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*Easterhouse 2004: an ethnographic account of men's experience, use and refusal of violence.* PhD thesis.

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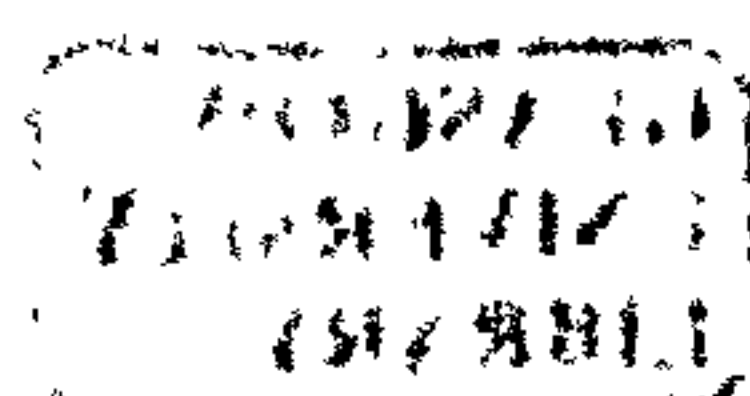
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Easterhouse 2004: An Ethnographic Account of Men's  
Experience, Use and Refusal of  
Violence

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**Thesis submitted for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy**

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## **Abstract**

The focus of this thesis is on how working class men live with physical interpersonal violence. The place of the research is Easterhouse, a housing scheme on the outskirts of Glasgow in Scotland. The primary research methods employed are a reflexive engagement with in- depth semi- structured interviews and participant observation. This concern with a reflexive engagement with the research field and the research 'data' is theorised using the sociological tools crafted by Pierre Bourdieu: in particular, his stress on reality as fundamentally relational and his use of reflexivity, habitus, the body and fields to construct and understand human agency. In this thesis, these tools are used to open up moments of often 'mindless' violence and to understand what these moments might 'mean' to both those who experience this violence, and how this reality can come to be evacuated / excavated in historical and representational forms. To do this, the thesis considers the formation of habitus through time, across generations and indeed how a relationship to time is made and grounded in everyday experience of class relations and culture (and so the amount of resources or capital that can be brought to bear in the context of these relations). In this sense, the thesis endeavours to complicate what is meant by violence and what is meant by the 'causes' of physical interpersonal violence by situating moments of violence as elements in a total fact of life. The thesis situates contemporary forms of physical interpersonal violence in the new social, economic and cultural landscape formed post-1979. That is, continuities and discontinuities are assessed in relation to a tradition of having no tradition and the possibilities for historical self-understanding and agency that such a moment *could* provide. That is, now that working class culture has been 'stripped down' to its economic reality the culture of working class life is simultaneously a coming to terms with this 'nothing'. Paradoxically, then it is in this 'nothing' that agency is found and where history, culture and politics can either come to be 'reclaimed'- 'invented'- or 'mobilised'. The alternative is that in the same way an object discovers it now has properties when support for that object is taken away, the thesis identifies what can be falled back upon or what can be afforded in a market society. When violence, '*livin wi extremes*' and '*visceral culture*' (Hall, 1997) are themes of everyday life they are also liable to be used as sources for funding a self that has little or no other perceived resources for trading on the new 'soft' interpersonal markets. This theory and analytics of the social body and its relationship to violent expression is used to situate actual violence and men's changing relationship to violence.



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# 1 Introduction

This thesis is an attempt at understanding undertaken in the tradition of ethnographic research: that is, it is research work aimed at knowing and learning how people in their 'own' environment live and get on (or don't) with others and how the author tried to engage and then write what this engagement meant to everyone involved (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995, p10). At the core of the thesis is a concern with the relationship between men's actions, their violence and place(s). More specifically, the research addresses the closeness of violence and confrontation as an aspect of everyday fundamental social relations and how violence and its use become articulated *in language* as 'dead normal'.

In describing my intent as identifying the conditions and processes that produce violence and the effects of this violence on individuals and communities, there is a desire to contribute to those emerging public debates by offering a close up understanding and explanation of the conditions which make violence more or less likely to occur.<sup>1</sup> Unsurprisingly, I discovered that a focus on a specific place and a focus on physical interpersonal violence alone are insufficient to explain its occurrence.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This work is following a long tradition in that it touches on the legitimation, justification and limits of violence. Moreover, in following these themes to the interpersonal level the work is engaging with a more recent focus, that is, on violence and its relationship to men and how they '*cope with violence, how they order their lives as a result of violence, how criminal justice professionals and support organisations view male victims*' (Newburn and Stanko, 1994, p163).

<sup>2</sup> That is, in seeing violence as an aspect of culture and cultural work I follow a long tradition in refusing to separate an analysis of culture from other everyday activities and relations (Engels, 1892).



The primary topic of the thesis, then, the one that was successful in obtaining Economic and Social Research (ESRC)<sup>3</sup> funding, was and is to explore men's use, talk and experience of physical interpersonal violence in a particular place, that is, the council housing scheme of Easterhouse on the eastern edge of Glasgow. The place of the research is Easterhouse in particular and Glasgow in general. However, and as will be seen, I do not encounter Easterhouse as a unique place amidst a geography of unique places: that is, Easterhouse should not be conceptualized as independent in its development or in its relationship with other places.

The choice of the research site is grounded in the area's association with violence and indeed the current high rates of serious assault that are in evidence throughout Glasgow. 2002 statistics reveal that in relation to Scotland as a whole Glasgow has considerably higher levels of people found carrying a weapon as well as carrying out non-sexual crimes of violence (Scottish Executive (1), 2003, p2). As will be seen there are good reason to believe that this figure significantly under represents the 'real' levels of violence against the person. As far as murder rates are concerned 2003 statistics has seen Scotland as a whole ranked only behind Finland and Northern Ireland. Again, though, Glasgow is the main contributor to the Scottish murder rate and stands on a par with Belfast (59 and 56 murders per million of population respectively): the geographical representation in the Scottish Executive's statistical bulletin is striking (2003 (2), Chart 8). By far the most common method of killing is stabbing (this holds for both males and females: over 50% for males and 25% for females). As the Scottish Minister for Justice, Cathy Jamieson has referred to this murder rate as '*shocking*' and that it '*can no longer be tolerated in a*

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<sup>3</sup> The ESRC is the UK's leading research funding and training agency addressing economic and social concerns. The Violence Research Programme (VRP) is one of its thematic concerns (see Stanko et al, 1998).

*modern Scotland* (Evening Times, 6<sup>th</sup> September, 2004). The collective understanding of the ministers is that the levels of violence can be reduced to Glasgow's 'booze and blade' culture.<sup>4</sup> In this sense, the place and its relationship to violence is a topic of much debate, concern, action and expenditure.

On the other hand, the research site is one that came 'naturally' in that it was an area I grew up in and still had some contact with friends and family. I wrongly believed that this would make my research straightforward as I was of the opinion that everything I needed to complete the PhD was already there at hand and ready to be 'used'.

Indeed, supplementary but integral to this core concern is an engagement with and illumination of these topics as someone who had lived in the area until nineteen years old and whose family continues to live there. This notion of returning, re-engaging and then explicating is encountered as both a key and painful problematic but also a source of sociological knowledge. As will be seen, it is this slow coming to awareness of what was already available and at hand in the field itself allied to my experience of representational forms of knowing that I found a resonance in the idea of '*bodily reflexivity*' (Nast, 1998) as an interpretative key. This was especially the case in relation to particular moments of physical and symbolic violence where it was clear that all that that moment involved could not be said in words, yet what was involved was already known. This working with what is already known and how 'things' come to be known is thus a theme at the heart of this thesis.

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<sup>4</sup> This terminology appears topical in that in September 2004 I was approached by a researcher for a Channel 5 programme called '*Tough Towns*' and asked if I could put them in contact with someone while they filmed in Glasgow (which was only two days away). On asking for the rationale for the programme I was told that each



As has been noted, the subject matter and data of the research was drawn and generated from a number of different sources. To this extent I reflexively engaged with the idea and practice of traditional ethnographic research on two fronts: semi-structured in depth interviews and participant observation. The research diverged from the classic tradition in that *critical* attention was paid to the social and historical construction and emergence of categories of perception and to the role that this could play in the construction and objectification of the research field itself.<sup>5</sup>

This involved, amongst other things, taking part in focus groups, hanging around, visiting friends and family, going to the pub, shopping, going on stag nights and generally doing and taking part in normal everyday things. This ‘everything and everyone’ as possible topics for the thesis is in retrospect an aspect of how I situated myself as ‘data’ and those I knew in writing up as ‘data’. This is what Gilfillan (1999) describes as an ‘ontological reduction’. My interpretation of this is that the researcher as a medium of the research itself becomes exposed to the market for research as research and in doing so exposes themselves to the logic and structuring forces of that market. As will be seen, this is a fundamental insight in that it recognises the ‘openness’ of working class populations to social and economic relations. In an

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town is given a theme and they talk to locals about this theme. In Glasgow’s case the thematic gloss was to be ‘booze and blades’.

<sup>5</sup> This distinction between ‘traditional’ and so ‘non-traditional’ ethnographic research is largely illusory if the basis for the distinction is made in relation to the reflexive use of theory. Ethnography is a practice that has always found itself at the center of much debate within the social sciences. Its subject matter and aims, to understand how and why people do what they do by getting to know what these things mean for people in their everyday situations and in relation to wider issues in their life, is not at all specific to its aims as a social practice. Indeed, Martin Hammersley (1992) denies that there is an actual specific ethnographic method we can talk about with any great degree of clarity. What seems specific is *how* this enquiry is systematized and reflexively theorized. Indeed, this is the basis of much postmodern reflections on the role of anthropology/ethnography in the maintenance of ‘hegemonic representations’ and the creation of the ‘other’. Of course, this very same process of ‘othering’ and ‘implicitness’ was the basis for feminist critique going back over fifty years (see Mascia-Lees et al (1996) for a review of ‘New’ Ethnography and the politics of representation). In both there seems to be a claim to authority.



increasingly market oriented society it is those without cultural resources who will 'register' the costs and character of that society.

This grounded aspect of the research was allied with the use of recorded and then transcribed in depth semi-structured interviews, life histories or 'conversations' and the employing of more formal sources of documentary or textual analysis that ranged from national/local newspapers and academic texts to graffiti and the rendering and objectification of Easterhouse locals in psychiatric reports, job seeker evaluations, social work reports, housing association evaluations and statistical and demographic representations.

A significant minority of my interviewees and informants are all people I know/have known or know people I know and have known. This includes people who have moved abroad from the area to places as far flung as French Guyana. Indeed, for varying reasons Easterhouse has experienced massive population decline over the last two decades.<sup>6</sup> As would be expected, though, the majority of my informants and all of those who participated centrally in this thesis are 'locals' who are always universal. In this sense, the snowballing of the research and my informants has a limited range and thus like all ethnographic work its claims to representative-

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<sup>6</sup> This thesis will touch on a number of reasons for what could be called this movement of people. What is clear is that an explanation of 'the movement of people' cannot be isolated to a specific place for the simple fact that a large amount of people are moving across spaces. In talking about specific places, then, it is important to ask questions of those who remain but also those who leave. In a narrow sense, this will ask us to begin thinking about those forms of subjectivity/dispositions that are acquired when living in a particular spatial environment, and the manner in which bodies respond to being opened up to new experiences and spaces and how people not only come to cope and manage but how they then look back on what 'really happened'. In this sense, the inclusion of people who have moved away from Easterhouse also prevents the writing of reality as events and things, of writing out life as process and interaction, of change, of 'getting on with it', of getting on (or not) with other people. Perhaps this asks us to identify the particular and situated experiences and motivations within a more general Scottish 'culture of mobility'. For example, Devine et al. (1992, p5) traces this trend back to at least the seventeenth century. The main point is that mobility and movement, the actual statistical fact and the meaning of the move, have to be assessed by not only by situated push and pull factors (that is retrospectively as statistics) but by attention to the very experiences and perceptions as they are lived of those who come to make up those statistics. This attention to psychological reproduction (continuities and discontinuities) across space asks for



ness beyond this small circle are weak but perhaps indicative of the sphere of influence of this circle itself and again a comment on the relationship between place and habitus.<sup>7</sup>

In looking to make sense of researching the social and what the social and the research of the social entails I gradually became drawn to the theoretical work of Bourdieu and in particular his tools of habitus, field and reflexivity.<sup>8</sup> Although what is meant by these concepts are clarified more fully in the next two chapters it will be worthwhile giving a brief statement on how they are used and what part they play in my theoretical approach. By reflexivity I refer to what Hammersley and Aitkinson (1983) identify as the researcher's *conscious self understanding* of the research process, context and field.

This is the starting point of my engagement with reflexive understanding.<sup>9</sup> This leads onto my use of the concept of habitus: that is, the substantive focus on the everyday life attends to both my own cultural and intellectual resources as well as the concern to explore the constitution and generative structure of an embodied habitus within a given material and cultural context. This is one reason why I began looking for ways to write about embodied understanding and

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clarity in relation to how patterns of emigration can develop new links between and away from particular places and particular dispositions (Brock, 1992).

<sup>7</sup> In this sense this work's claim to generalisability depends on how generalisability is conceived in the first place. For example, in an interview with someone who had served five years in prison Grant Mitchell was keen to stress the commonality of background, life history and views shared by many of his fellow prisoners. He was keen to stress this commonality after I had focused on the particularity of Easterhouse. This idea of the generalisability of qualitative research is something that Ward-Schofield (1993, cited in Wainwright, 1997, p14) has taken in hand and suggested that the term should not be seen in light of positivist criteria. That is, she suggests that terms like 'fittingness', 'comparability', or 'translatability' are used to reflect the coherence, character and validity of ethnographic research and writing. Indeed, as will be seen, in Grant's account of the hyper-reality of prison life these terms have an everyday practicality when it comes to facing up to relations with those that share the same space.

<sup>8</sup> This movement towards the sociological insights afforded by Bourdieu's work was paralleled by a move away from the original tenets of the research; that is, to understand men's violence by submitting what was discovered to the hypotheses of Connell's masculinity theory. This process of rewriting and revising whole modes of writing and understanding is itself a way of engaging with what could be described as the intellectual habitus and relationship to time and necessity.



an engagement with what some authors have referred to ‘unproblematically’ as a ‘carnal sociology’ (Wacquant, 2003): that is, in what way would it be ‘better’ to explicate the research and the research process ‘*with one's body and one's soul*’ (Nietzsche, 1961, p12).<sup>10</sup>

Indeed, this concern with the ‘body and the soul’ and the relationship or lack of relationship between the body and soul is one way to describe Bourdieu’s concern with the social and individual explanatory power of habitus.<sup>11</sup> That is, that the body and soul as the body and the social are inseparable in the analysis: although one cannot be thought without the other, the social is accorded primacy of form while the body matters. What I have found is that a prescription for an embodied or carnal sociology can be exactly that: that is, it can be encountered as a social form in its relations with others itself. For me to *describe* my research as ‘carnal’ is to separate myself from myself as I am in my relations in the field. Moreover, to ‘choose’ a carnal site is to identify either a methodological presupposition or an unrecognized

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<sup>9</sup> That is, how reflexivity itself and the introspection that can be generated through a reflexive approach can *detach* a researcher from fully taking part in the game. In this sense it is to recognize to that people are already and always reflexive in everyday life.

<sup>10</sup> Again, the idea of a ‘carnal sociology’ is not new. It is at the basis of much feminist theorising over the last fifty years (Weitz, 2003).

<sup>11</sup> Habitus is what Bourdieu refers to as lacking in many accounts of practice; that is, it is a principle in the production of practices that is often left unsaid or taken for granted. It is in this ‘invisibility’ that social power or perhaps more accurately, the emergence of power in social relations is often found. The importance of habitus is that it provides both a social and individual principle of practice. In this sense, it is a concept that has similarities with Giddens use of structuration but side steps Giddens’ use by denying the whole industry that is the antinomy of agency and structure. Both are already implicated at the core of the game and indeed the antinomy-work has become the core of the game. That is, habitus provides both a principle of sociation and individuation: ‘*sociation because our categories of judgement and action, coming from society, are shared by all of those who were subjected to similar social conditions and conditionings; individuation because each person, by having a unique trajectory and location in the world, internalizes a matchless combination of schemata*’ (Wacquant, 2004b). The concept is as old as Western philosophy and is found most prominently in the work of Aristotle and medieval scholars such as Aquinas who although in identifying the inseparability of the body and soul identified the soul as ‘that which makes things alive’ (Davies, 1998). For a concise history of its usage and meaning in both philosophy and social science see Wacquant (2004b). For a more complex and practical application of its use in ethnographic research in Scotland and England see Gilfillan (1999) and Charlesworth (2000) respectively.



desire. My recognized desire is that in engaging with 'myself' I recognize that a carnal sociology is one thing I cannot wait to be rid of.<sup>12</sup>

As a key feature in his understanding of action and his understanding of consciousness and its development and emergence Bourdieu describes habitus as '*... the strategy generating principle enabling agents to cope with unforeseen and ever-changing situations... a system of lasting and transposable dispositions which, integrating past experiences, functions at every moment as a matrix of perceptions, appreciations and actions and makes possible the achievement of infinitely diversified tasks*' (Bourdieu, 1977, p72). It is in this sense that I use my body and soul as the tool that is habitus to 'capture' my men's intentions and postures towards and against violence and my use and experience of the literature: that is, it is through the term that the constitution, emergence and working with a masculine and violent habitus can be perceived in and through time.<sup>13</sup>

For example, Stanley ((55), disability allowance for twenty years and self-confessed '*horrible cunt*') and Merleau- Ponty could agree philosophically that '*a habit is an aptitude for responding to a particular type of situation with a particular form of solution*' (1962, p49).

Where they would diverge, not disagree, is their understanding of violence and social structural reality and its relationship to themselves as embodied social beings in and through time. While Merleau- Ponty recognised and then stopped at the verge that is both the communicative and mimetic power of violence, Stanley is living evidence of

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<sup>12</sup> This social construction of the body and desire is exactly what a number of feminist philosophies have thought with, against and used (Weitz, 1998).

<sup>13</sup> Similarly, the overriding character of a particular habitus can be shown to be eroded or dismantled by new and external social forces. As will be seen, this is particularly the case in reference to men, violence and aging as it is to the experience of being 'opened up' to new places and experiences. Moreover, and as will be seen, as far as masculine is concerned I do not reduce this to men.

someone who stepped into that theoretical void or gap that holds the essence of its own sociology. That is, the space between the 'urge and the action' is the space where a social theory of power and a social theory of language can be explicated.<sup>14</sup> As Stanley mentions in a drunken passing about his relations through time with the police, borstal and prison, *'Hearing that door bangin, it's the feelings that go through your body, there's not wan thing you can dae tae get oot a this. Ye might be the best fighter in the world an get oot a this and that, but you canny get oot a that cell unless ye start using yer fuckin nut. Even then, ye've gote tae dae that ower a longer period of time, change yer whole concept a life. Ye've gote tae change yer lifestyle or else it changes it fur ye*'. Again, we can see a meeting between form and idea, of how a habit- is not a singular, it involves- us *'is an open system of dispositions that is constantly subjected to experiences, and therefore constantly affected by them in a way that either reinforces or modifies its structures'* (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, p133). The substantial is thus the relational: substance is generated through relations.

As will be seen, this space between 'urge and action' could be the basis for a whole research programme itself in that it is an encounter with people and our methodical relation to time. That is, how time is made by people in our interactions with each other, with our environment and so with ourselves. This relation to time and to how time is formed is to ask questions about the durability of a relation to time, to the quality of time and to the moment when time is realized through form: for some, the 'god moment' that

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<sup>14</sup> This opening up of the space between the urge and action is something that Weil theorised in relation to power. For example, she states that *'Those who possess 'la force' walk in a non-resistant milieu, as if nothing in the human material around them, or in nature, could raise between the urge and the action that brief interval where thought lies'* (1956, cited in Nye, 1994). As will be seen later, Stanley's reference to his actions as 'just fucking stupid' and 'didnae think about it at the time' is also a relation to this complex sociological and gendered idea of power. That is, what he says asks the researcher to go beyond what he says and to address what exactly is meant by thought and thinking. On the one hand, it could be argued that Stanley did not need to think because his violence and that of his peers was already authorised. On the other, it attracts analysis to the intelligibility of the



becomes the principle of perception and the production of practice, *the* time and place where what ‘really did’ begin is what will always begin.

It is in this sense that a key misconception of the concept of habitus is that it is formed in relation to this ‘god moment’ or one overall ‘social structure’ or form and that it is a concept that seeks after a unified or whole and authentic self. These are conservative misunderstandings that reduce the worth of the concept to areas of relative stability, total reproduction or a gendered bias.<sup>15</sup> As far as social reproduction and stability are concerned this is simply wrong in that while the concept refers to a certain sense of inertia and durability this does not imply fixity or a lack of creativity. As Wacquant (2004b, p3) notes, not only is habitus dependant on the ‘*character and compatability of the social situation that produced it over time*’, habitus does not ‘*necessarily agree with the social world in which it evolves*’.

As will be seen, this is a recognition that forces the researcher to interrogate the ‘luxury’ that is the concept of the ‘social’, ‘society’ or an overall concept of structure. It demands closer attention to the force of circumstances and the different personal structuring realities that each person faces (Gilfillan, 1999). Indeed, it is in these personal structuring realities and their meetings with history that give purchase to a complex sociological

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identification of the very space that is seen to exist between thought and action in the first place. It is to see thought formed in the specifics of action.

<sup>15</sup> For an example of this sort of critique see Connell (1995). The issue of change and reproduction in relation to human agency and intelligibility of that transformation are complex. For an example of the use of habitus to illuminate the living with and through change see Charlesworth (2000) and Gilfillan (1999). Again, though, habitus is a useful conceptual tool in that it asks for specificity and explication of change and transformation. In this sense, it has practical efficacy in that it demands that a person’s methodical relationship to time is understood systematically and meaningfully in relation to identifiable forces. Bourdieu discusses the relations between habitus and gender in *Masculine Domination* (2001, for a critical appraisal see Fowler’s (1998) review). Similarly, Moi (2000) discusses the practicalities of Bourdieu’s conceptual tools for feminist theory.



reality that does not then begin with and so then find impetus for more research into why 'many are called but few are chosen or self-elected'.

Recognising the fundamental grounding of social being in the conditions in which people exist can enable the researcher to 'rehumanise' and remain critical of what can easily become a discussion of the objective or 'intrinsic qualities' of a place.<sup>16</sup> It becomes easier to understand people as 'historical, practical and generative beings', it becomes easier to understand people as sensitive and adaptive to their environments in ways that cannot be reduced to some form of utilitarian rationality.<sup>17</sup>

This is how I engage violence as a particular 'structure of feeling' (Williams, 1977).<sup>18</sup>

That is, that actual violence as an aspect of habitus must be understood in relation to other personal structuring structures and how these structurations encounter other structurations in and through time. This can be understood as the deep embodiment of

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<sup>16</sup>This fetishism of place (or '*reification of consciousness*' as Lukacs (1923) put it) denies the *interactional* nature of reality and history as but one possibility amongst many.

<sup>17</sup> That is, as Scheper-Hughes (1992) has shown, sometimes this adaptation can involve the internalization of the most aberrant social and economic conditions- they are aberrant because they are understood from a position that has experience of better living conditions (not to mention the clarity and distance of objectivity). Paradoxically, from this perspective, individual choice, or agency, is given greater theoretical and practical purchase than the soulless actor of utilitarian rationality- what might be called the '*sadistic potential of a language built on agency*' (Scarry, 1985, p27). In sociological writing there is often an implicit notion that 'agency' must be positive/innovative. Agency in effect is asked to find a 'way out' of any problems the writer finds in reality. Paradoxically, this peculiar tendency is most common in circumstances of grinding and obstinate reality- those situations where fantasy is most likely to emerge. There is no irony, then, in using a quote from an old science fiction novel to get this point across; '*Odd how the human mind, once it became conscious of the unyielding pressure of limits and restrictions, refused to think constructively. There was a lot of loose talk about the indestructibility of the human will, how it strove onward and upward, overcoming all obstacles. But that was just talk, of the most irresponsible kind. Actually the human will to progress was the most delicate mechanism imaginable, and refused to work at all if conditions were not precisely right*' (Clifton and Riley, 1955, p41). Choice, then, in an age of entrepreneurship, is not a taken for granted methodological assumption to be placed beyond assumption (Holmwood, 1996, p11), choice and what agency means are themselves categories that have to be explained sociologically.

<sup>18</sup> Williams describes a structure of feeling as '*characteristic elements of impulse, restraint, and tone, specifically affective elements of consciousness and relationships: not feeling against thought, but thought as felt and feelings as thought*' (Williams, 1977, p132).



the world that is historically constituted, specific and yet relational and so contingent. It is against essentialist notions of being or form and yet identifies the durable nature of being. It is against essentialism yet identifies the phenomenal form as substantial and real. It is against a substantialist reading yet argues that substance has to be engaged with if only to then see substance as emerging through a whole web of relations and a definite mode of life. From here culture has its basis in materialism. This is the lens with which the world is interpreted and made (socially constructed) and which is itself transformed in the process. Contemporary expressions and levels of violence are thus situated in an explanation that identifies that violence as traces of practical and durable dispositions. This is how I have understood the *sheer availability* of violence as a background discourse and source of action.

Again, and this is worth repeating, it is in this sense that the theoretical basis of the thesis is interwoven with the methodology in that I do not omit my own carnal (dis)engagement or feelings from the analysis and description of 'how and why things happen and come to happen' (Stanley, 1992; Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983). In other words, there is also stress on explicating the meaning and relevance of history, subjectivity and reflexivity in relation to biography (Flanagan, 2001) and the research process. The concern is with the structures and processes of everyday life or the idea of what then comes to be identified as a certain sense of lived-ness, the durability and transformation of habitus and the body as a social process and product in a web of social and economic relations. The theoretical and specific linkages are how the socially and culturally formed body acts *rationally* and so with reason in moments of often 'mindless' violence. This 'mindlessness' is not to be encountered as a substantive phenomenon. Thus ethnography is seen as one way to interrogate the philosophical dualism that is agency and structure and to show how the social can be found in the body and in place,



and how the body itself is a site for registering social relations and people's engagement with and incorporation of the social.<sup>19</sup>

This commitment to an explication of a situated 'working class' habitus is looked at historically and contemporaneously.<sup>20</sup> Aspects of structuration include relationships to the economy, the constitution of local culture, the character of the 'social' or the 'public', housing conditions and the psychological continuities and discontinuities across generations. It is in this sense that space is devoted to the narratives and historical formation of place and the 'livedness' of place in and through time. This is to recognise not only the limitations of a purely phenomenological analysis but to again reiterate the importance of understanding the body and its emotional constitution as a fundamental force in human life (Hall, 1997, p13). This approach cannot but make explicit the inherent difficulties in rendering this reality in text and for a particular professional field.<sup>21</sup>

Indeed, an aim behind the research is for the attainment of a PhD from the University of Glasgow which is situated in Glasgow's *West End*- an institution that is on a clear day as far as

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<sup>19</sup> Indeed, it is here, in the invisibility and the classifications that the silence of symbolic violence is articulated in physical form (Hall, 1999).

<sup>20</sup> In this thesis an emphasis is sometimes stressed on the power of particular 'moments' or relationships in revealing aspects of working class structuration. However, I do not identify a 'typical' working class form in that the working class is not a category in itself but is located in a series of social and economic relations. In the field I heard one man refer to working class as a political concept and project. It is not a word that is used. In the course of this research I have found no evidence of a common political working class interest. Indeed, I have found no evidence of a political intention.

<sup>21</sup> It should be set from the start that these difficulties are not only descriptive of my attempts to put my thoughts down on paper; they are integral to my research. They are integral because they are one side of my own experience. That is, they are reflective and unreflective aspects of my own social history and consciousness in contemporary Western capitalist society. Trying to understand this, to explicate this 'structure of feeling' in a vocabulary that values just what it means to be is both difficult and problematic. It is, however, with some degree of certainty, a task that needs to be done if 'working class' being and working class experience is to be grasped in the *process* of being 'itself' and not a thing that is spectated or visited as 'something' amidst 'nothing', a mere reflection of the political process and what will be referred to later as a long tradition of disbelief. I include my own class positionality as a means to engage with the many contradictions I have felt in escaping and disappearing much of what is in fact the reality of my research. Indeed, I encounter myself methodologically as



the motorway is concerned and in possession of a car, only ten minutes away from the *East End*.<sup>22</sup> The university stands on a hill that looks down on the city.

I understand Sociology in the fashion outlined by Bourdieu in that it '*is an esoteric science- initiation into it is very slow and requires a real conversion in your whole vision of the world- but it always seems esoteric*' (Bourdieu, 1996, p53). This often mystifying character of sociology is summed up in one man's Aristotelian description of what Platonic forms of understanding often disappear '*its aw text, there's nuthin fae the heart*' (George, Interview in White Horse Pub, 15<sup>th</sup> August 2003).<sup>23</sup>

It is in this sense, that this work also follows another aspect of the ethnographic tradition in that it identifies the cross cultural frame of reference as of fundamental importance in what is involved in the 'coming to know' of ethnographic understanding. From this perspective, ethnography is understood as the '*...the art and science of describing a group or culture... to show how social action in a world can be understood from the perspective of another culture*' (Agar, 1986, p12). This identification of difference rather than commonality is in reference to the focus on the assumptions and effects of knowledge claims themselves, the

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wholly enraptured by an education system that can disappear a reality. My cultural work, then, is also part of my theoretical work in making an epistemic break from this objectivism.

<sup>22</sup> I am trying to complicate and interrogate how space is occupied and comes to be occupied. This involves an integration of the very forms of thought and human bodily relation that is felt and experienced in encounters with spaces and places *encountered* as different.

<sup>23</sup> This identification of a world of text and textual awareness is to know a world that can be utterly mesmerising. Paradoxically, it is the basis for much post modern criticism of sociological theory (for example, see Seidman (1994)) and for sociological critique of post modernism! It is evidenced most clearly in the debates that gravitate around the relative weights of 'agency' or 'structure' in relation to human practice: it can lead to '*a house of mirrors, a self-sufficient metalanguage which will isolate them from the rest of the world*' (Alvesson and Skoldberg, 2000, p246). More importantly, for George, the distinction between text and heart is his understanding of what these different perspectives on knowing mean. That is, heart is the living breathing bonds between people, the recognition of a recognized charisma and so a mutual recognition of forms of life: it is knowing knowing through the experience of it, the doing it. The text is what George has come to understand through his experience of *formal* education as dead to the facts of his own experience. That is, the facts are only facts on a page and will remain ever so until they have become experienced and conceptually embodied in practice.



social and cultural relations that underpin those claims, and how these relations may be intimately linked with 'ways of seeing'.<sup>24</sup> To be 'one of them' may not be a prerequisite for ethnographic research (Pearson, 1993, pxviii), in fact in many situations the opposite may be of benefit (Foster, 1990, p167), but to be 'one of them' and to be reflective about how that comes to be known as a fact can offer important social and ethnographic knowledge that might not otherwise be articulated.

This is a key issue and goes some way to explain the thread of methodological and epistemological questions that run throughout the thesis. That is, I encounter sociology in the same fashion that social theorists encounter social reality in that I agree that the '*fundamental problem of social theory is how to connect in a satisfactory way the two conceptual strategies indicated by the notions of 'system' and 'lifeworld'*' (Habermas, 1987, p151). In an ethnography I have taken this to mean that while social theory should not exist in a vacuum it often does. I refuse this disconnection in relation in that I see it as an attempt to disappear the traditional disappearance of social structures, social relations and power evidenced in 'front end' representations of violence and violent types found in policy discourse and media work exemplified recently in the comment that '*neds are a modern day plague*'.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> In other words, how easily a vocabulary of difference is transposable to real lived realities. This notion of difference then is one that works with difference as an aspect of universal category. It is to agree with Currie that there is 'plenty of talk about the culture of poor people. We hardly ever talk about the *common* culture' (1997).

<sup>25</sup> The quote is referenced to MSP Margaret Curran the Minister for Communities and it neatly encapsulates and evidences the argument that the 'reserve army of labour' thesis is redundant. That is, that there are now large groups of people who are completely excised from the circulations of value. Curran's constituency is Glasgow Bailleston which borders Easterhouse. Of course, from one perspective this contemporary example can be seen as the most recent incarnation of a specifically modern phenomenon, that is, that long struggle of authority against hooliganism, a term that goes back 150 years- slightly longer than the term ned (for example, see Pearson, 1983). It is an example of how in and from the field of politics, morality has been increasingly used to define what are political problems (Bourdieu, 2000, p201). This 'need for roots' is not something new (Parenti, 1999; Weil, 1959). The relationship between 'system and life-world' is one that has to be encountered via a perspective of social and economic relations and the different 'fields' in which these discussions and acts of naming take place. If this isn't done then the principle of the production of practices remains 'invisible' and like the above discussion



It is in this sense, that the writing of the research for the academy is explicitly included in this involvement and it is through this writing for a specific audience that the phenomenal forms of the research are appreciated and at the same time 'critically' evaluated. That is, this engagement with the ethnographic data and the theoretical and historical work (reading and constructing) is *critical* in that it is dialectical. What is meant by this is that the construction of this thesis has been a continual development and meeting between real lives and written text and a reflexive awareness of the context in which each of these take place.<sup>26</sup> This to and fro and sometimes resolution (Gadamer, 1975) is, for a number of reasons, a strength of this thesis. At the same time there are a number of cul de sacs and difficult paths that I have not omitted as part of a polished and finished product.<sup>27</sup>

In part this difficulty is related to three main issues: the original and ultimately misleading motivation to isolate and study violence *in itself* as a feature of a particular gender or class habitus in a particular environment (it cannot be reduced to acts of physical violence, violence is never unmediated or unmotivated, neither is it explicit or immediately recognizable); my closeness to the people in the field as it unfolded in a number of different directions (in, away

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of habitus action becomes orientated to discussing the relative merits of either agency or structure or degenerating into empty moralising. That is why Bourdieu's concepts of habitus, field and reflexivity work with each other as part of a total analysis of practice. His work is an attempt at identifying those '*zones of necessity and freedom*' and so identifying those '*spaces open to moral action*' (Bourdieu, 1990, p47). Of course, 'necessity and freedom' and 'moral action' are the personal and the political. It is in this sense that in developing these concepts/tools in relation to empirical phenomenon Bourdieu proposes that an appreciation of what people do requires '*a triple elucidation of the social genesis and structures of habitus and field, and of the dynamics of their 'dialectical confrontation'*' (2000, cited in Wacquant, 2004b, p3). As will be seen, this was something that I became aware of in the continual development of what I aimed for in the interviews. That is, from totally unstructured to semi-structured and to following lines of thought that I saw as relevant to illumination through social theory.

<sup>26</sup> This has a long sociological tradition that stretches back to Weber and beyond. That is, the concern with '*analytically ordering empirical reality*' through interpretation and explanation (Weber, 1904, p58).

<sup>27</sup> This notice of a lack of resolution or evenness is not to reintroduce a sense of consistency through a lack of consistency. Rather, the aim is to refer to concrete situations and what was or could be done and so to be frank in noting that consistency of thought, if it is not to become a matter of self-deception and mental illness, is a consistency that is patient with inconsistency.



and the return to place and spaces); and to my sociological relationship to what counts as sociological and ethnographic knowledge. I quickly encountered these issues as epistemological and methodological barriers to 'doing' the research in the way I originally intended: that is, in relation to a traditional if little practiced template (Fielding, 1993).<sup>28</sup>

It is here I discovered not only the strengths/limitations and vulnerability of ethnographic knowledge but the difficulty of a sociological vocabulary to 'get at' or do justice to the specific and embodied reality I already 'knew' was at hand but was increasingly becoming aware of how I was not using this as the data of my research. This was never more clear when attempting to employ a homogenous and often negative notion of 'working class' culture. It is this post-Thatcher reality that challenges writing that is based in a pre-Thatcher theoretical stance and it is this reality that contradicted my own attempts at representation through writing. That is, although I am young enough not to be blinded by a pre-Thatcher theoretical stance it was this modernism that I initially used to frame or try to frame and get a grip on my data.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> My own experience has been of absolute struggle, muddle and the dialectical ping pong. I include a copy of the timetable that I included at the end of my PhD proposal as an indication of the linear 'hypothesis-collection-analysis' template that no qualitative researcher seems to follow!

Indicative Timetable

YEAR 1: (i) Begin conducting a number of 'pilot' interviews (with respondents identified in preliminary research), and on the strength of the data gained, develop and elaborate a theoretical framework for carrying out, recording and analysing subsequent interviews; (ii) Initial communication with organisations and individuals on current contact list; (iii) Develop number of potential respondents through 'snowballing' and continue interviews; (iv) Identify and record sources of empirical information that can be used to paint a demographic picture of Easterhouse

YEAR 2: (i) Fieldwork in Easterhouse; (ii) Review of interview methodology, fieldwork data and theoretical framework; (iii) Ongoing discussion of data with relevant individuals and organisations

YEAR 3: (i) Review of findings in relation to research questions; (ii) Evaluation of theoretical framework in relation to interview findings; (iii) Contact with individuals and organisations in relation to my findings and conclusions; (iv) Issues for further research.

<sup>29</sup> I see this confusion as my unreflexive engagement and immersion in the 'game' of sociology.

The 'what was at hand' is the what was and is at hand for many of those who entered the adult world of work and who are born into the post 1979 generation. It was, and is a time in relation to previous eras, that on the one hand has no pretence towards the memories of a past homogenous working class tradition, culture or ways of life: market forces dominate and previous political, social and cultural institutions are being dismantled. In this sense it is an engagement with a tradition of having no tradition and the possibilities for historical self understanding that such an engagement with reality *could* provide. On the other hand it is a recognition of the possibility of other traditions and their emergence. In this study, the use, experience and understanding of violence is used to engage with contemporary and emerging forms of life.

Indeed, it is as if now working class reality has been 'stripped down' to its economic reality that the 'culture' of working class life is simultaneously a coming to terms with that traditional 'nothing'. For one respondent this nothing is the feeling that he had to justify 'everything' whereas for 'others' it is just taken for granted. That is, culture and representation is recognized as having always been part and parcel of the social and economic realm. With the transformations in traditional masculine and feminine forms of work and association traditional forms of female and male culture are also changing. Indeed, it is here the relations between gender and what gender means is being 'deconstructed'. Paradoxically, and as will be seen, it is in this 'nothing' that 'agency' is found and where history, culture and politics can come to be either mobilized/invented/reclaimed or find that as support for a reason for being becomes a market force itself there is in a sense a fall back on what can be afforded. When violence, '*livin wi extremes*' and '*visceral culture*' (Hall, 1995) are key themes in everyday life then they are also thus liable to be used as sources for funding a self that has little or no other resources that can be traded on the new 'soft' interpersonal markets. As such perhaps



this is where a theory and analytics of the body and its relationship to violent expression will be focused.<sup>30</sup>

In this sense, this is where I situate my own research. That is, in the literature and research on men, masculinity and violence in an era marked by (amongst other things) de-industrialisation, political apathy and the expansion of the higher education sector to 'non-traditionals'. One area that my work can contribute to is complicating and opening up the relationship between masculinity, power and violence and indeed how the emergence of physical interpersonal violence makes more *sense* when this form of violence is understood as an event that has a long horizon. That is, in the same way that previous behaviours that were not *represented* as violence become known as violence much physical interpersonal violence is better understood as emerging and occurring along a continuum of violence. In this view, violence is a form of energy that is conserved and transposed in violence through the normalcy of social relations. Violence here has a wide remit and includes violence to the self as well as violence to others. Indeed, in drawing on Bourdieu's conceptual tools of habitus and reflexivity I attempt to show how a non-reified sociological understanding of the body can be used to illuminate the body as a source of both human agency and constraint.

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<sup>30</sup> Indeed, this seems to be the thrust of much research and theorising in relation to men and violence. For example, the explosion of work on Door Stewards and the commodification of culture and investment in violent capacity as a means to earn a living. Here the body itself is both a symbolic and material commodity. Bourdieu's concepts of habitus and field could be employed productively in this area in that it would ask researchers to think with the phenomenal forms and ask questions of how those forms emerged in their relations with other forms, that is how people relate interpersonally and what and how they perceive. Such an approach would distinguish between real relations and phenomenal forms in that not only can concepts not be reduced to a theory of mind but that the relations between, say, commodities (in this case bodies and descriptions and typologies of bodies) is itself 'more than mere symbol' (Outhwaite, 1983, p47). It asks that what went into a body and how a body relates goes beyond a description of a training and eating regime: for example, the congruence between Door Stewards expertise in violence, their class background and their understanding of their clientele. Indeed, this is a key aspect in calls for the regulation of the industry in that it does not become a 'vent fur sumdae's anger' (Luke Wifally, Interview in his flat, August 2002). On a more practical level, this relationship to culture as a relationship to necessity and so potential explosion of creative energy can be discerned both in the building of a new cultural campus in the scheme and the decision to build and situate the new National Theatre of Scotland administrative office in the area (<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/pages/news/2003/09/SEtc224.aspx>).

With these points in mind I can now outline the structure of the thesis. As has been noted, a key aspect of my work is in situating my ethnographic self in my relations with 'my men' (and their lives) and with the construction of the text (in writing time). It is in this sense that the work has a more narrative and fragmented style than a linear or logical progression from point to point or the following of a template towards knowing. The thinking here is to identify themes of importance and to return to them through different angles of approach and so to encounter, for example, context and violence as simultaneously personal, ecological and representational.

To this extent, I begin my discussion on men's experience and use of violence in Easterhouse and Glasgow by immediately framing and putting to the question what violence is and how do we come to know it. Here I present a working with the power of defining and of living with a defining: an encounter with lived meanings and encounters with violence and institutionalised definitions of violence. In this chapter I attempt to work out what it might mean to understand violent *events* as an expression of a *continuum* of violence in the same way that Elias (2000) noted how the monopoly on violence *came* to be defined through the state: in both situations there is a question of a relationship to not only power but to perspective and the constitution of understanding. A key issue here is to draw relations between different levels of representation and resolutions of violence and to show the disparity between policy and lived experience, most especially between professionals and those most subject to the professional gaze. In this sense, this abstract discussion of violence prepares the ground for the later phenomenological and ethnographic chapters that identify the sociological constitution and significance of emotion

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in systems of informal justice. Here the presence of my informants begins but in a less visible and direct form.

From defining I then move onto methodology and in particular encountering some methodological problems. That is, to what extent method is or can be assumed to be related to or equated with understanding. Indeed, in this sense I see methodology as an engagement with the very possibility of researching meaning in the first place: that is, how do we know and who knows best? Thus, it is through and after the methodological reflections that I move onto an early meeting with 'my men'. I introduce some of my informants here in order to reiterate the individuality and the intimacy that ethnography can engender and how conceptual tools of habitus, reflexivity and field can be used to deepen our understanding of human agency as social action.

In this sense, and in a similar fashion to the methodological chapter, I do not bracket off these men from my use of the research data or from their lived environment. It is here I begin to identify and work with the emerging twists and turns that are generated between analysis of violence and everyday living (including my own life) and how these themes are always triggering, returning and present in some form. The forms I focus on are men in their relations with other men, in their understandings of themselves and their lives. As will be seen, they understand what violence is, how it emerges and how it can come to structure a life.

Indeed, I take some of these men's experiences and use of violence with me as a guide into my next chapter and that is my first detailed encounter with Easterhouse: from its 'birth' up until the near present. The impetus in this chapter is to both outline some of the forces that were involved in bringing the scheme into existence and to draw out how some men arrived and

**'found' themselves in their relations with those they shared the same spaces. It is to develop some of the themes identified in introducing the men and their experiences and to relate this to the formation of place and the formation of habitus: to look through their experiences and perception of place and living place and to understand these perceptions as part of their living amidst social and economic relations. Here it is possible to see the illusion and reality that is 'working class culture', to see the relationship between the particular and the universal and to recognise the processes of emotional enrolment.**

**From this questioning and analysis of historical forms/representations and the embodied basis of social reproduction I step out of representations and bring the analysis up to the present time by focusing explicitly on violence, the body and the experience of violence. Indeed, it is here that I move onto a meeting with emotions and physical interpersonal violence as a structuring force in itself. To do this I situate and explicate what violence means to a Glaswegian male individual as an expectation and as a structured 'structure of feeling': in other words a violent habitus or a habitus formed in an ecology that is itself subject to violence. Part of this explication remains theoretical and based in the literature. In particular the chapter begins with a brief review of how violence has been assessed via the lens of masculinities. Indeed, throughout the chapter there is a meeting with what could be identified as a masculine habitus that has come to know and use violence: how a habitus comes to possess a body's movements in space and time. Again, there is a questioning of the relationship between violence and power and a foregrounding of 'affect' as a primary motivational force. This micro- analysis of violence and emotion as something in itself is used as a framing device for the remainder of the thesis.**



In the final chapter I bring the previous discussions on men, violence, methodology and place together in an ethnographic day, a moment in four years. The 'day' is a real day (out of the many) I spent in the field but it is a day I also construct in relation to my previous arguments and to research data that has been spread over three and a half years. It is in this chapter that I attempt to bring together the different personal structures and structurations I identify in my informants lives in one argument. That is, it is through situated and lived experience I highlight the discontinuities and continuities across generations; the importance of understanding the body as a mode of understanding social relations and in particular the notion of unexplainable anger as a route into seeing 'affect' and its value in a contemporary political economy of emotions; the embededness of violence in early working class socialisation; the continuing relevance and non-relevance of class and gender as explanatory vehicles; and the different ways in which the men I have 'worked' with have found themselves and are found in twenty first century Scotland.

## 2 Defining Violence

The general aim of this chapter is to expand on the core theme of violence identified in the introduction. To do this it is my intention to examine the different meanings and definitions of violence and how I thought about and used these sociologically: what might be referred to as paying attention to the '*force of circumstances*'. Although I mention the word definition it is not my aim to reduce a short discussion of what violence is and can come to mean to the level of bullet points. I am aware that definitions can be self-serving and can introduce a level of detail that is often only of use to the speciality at hand. This is often an excuse for putting on the blinkers when it comes to the emergence of violence and the '*problem*' of violence. Nevertheless, my purpose and rational is to engage with the phenomenon of violence and how it is experienced. To this extent a level of defining is necessary.

This opening up of violence to its different meanings and contexts, to *what it means to know and to talk about violence* is necessary because while violence can be *felt* as violence it is often not *recognised* as violence. On a more primordial level, of course, it seems that everyone knows what violence is and does. In this sense, as laughable as it sounds, I want to know what is violence? What does it mean?<sup>31</sup> How do we know it and under what circumstances does

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<sup>31</sup> As an aside, see literature on Dispensationalism and its links with American political elites- the belief in a coming Armageddon and those who would be saved (Scott, Internet). Does violence of thought operate on this scale? There is a reason and a parallel here in that in identifying violence with religion and apocalyptic visions I see a correspondence with the meanings of apocalypse and the sociological '*meaning*' of living a life marked by violence and how '*future horizons*' can be recognised and worked with. Apocalypse can mean *to open up* and to make visible the truth, to show; it is a statement of absolute violence and a revelation through violence. Violence, from here, can reveal meaning and show truth just as it destroys that meaning and truth. That there is potential violence in a particular vision of a particular future is perhaps one of the fundamental psychological issues that orientate strategies towards that future. It brings discussions of space, place, economy and our understanding of action and human being itself, back to everyday sociological realities and how people '*entertain*' and are '*entertained*' by these realities. In Richard's case, the '*livin wi extremes*' is a state of mind he wanted to leave. He was conscious of his decision in retrospect. Was he '*conscious*' of that decision at that moment in time. Indeed, as will be seen later, consciousness and differentiation of action in relation to consciousness is one area that



behaviour or a phenomena come to be understood as violence- *when* and *where* and by *whom* (in accordance with the Oxford definition) is an action (or lack of action) experienced as harmful and as violating? Indeed, how is this violation made known, if at all? What does violence do, what is its *function*?<sup>32</sup> What can the character and form of violence reveal to us about culture and society? In the fuzz of writing it took a visit from two well preserved Mormons to remind me that religion and violence are not unfamiliar with each other, indeed, both forming a 'special' bond in the bigotry and sectarianism that ties many Glasgow Rangers fans to their Celtic footballing cousins.

In order to approach these different meanings of violence I will ask how violence has been defined and theorised, how it has been described and explained (and how this has influenced responses to violence). In the following chapter this abstract discussion will then make way for a discussion about what violence *is* for specific individuals and how this can be understood in a way that explicates the full meaning and heat of that violence for those individuals (and

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sociological work can capture the 'political ontology' of writers. In the talk of other informants I have heard and felt the anger of being stuck in the moment as the future and heard the ending of not only their future but of everyone else's future; again, if taken as indicative of only a particular social or individual psychology this would stand as evidence of an 'immaturity of emotional intelligence'. Taken as a politics and as a sociological and relational reality, however, it thus becomes possible to understand the reasoning behind a threat such as 'all take as many wi me as a kin'. The personal violent apocalypse is seen as something that should be shared and imitation as a founding feature in the art of human life is found in these sociological expressions.

<sup>32</sup> This is less to do with only seeing cause and effect than it is more to do with the idea of the function of violence as closely related to its legitimacy and its representation and how these representations work, to what Michael Taussig refers to as the 'language of flowers' (1996). It attends to what comes to be known as violence and it attends to the use of the word 'violence' and the contexts it is used and justified. How the use of the word itself (and its euphemisms) has a function, as both a means in itself and as a means to an end. Elias argues the same thing in relation to the idea of 'civilisation', that is, that it came to be used and understood as an expression of superiority and a progression away from nature; initially within Western society and between the upper and lower classes; and then 'of Western nations as a whole in relation to peoples in other parts of the world whom they had conquered, colonized or otherwise come to dominate' (Dunning and Mennell, 1996, pxiv). The point is that like this function of 'civilisation', the use of violence must always be understood in social and historical context, and always relationally. If this is not done there will only ever be one side of the story- the 'celebration of alienation' on the one hand and Dr Pangloss on the other, the 'me-and-mine' over 'you and yours'- that will be heard, there will in effect be no understanding of the processes and power relations that are involved when people come to identify qualitative difference between each other and what those differences come to mean socially and psychologically. Civilisation was used to both defeat and demonise those it had conquered while



for me) in a specific place and time (Reality is rapidly becoming DVD compatible with freeze frame a special bonus for interested researchers).<sup>33</sup> In this sense, a grounding of violence is achieved: the 'being' of violence is thus, of course, always a specific one, bound in place and time. This final point is to clarify why it is important to engage with violence that is, for whatever reason, no longer experienced as an act that can be addressed through law and it is this I will turn to in my ethnographic chapter.<sup>34</sup>

## 2.1 *Violence and Definitions of Violence as a Key to Social Relations*

First, my decision to research violence is not only, as one man put it, because '*its all I have known*' (it isn't all I have known) but because I have come to sense (as an apprentice sociologist/an apprenticeship in writing) that there is a close relationship between the embodied self and society and that the character and prevalence of physical interpersonal violence is one way of understanding the complexity of social reality and social being, of understanding why things happen as they do.<sup>35</sup> Indeed, like ill, dead, super fit or shaped bodies<sup>36</sup>, a focus on violence may also be an exceptional way of thinking the social body, of rendering in text the manner in which social practices and relations get inside 'us' or, to put it

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simultaneously glorifying and solidifying the bases of collective action from whence it emerged: violence in word and act can be seen similarly.

<sup>33</sup> In referring to the 'Essence of Neo-Liberalism' Bourdieu draws attention to how this 'strong discourse' 'tends on the whole to favour severing the economy from social realities and thereby constructing, in reality, an economic system conforming to its description in pure theory... this theory, that is desocialised and dehistoricised at its roots has, today more than ever, the means of making itself true and empirically verifiable' (1998). Thus, unreflexive theories of social science can indeed *make* reality in their own image. What Bourdieu is identifying is the separation of time, power and praxis from social context- how history is often taken as either a 'pre-given reality' or as an 'a priori framework for every historical process' (1990, p206). For example, a sociological concept like the double hermeneutic is in this sense a generalisation of a particular social experience: it evidences what Ricoeur (1985) denies in his philosophy, that is, that 'we are not capable of producing a concept of time that is at once cosmological, biological, historical and individual'.

<sup>34</sup> Issues concerning 'grassing' and the experience of violence as normal are taken up more fully later.

<sup>35</sup> Young Tam mentioned how much violence has been a feature of his life when in drunken conversation about his intentions towards anyone who has not respected him in the past I had asked if we could talk about something else. He stood up in exasperation and bellowed this was all he knows.



in a less intentional way, the forms that our social bodies take on in everyday practices and life.

Indeed, the word intentional is key here. On the one hand it seems straightforward to utilize a concept that is rooted in an understanding of violence as primarily an interpersonal problem (Bradby, 1996, p5). Violence is after all an attack on the person, it is an attempt to diminish the person. But do we leave our explanations of violence as physical violence on this level? While physical interpersonal violence *is* the original motivation at the core of this thesis the reasons for this motivation have always been less than clear to me. In rational retrospect, the topic of violence came ‘naturally’ to me as an object of academic inquiry in an environment where there was literally nothing else I could think about to say when asked ‘what is the topic of your dissertation’ (undergraduate level). This immediacy, then, I now see as my sociological relationship to sociology, and so an encounter with my own social structuration via the field of sociology and social science.<sup>37</sup>

Violence or what is now experienced as the ‘depressing gumph’ has a heavy presence in my memories and I wanted to make sense of it in a way that did not reduce lived experience to what could be said about intentions at any moment in time. From here, I could see how physical violence, with its attendant anxiety, rewards, its risk and experience of injury, its implicit intensity of affect and its forcefulness is perhaps a place where we can decipher and make visible the ‘*thousand complicitous ties*’ (Wacquant, 2003, p1) that are our ‘*relation of*

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<sup>36</sup> When a person is asleep or dead what animates their being is gone. The social body is at peace and its animations are silent.

<sup>37</sup> That is, rather than undertaking a dissertation on policy I have to instantiate a relationship to the sociological market based on what I know, that is experience. This ‘nothing’, that is, it is not represented but has to be justified, is one area of working class Funding and education opened up a new dictionary and vocabulary to talk

*presence to the world, and being in the world, in the sense of belonging to the world, being possessed by it, in which neither the agent nor the object is posited as such* (Bourdieu, 2000, p141, cited in Wacquant, 2003, p1).

My motivation is that 'we' have to try and understand people and what 'we' do in 'our' world as part of 'our' society, what people do to themselves, to others, indeed, how we perceive and *appreciate* 'others' and the world that we live in. This is then an engagement with what comes to be experienced as culture and what comes to be experienced as social structure. It is about looking at the relations within people/places and between people/places. It is looking at how violence and our responses to it reveal something about the very nature of the social order we live in (Bograd, 1988; Arendt, 1970).

In this sense, my 'concept' of violence, as it is made to 'fit' in my construction of a reality and if it is to be faithful to this 'reality', should be an interpretation open for assessment from both 'natives' and interested but partial observers. It should be because working class academic work must be able to produce something that has some form of intellectual benefit for working class people. Thus, a very general definition of violence (a general category of action) is not only an easy place to start before attending to particularities, it is a prerequisite.<sup>38</sup> From here, working with and within a dominated discourse can stand as evidence of my own cultural and intellectual work in this specific area. Then we can begin by attending to the specific and

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about what is meant by violence. In this case, that also means a discussion of violence in its symbolic and structural forms, and to this I was late to discover the importance of Pierre Bourdieu's work.

<sup>38</sup> Although violence will often be analysed as having a logic of its own I do not 'delude' myself into supposing violence to be a distinct system or something that can be defined or captured in itself. There are always concrete and preliminary conditions from which violence emerges. Moreover, the multiplicity of forms and uses of violence seems to imply that it would be accurate to define violence as more of a capacity than an innate thing, something that becomes, its expression and actuality an indication of conditions favourable to its emergence. Indeed, perhaps violence has to be thought of in its effects, in what it does rather than what it is.



carnal experience of what violence is and means in a particular context, and indeed what is its range of action and effects in other areas of life.<sup>39</sup>

Like the concept of 'crime', not only are there are a wide range of actions that *come to be* defined as violent, it might seem as if violence and aggression are ever presents in human societies- the 'intra specific aggression' of humanity alongside our capacity to be reasonable about it. Indeed, from a particular perspective, it is difficult to believe or imagine how contemporary society (as a totality, as a conceptualised process of modernity) could function as 'normal' without, if not violence, then aggression, destruction and planned *obsolescence* of both people and things (Marcuse, 1964).

Moreover, like power, violence seems to be inscribed in the very operations of society:

aggression will be a valued commodity in a society that openly advocates a social Darwinism,

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<sup>39</sup> Again, the 'range of action' and 'effects' of violence are dependent on what is taken as violence in the first place. For example, Bourdieu's concept of symbolic violence enables a much larger range of actions and relations to be defined as harmful and violating than say explicit physical or verbal violence. This is the core of much contemporary empirical research into differentials in health and mortality rates between people defined according to class and status categories (for example, see Wilkinson, 1999). Indeed, the concept of symbolic violence implies that there is such a thing as social structures and that social relations are central to the reproduction of class differentials. Here there is little blood and guts, or visible and audible threats. The 'causes' and 'effects' of violence are thus encountered as more widespread and predominant. Indeed, it is in the symbolic realm that both domination and freedom are found. From here we encounter a paradox; the concept of symbolic violence complicates our understanding of what violence is and yet at the same time simplifies it. It directs our attention to the unsignified processes and routes that violence can flow, and to how violence is experienced, its effects on and in the body (Charlesworth, 2000). Again, this is perhaps the importance of attending to the body as the bio political subject in contemporary times. The aspect was related to my affinity towards ideas of class and habitus as having an enduring relation to being, and in particular, one that may be formed natal, and indeed pre-natally (Barker, 1998). This offers a way into understanding the feedback of the social onto the biological (for example, see Barker (1998) and Dhalgren and Whitehead (1991) on health inequalities and class relations). This is the naturalisation of socially created differences (Scambler, 2001) for a discussion of biological and environmental factors and health inequalities in and through time.

Thus, when (symbolic) violence becomes a predominant feature of everyday life and of social relations, things can become *visibly* simplified: all is sensitised toward the 'unconditional annihilation of opposing forces by unconditional means'. What is then seen is 'devastation' and the desertification of thoughtfulness and care for being (Heidegger 1962). Haylett (2001, p16) has asked these fundamentally sociological questions in relation to the state's contemporary project of multicultural modernisation: 'In these offensives, poor whites function as ciphers for the offloading of a culturally shameful and burdensome whiteness, whilst the symbolic and material violence of that process, pitched both against class identities and against means of subsistence, remains largely unspoken'.



a social that is reduced to the economic, and a concept of the economic that is reduced to market activity (Levitas, 1998); explicitly in jails and prisons (and the massive rise of prison populations, the use of necessary force, implicitly in its organisation and tendencies, what Marcuse referred to as the '*psychological habituation of war*'), the very idea and practical formation of the nation-state (Arendt, 1969; Elias, 1996; Giddens, 1995); the massive amounts of money spent on weapons and training people to be weapons to themselves and others in peace time and war<sup>40</sup>; the antagonistic, exploitative and rewarding character of capitalist relations and the existence and co-proximity of wealth and health with poverty and disease; and the rise of psychosocial disease alongside the psychiatric pharmaceutical industries that emerge to account and 'cure' them chemically. As Erich Fromm put it, it is a society which in its very *normality* can be characterised as 'objectively insane', its abiding feature being its irrationality.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> See Messner (1997) for an account of the *male* body as weapon, that is, an understanding of self that finds meaning in the use of the body in physical contests. Recent anthropological work has argued that warfare has existed throughout human history and is not a product of civilisation (Keeley, 1996).

<sup>41</sup> It is not my aim to follow that long tradition of drawing an association between violent acts and mental health or violence and irrationality. Indeed, Gouldner's (1967, p143) point that violence can also be seen as a moment when the limits of issues are clarified and marked is not only a reminder that violence is not always inimical to rationality (indeed, the 'rational violence' of the 'state' the clearest example); that is, that violence *can be understood* as a rational response to perceived threat or transgression of norms: it is a reminder that violence is both 'instrumental' and 'expressive' and that indeed such a consciously rational distinction is arbitrary when the 'moment' is appreciated in its immediacy and embodied intentionality. Tam's urge to climb over the table and punch a social worker in the face as he '*spouted aw the lingo*' and referred him to the fact that '*this sort of thing should not exist in the year 2003*' was motivated by Tam's perception that he had been '*well and truly kicked in the bollocks*' and was constrained in responding to this kicking in the way he knew best. Of course, it is also a commentary on professionals and their points of contact with reality and the 'gap' between those forms and lived reality. Perhaps, 'minding the gap' is where understanding and explanation is found. In Scotland, suicide rates amongst young men have risen by 75% since 1970 (Scottish Executive, 2002). This figure represents those who have been *successful*, that is, those who have shown agency. When female and male attempts at suicide are compared females are less successful. Of course, this asks when does a suicide attempt begin. Is suicide an 'acute' response to circumstances? This is a huge increase in the number of people who find death easier than the prospect of continued life and indeed there is now a glossy brochure outlining the Scottish Executive's intentions in tackling this figure. Perhaps a key characteristic of these people who long for another shore (Nietzsche) is that the mortality rates for those males in deprivation category seven are 4.1 times higher than rates for males in category one (Brown et al., 2002). Is this statistic to be read as a natural phenomenon vis a vis a wholly substantive and Daily Mail reading of Darwin? Is there some correlation between men's violence to other men and also to themselves? Dewey's generalisation has a particular hook in this case, '*Energy becomes violence when it defeats or frustrates purpose instead of executing or realizing it*' (1939, p489). From this starting position violence is potentially everywhere when human agency cannot find a means to realise purpose. On the end of this hook is the fact that there is often no *long duree* of purpose/intentionality to frustrate- as Durkheim notes there is



On looking for an answer to what the experience of violence is and means I was quickly to discover that an all embracing definition of violence is not to be found: it is a moral and political term that theoretically cannot be contained, classified or categorised. In practice, of course, and because of this 'theoretical ambiguity' violence *is* categorised and classified, its practical limits set in law and its legitimate use defined through the state.<sup>42</sup> Indeed, in Max Weber's classic definition of the state's claim 'to the *monopoly* of the *legitimate* use of physical force in the enforcement of *its* order' (1978, p54) violence is understood as actions that violate that state's containment, order and control. Violence is understood as 'unruly', as illegitimate and as *unauthorised force*. In this formulation the relationship between power and violence is close and binding; in the context of the state, force is an institutionalised and organised expression of state control, violence is *seen* as disorder and the moment that threatens to go beyond itself, indeed does not know itself beyond this moment. In this sense,

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often an objective *social* reason for individual phenomena like suicide and rates of suicide. A similar case can be made for levels of 'violence' and knee jerk reactions that associate violence with a specific phenomenon (for example, video games as wholly negative and as something alien in themselves- see the 'reflexive' furore that the game *Manhunt* generated). The Scottish Executive figures, like most statistics, make invisible just exactly who are killing themselves but do not speculate as to why. Can and should a carnal sociology be able to explicate this 'meaning' or does that carnal point of contact depend on the physics of the sociological field itself? Are 'breakdowns' in communication more than a matter of method? In a sense, it is an engagement with death and death is an engagement with a universal human attribute. It is also an engagement that faces up to the fact that the ethnographic site and people will not necessarily be there after the ethnographer has left (Mann, 1986, p19) and indeed that the relationship between the ethnographic site and the ethnographer may be more enduring than those studied (for example, see Charlesworth, (2004)). Health research has shown that there are clear inequalities in mental and physical health when social class is used as an explanatory variable (Wilkinson 1997). There is an argument and a research project to be made that contemporary 'working class' subjectivity is literally 'unthinkable' because that person 'inhabits a culture that has no representations of [him] and gives no encouragement to exist' (Gilfillan, 1999). Like forms of violence, though, defeat is not simply a recognition of a winner, it can involve the complete reorganisation of what it means to exist. What *brings* or what is brought that contributes men from particular backgrounds to kill themselves in such numbers? Is the socialisation of men like the formation of a paradigm, one that in finding nothing that makes any sense is dealt with in a way that does make sense to the man? Individual Action, then, how it is conceived (and by implication how time and space themselves are understood) is an 'accommodation to a particular structural situation, rather than a rejection of dominant values and lifestyles' (Hobbs, 1997, p808).

<sup>42</sup> Albeit that violence is transposed as 'force'. The privatisation of policing and the military are phenomenon that complicate this classic definition. Penny Green (1990) argues that 'violence' done to ensure that the conditions of capitalist expansion are met is not defined as violence. At the same time that this violence is underplayed she notes how straw enemies (terrorists, strikers, etc) are 'shrouded in violence', a move that legitimates the state's increasing monopolisation and exercise of violence in the name of protection of the public. In social scientific discourse there is a growing recognition that contemporary levels and forms of violence are real problems that are



violence and the scale of its expression (as official statistics) is intimately linked to public visibility and the decisions of those people who work in the state and state agencies.

This moment that threatens to go beyond itself is testimony to the long chains of social and economic processes (processes that create culture) that produced the monopoly of force within the people known as the state. It was the building of these chains that rendered the use of violence legal/illegal. As Elias notes, the state's monopoly on legitimate violence is '*a human invention and a collective one at that*' (Elias, 1996), one that was itself the source of much struggle and bloodshed. People use violence to declare what is violent and what is not and so force communicates force according to an established background of meaning. This established background of meaning is the institutionalising of public value and the long chains of social and economic processes that constrain and shape what is to be engaged with.

This is the ordering power of violence, its ability to found a social-economic and symbolic formation. Of course, this all sounds a bit too functionally precise and reified when approached from the ground up, especially when the executive branches of state force, particularly the police, are encountered more as threat than as resource.<sup>43</sup> It is often those most associated with violence (whether as force or as violence) who are well aware of the contingency and arbitrariness of force: as are those who are victim of violence. The description by one police officer of how he took off his uniform to fight a local who had asked

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consistently under reported and under signified. In this sense, defining what violence is or is not is the ultimate political act.

<sup>43</sup> For Hall and Winlow (2003, p151) the relationship between state *spending* and levels of interpersonal physical violence is unequivocal. He notes that '*between 1950 and 1973... state spending rose from 27.6% to 45% of GDP... a substantial proportion of the state's intervention was focused on maintaining economic stability and social security. It is more than coincidence that, in the same period, rates of murder reached a 600 year low in Britain, less than one per 100, 00, a decline from between 20 and 40% per 100, 000 in the 14<sup>th</sup> Century*'. As will be seen in relation to 'grassing' and the changing context of 'grassing' local relations with the police are often dependent on local resources and the direction of state spending.



him to remove his emperor's clothing seemed to make sense of how violence leaks out of force as a political category and how *'every form of control of violence implies the threat of violence and a certain degree of the use of violence'* (Van Benthem van den Bergh, 1980, p10-11, cited in Fletcher, 1997, p52).

However, to what extent is it enough to identify the state's executive sensitive organs for violence in solely or even primarily in the police and the military (methodological rungs on the ladder, intermediate institutions)? Indeed, to what extent are the police seen as out with the gambit of local understanding? In a local community meeting I sat down with over two hundred other local people and listened as they brought their concerns over the level of youths fighting on the streets. Indeed, I had watched from my own flat window a few weeks previous as one teenager ran up the middle of the road being chased by another brandishing what looked like something a butcher would use to cut meat and bone. My downstairs neighbour had been stabbed in the shoulder the week before. There had been two murders (victim and murderers both teenagers) in the last two month. I had listened on the phone to a friend describe in taut tones how over twenty teenagers had walked the two storey to his flat and sat outside his front door laughing and shouting. He is a sixteen stone man who didn't know what to do. He felt he couldn't phone the police. Twenty minutes previous he had had to manhandle one of them out of his close. It was the same person who had set his close ablaze three months previous. He didn't feel at home in his own flat and indeed has resorted to staying with his parents at the weekend. It as if the lines of communication between youths and adults are or have been cut. Have the informal processes of understanding and control changed and are the police now more understood as a public resource in a place where social relations have

become privatized? Is it the case that, in true civilizing fashion '*violence has become soft, invisible*' (Bourdieu and Eagleton, 1992, p115).<sup>44</sup>

## 2.2 *Towards Understanding the Everyday Presence of Violence*

If you look hard enough violence can be found in most places. It is an ever present absence. It does not just appear quark-like, here one moment and gone the next. Like the concrete individual, actual violence always and already presupposes a form of life, already presupposes a social, cultural and economic formation. In Glasgow, we find violence and the conditions for its emergence have already been cultivated. These conditions, though, are not reducible to physical violence itself, to a culture of violence (although violence as something in itself is important). The conditions are also the structural and symbolic violence of everyday life (Blau and Blau, 1982, p114) and how these conditions are transposed, 'registered' and cashed in.<sup>45</sup> In this sense violence has to be seen as a behaviour along a continuum and involves verbal, psychological, sexual, physical and emotional abuses of power at individual, group and structural levels. This is the 'basic common character' (Kelly, 1987, p48) of violence: how it is

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<sup>44</sup> For example, see Wacquant's (1999) work on the convergence between the right and left hand of the state in relation to populations identified as problematic. Of course, Bourdieu and Eagleton's point is that the 'soft, invisible' violence of symbolic violence and rationalization is that it is transposed across social relations into a more visible 'language'.

<sup>45</sup> Perhaps some clarification is needed here. The term 'structural violence' is one that writers like Farmer (2003: 2004) have drawn upon and developed to shed light on the relations between what can happen in an everyday life and the wider historical and political processes that come to be identified in the emergence of particular phenomenon. In Farmer's case he reveals the logic that exists between how individuals experience particular diseases and the macrostructural forces that are implicated in their evolution and emergence. As Wacquant (2004, p3) indicates, though, despite the strength of the concept in linking micro phenomenon with macro structures, it is one that cannot by itself unpack the different and changing details of personal suffering and relations to suffering. In sum, 'structural violence' is unable to distinguish the '*various species of violence and different structures of domination so as to trace the changing links between violence and difference, rather than merging them into one catch-all category liable to generate more moral heat than analytical light*'. In a sense this is the argument made by writers who have focused on early socialisation and the different access to masculine resources available for particular groups of men to 'do' their gender (Messerschmidt, 1993; Meidzian, 1991). Again, the tension is found in the explanatory impetus, that is, to what extent can a sociology use or work with micro data to 'explain' or 'understand' macro phenomenon like patterns of male violence?



continous and related rather than atomized: it is as one of my informants puts it, '*Something which saps your spirit*' (Sean Collins, Conversation in Pub, May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2002).

The more I looked the more violence I saw and heard about. Ironically, as far as observation is concerned, it wasn't as much the physical interpersonal violence I *saw* (the explicit motivation for my research in the first place), it was the violence of the everyday impregnated in people's bodies (the 'litany of morbid symptoms' as Wacquant (1999, p132) describes it): the structural and symbolic violence of unemployment and poverty; the violence that is the catastrophic effects of alcohol and drug addiction (non-prescribed and prescribed) and its effects on addicts and those around them<sup>46</sup>; the violence of the utterly boring and mundane ('*most of them are either deid or livin horrible lives noo*')<sup>47</sup>; and indeed, the violence of threatened and imagined physical violence I brought to the surface in interviews (*what would you do?*) and in just 'hanging around'. I saw in many people's faces both their escape and their 'participation in the collective that is greater than the individual' (Radcliffe-Brown, 1964, p103), what might be termed the physiological and biological effects of the invisible social relations of late capitalism (Dickens, 2001).<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> The extent of rehab provision and the scale of the drugs and drink addiction in Easterhouse is being addressed through the building of a number of points of contact with addiction services. Indeed, the new cultural campus offers detoxification courses alongside its introduction to computers and hairdressing skills. The present (2003) situation is summed up by one woman's situation. In waiting for a place to become available she was advised *to keep drinking*: the extent of her withdrawal fits were so severe that she was effectively self medicating until medical provision could become available.

<sup>47</sup> This is a very different understanding of cultural capital found for example in Winlow's (2001) account of '*The Cultural Millionaire*'. In the course of my research I observed how in some cases 'cultural capital' is passed on from father to son, an unwritten inheritance, in a totally destructive masculine form. It is a form that in relation to masculinity 'one begins to suspect that the torturer is also the victim... he is also mastered by masculine domination' (Bourdieu, 1990, p23).

<sup>48</sup> 'there is a continuing recognition of the overwhelming impact of material and structural forces on the major causes of mortality, morbidity and general unhappiness in western society' (Wilkinson and Marmot, 2001, p1235) risks are distributed by material forces- even if they are 'socially constructed'- and this distribution is systematically unequal' (Williams and Popay 2001, p26). 32% of adults in Easterhouse are officially sick.



I *heard* about plenty of violence, death and everyday struggles to cope. The sheer number of ‘casualties’ over the course of my research has been staggering. But it hasn’t been the numbers, the statistics themselves that depress. It is the manner of the casualties and the intensity of the numbers in an ethnography. It is being able to put a face and a feeling to the ‘statistic’.<sup>49</sup> Premature deaths from alcohol abuse, heroin overdoses, burst ulcers, choking on vomit, cancer, heart disease, murder, poisoning, stabbings, slashings, beatings, threats, and the general visibility of physical and mental illness.<sup>50</sup>

I have a strong ‘fatalistic’ sense that part of this is expected and it reminds me why I have come to violence and habitus, reflexivity and field to understand living in ‘place’ and moving from place. It is because the argument is that the closeness of both symbolic and physical violence are fundamental aspects of contemporary ‘working class’ existence that are engaged with, endured and used. It is a reminder that just like phenomenologies of place have tended to emphasize what is positive, ‘*attachment to place can also be equally one of fear, disgust or sadness*’ (Relph, 1976; Charlesworth, 2000).

Much of the gossip or events that had happened I would get to hear about them, here are a few examples, it is like a shopping list, ‘*Aye, did ye hear wee Gerry died last week... that wis him 29*’ (Billy, In his house, July, 2002); ‘*Gordon Cotton’s up for the murder*’; ‘*Fun ‘im deid in*

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<sup>49</sup> Conversely, in describing his living conditions as under siege, Bob Marjuper referred to his own situation as akin to being turned into a statistic. His reasoning is his bewilderment at the lack of understanding of the conditions and basic level of violence and humiliation that he perceives with regard to the local male and female youth.

<sup>50</sup> From one perspective, Hall argues that there are ‘bodies’ of people who, generally excised from any ‘positive or constructive engagement with the flows and forces of contemporary global Capitalism’, live in ‘microclimates of disaster’. These ‘bodies’ are not exactly communities, though they have geographical locations; they can perhaps be more adequately described as ‘habitus-areas’ (Hall, 1997; Bourdieu, 1977, 1984). On a general level, the transformation of employment patterns and opportunities, de-industrialization, disappearing working class reality and increasing population shifts may contribute to increased incidence of violence within densely populated urban areas.



*his bed... liver wis fucked* (Stanley, In his house talking about Mark, age 40, Nov 2002); *'The body wis lyin there uncovered fur two 'oors'* (Velma, In her house talking about murder outside her front door on New Years eve, Jan 1<sup>st</sup>, 2003); *'he's no the full shilling noo... she's lost the plot as well'* (Bobby, In his house, July, 2002); *'... a thote he hud killed 'im'* (Loaney, Conversation in Pub, March, 2002); *'that's him died a naw, choked oan his ane vomit'* (Raymond, March, 2003); *'brain tumour at 32, lovely guy as well; 'the dafty bastard hud five knives oan 'im. He wis mare likely tae stab himself'* (Fiona describing Tommy Vercetti); *'she slashed her wrists up the way, she meant it'* (Fred, talking about Mary, age 29); *'am just sittin starin at the waus, a don't know whit it is'* (Linda, age 30); *'they fun her deid wi the weans. She hud been lyin there fur two days'; 'he tried tae hing himsel'* (Fred talking about eleven year old boy). As 'data' for research into violence itself each of these conversations took place as part of everyday talk. They are said while doing the dishes, changing a nappy, watching the TV, eating dinner. They are words from a particular vantage point of working class reality that seem to leave a mouth and enter a pre-recorded atmosphere.

It was *these* observations, not just observations, it was and is the living with them and through them, the end of them, that made me realise I could not restrict my definition of violence to one that made sense only in the *moment* of physical interpersonal violence. What was becoming an important consideration in my research was everything that made up a life in a particular social space and time: and how the experience of space and time could come to feel warped. As far as physical interpersonal violence is concerned I saw the violent links between generations become both intensified and broken. Violence can be seen in the living of time if time is encountered as an element of how life is lived, as a structure in life itself, as a relationship to being. Textual representations of life are often 'lifeless' in that this fourth dimension is missed. As will be seen, even from a focus on the body itself, its movement and



emotion, its reason in violence, understanding was always being taken away from the moment, away even from the anger and rage of interpersonal conflict. Indeed, anger, an anger that never made it into words, or more precisely, never made it into conceptual expression was always simmering beneath the surface when the conversation turned to feelings and trying to explain them. *'Just feeling angry aw the time... a don't know why'... 'a turned intae a bit of a nutter' ... 'he's a real psycho noo'... 'if am gawn am takin as many wi me as a can'*. It is as if there is an unquantifiable 'pressure' involved in existence and the moment is all that is available for purchase psychologically.<sup>51</sup>

Violence then is complex, its range of application so wide as to be on the one hand almost without meaning, and on the other to *suffer* from a surfeit of meanings (Khan, 1981, p181; Fletcher, 1997, p47). The word suffer is heuristic here. What Khan wants us to think about is

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<sup>51</sup> This feeling of anger is amorphous yet I think specific in its explanation. It attends to what Bourdieu has characterised as the 'conservation of violence'; that is, the very generality of violence in everyday life as a feature of psychosocial relations. On the one hand, we have the real face to face ad sensum reality of a situated life. On the other hand we find the experience of this situatedness in its encounter with other fields. From here, levels of violence, like the subtleties of everyday interactions within fields and across fields, are actually subtleties in forms of expression. This is the 'soft' violence of a modern legal and public life that is here seen to generate anger (Bourdieu and Eagleton, 1992). In effect, violence is not recognised as violence but it still experienced as violating, as a 'kick in the baws.'

This idea of 'living in the moment' is a reference to the accumulation of moments and how time itself becomes an aspect of working class being, what Bourdieu theorises as a mood of fatalism (*amor fati*) and what Gilfillan (1999, p153) describes as 'a structuring reality structuring every structuring relation'. It is evidenced in George's reflections that *'Deep doon the noo, it's a bit perverse tae put yerself through that. A remember me an ma brothers always talking aboot stuff, lit, it happens tae us all man, when a grow up am gonny get stabbed, a know whit's gonny happen. An a just couldnay take that line, ye know, youv'e just gote tae ride wi the punches man, ye huv this sort a lifestyle that ye expect this tae happen, a know this is gonny happen an a don't care'*. In a study of the psychosocial effects of a natural disaster on the population of a small community Hocking (1970) states that *'as the degree of stress becomes more severe, an increasing proportion of individuals break down, so that if the stress is sufficiently intense, virtually all people will develop what would be, in an everyday setting, neurotic symptoms'* (p545, cited in Gleser et al 1981, p150). These 'neurotic symptoms' are perhaps what Gilfillan describes as 'hysterical social relations; that is, the naturalising and the normalising of a rapid change in social and economic relations and conditions. This 'hysteresis' is what Bourdieu (1990) theorises as a stable and 'normal' expression of class relations that is intensified in periods of intense change. It is a cultural 'lag' that enables those who are theorised to recognise the institutional basis of theory and reason. This 'lag' is something that anyone familiar with the internet or online computer gaming/networking/communication will recognise as technological and the price associated with not having any lag and having a good ping. That is, that the access to technology and to the monetary resources that 'disappear' lag invariably disappear that relation in terms of 'success'. Of course, this disappearance of access to a lag free universe is always relational and because of this there are always opportunities to 'make the most of what one has'.



how our understanding (if that is the aim) of what someone *does* can be destroyed of its meaning and significance (thus, its effect on reality?) by wrenching it from the context in which that act emerged- it asks us to be *specific* about how violence is used and emerges and how its emergence can become something in itself<sup>52</sup>.

But what is meant, what is implied and what are the consequences, of an enquiry aimed at getting to the meaning of violence within a specific *context*? Can we always be specific about something as complex as violence? Again, this seems a banal excuse to go chasing off after definitional debates while leaving the practicalities of writing and research on the methodological back burner- context is after all 'self evident' and has been one of the central theoretical and methodological concepts in social anthropology/research for decades (Dilley, 1999, p1).

This is why it is 'confusing and unproductive' to begin by basing a discussion of violence within a framework that presumes 'we all know what violence means' (McLintock, 1974, p132; Hearn, 1998). There is always the possibility that the meaning of violence will have no meaning when encountered from a particular understanding of what context actually is: context is always relative. Why something happened can seem to be without *any* reason. As will be seen, this is evident when we come to look at descriptions of 'mindless' or anonymous violence.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Rose mentions that '*existence [is] robbed of weight, its gravity, when it is deprived of its agon*' (1995, p98).

<sup>53</sup> Indeed, it is this lack of not only political meaning but of intelligibility which Horne and Hall (1995, p11) describe as an 'irredeemably negative form of violence: pointless, without object, without even resentment'. From the perspective of the subject there is the sense of 'I don't give a fuck'. However, perhaps this notion of emptiness, pointlessness and meaninglessness, what has been described from a different perspective as 'divesting the use and deployment of violence from moral calculus' can be met head on. Perhaps there is both reasoning

The term violence, then, is always a word and a practice infused with varying degrees of power. It is a concept that is never unmediated (Morgan, 1992, p14). As has been noted, how it is acted out, talked about, represented, reported on and so on is often a political and contextual issue.<sup>54</sup> In this sense, there is often a particular interest in defining violence and the causes of violence in a particular way.<sup>55</sup> This manifestation of what violence is and how it can be explained (often justified) are often moments when relations of power (and a will to power) become visible. For example, there are many definitions of violence that are used to create a particular understanding based within a particular discipline or more general 'way of life'. So, we have definitions that point to violence being understood from the perspective of military and political conflict, health/epidemiology, public policy, victimology, criminal justice, sociological, gender, racism and so on.<sup>56</sup>

In other words, there is an interest in defining violence as one thing rather than another: indeed, a definition of violence can influence the production of what actually comes to be *seen* as violence and what the expression of violence will entail. From a legal perspective, it was not that long ago that an incident involving a man beating his wife in the safety of her own home was labelled a 'domestic' and more or less accepted as a given<sup>57</sup>. Thus, what violence *is* and what violence is *not* is never fixed or even more basically, it might not even be recognised as such. Recognition of an act as violence can thus depend on political activity to make what

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and both attachment and generation of 'values' in mindless violence. Is this a condition of resentment or a state of realistic self awareness, a state in which the unsociable is sociality?

<sup>54</sup> In this sense, attitude surveys will have a tendency to generate data that has its focus on the abstract and symbolic aspect of what violence is or means. It will bring with it the answers it seeks in its questions.

<sup>55</sup> Indeed, violence and explanations of violence are infused with fundamental arguments about free will and cause.

<sup>56</sup> Glasser (1998, cited in Ray, 2000, p145) suggests that this diversity of takes on violence is indicative of the multidisciplinary approach that would be needed if a comprehensive theory of violence was possible. But would such a theory provide understanding? Is such a theory possible?

<sup>57</sup> A throwback to the rule of thumb. Men's violence against women as an expression of and instrumental towards gaining '*propriety over women and the 'right' to sexual and domestic services from women*' (Stanko, 1994, p42).



was unseen seen and so to become an element of public discourse on a political level. This political activity of representation is only one aspect of how violence is 'known'.

This contextualising or identifying the level of analysis that a phenomenon will be approached from can be understood as feeding back into how the phenomenon comes to be defined and so experienced. For example, Fisher (2002) outlines three general fields where representations of violent *crime* are constructed in accordance with implicit/explicit particular ideas of social action: Law, social control and cultural formation. In other words, what does it mean to research and to talk about violence in a particular way and from a particular perspective? Who is the research for, who will recognise what it has to say and why? Who will benefit? What makes an account of reality acceptable as real within a particular field? How is the phenomenon/person known and what does this knowing tell us about those who know? In an important sense, then, these qualifications not only ask researchers to situate their own understandings in the field of power from which they are constructed to be intelligible, they ask them to go beyond that field, to construct a reality that is at least thinkable.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> For example, Ray (2000, p147) describes how Giddens (1995) discusses violence only in terms of military power and the monopoly of violence in the nation state (with its civilising assumption). Ray suggests that such a focus *cannot see* either the everyday violence of 'pacified' societies nor the way in which the violence which contrived to bring about the emergence of the nation state are sustained in symbolic values like national identity. When national identity, or indeed, a notion of identity is encountered as a form of being or habitus that does not operate on a politics of nationality or representation but is a form of living that 'finds' reality in the everyday conditions of life then it becomes possible to see how those very representations can have such power. Indeed, what becomes apparent here is the extent to which symbolic values are central to the reproduction of class values and the class system. Similarly, what is also apparent from this example, though, is that the choice of research object and method of investigation is itself often dependant on the status position a person holds within the hierarchy of the social scientific field in a specific historical space and time. As Duster notes, methods themselves are stratified and contain within them their own 'ideologies' (2003, p166)- meaningful access to reality does not depend on a method to 'succeed', it depends on your position within social and economic relations and your ability to interpret and present an account that such a reality will not 'kick the fuck out of'.

At a time when the planet has literally opened up as a space of opportunity 'the lure of the local' can easily be understood as simply a matter of perspective, and a conservative perspective at that. The local has its academic corollary with the actor, the moment, the body, emotion, like the global has its affiliations to the structure, the long duree, the mind and reason. Positive associations are already identified in the latter as defining moments in the forward thrust of the actor in biography and history. The body and emotion is negated in the name of reason because reason is asked to bracket and endure the moment, to look beyond the moment and the body itself. Quite



To explain what violence means and how violence is experienced is to ask questions about historical context and about the role of *social* relations and power in relativising not only knowledge but states of being and states of non-being. There is something torturous and blind in assigning power to acts of violence when that violence is fundamental inequality and differential access to material and representational resources. While it may be the case that everything is, in some sense or another, caught up in the 'circulations of power' this in and by itself tells us nothing about living with or without what is defined as power, neither does it tell us about living in the dynamic of power, of being dominated or refusing this domination.

From a sociological point of view, there seems to be a primary importance in attending to the context (in its widest sense) and the interests and power of those involved in what comes to be understood as violence as well as the points of view of those who are subject to this violence. This is a provocative point of view in that it can be seen to suspend moral judgement, if only to then recognise the possible material and cultural basis upon which such 'moral sentiments' might emerge and coagulate as a 'stake' in the generation of knowledge. For example, how many people can or would want to think of the Das Reich SS Division (with 99 % casualties) and accept that they were *heroes*, albeit criminal ones at the service of a criminal cause?

In this sense my research will explore the definitions of violence that circulate amongst those men I encounter in my research and how these definitions are shaped by their embodied lives and at the same time how these definitions encounter or are defined in themselves in their

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often, the body is simply seen as something that moves from moment to moment in abstract space much like a book from one bibliography to another. There is an argument to be made that knowledge is thus mediated through social relations and the possibility of knowing or enduring those relations close up. For example, to what



relations to power (violently and literally). As will be seen; I encounter a number of 'moments' that reveal how violence is known as a relation to power and how, as Nietzsche commented, those involved in 'illegitimate' violence are aware of what legitimate violence means *as* power.

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extent are their continuities between the way publishing has moved to the level of the global in much the same way 'sociological names' moved from the local, that is Britain post 1979, to develop themselves abroad.

### 3 Methodological Reflections

*'The product, separated from its social conditions of production, changes its meaning and exerts an ideological effect'* (Bourdieu, 1993, p50).

*'Ye've gote tae learn about the wurld aroon ye before ye start understaunin yerself'* (Sean, Interview in my Home, 11<sup>th</sup> Oct 2001).

So as to be able to proceed further towards the empirical study on men and violence, this chapter will expand on a number of methodological issues identified in the introduction and to develop these themes in relation to the construction of the relationship between men and violence. That is, it is to reflect on how and why I situated my research on men and violence in Easterhouse and Glasgow and to show how I construct a sense of both the place and the people I encounter as part of my thesis in and through time. Firstly this involves a number of more, almost technical, explications of the research project conducted, such as the different phases of carrying out a three-year research project (with these different phases of course being interrelated and less of a linear development. Furthermore, a large part of the present chapter will focus on what could be called both the perils and the pearls of this ethnography of place; what ethnography can tell us about the world and so the strength and limitations of the ethnographic method. Again, this narrative is intended to add to the construction of the thesis and at the same time make my own murky motivations less murky (*'defence and security are still large items in the intellectual as well as national budget'*, Marcuse, p167).<sup>59</sup> While starting with such rather personal investments, this chapter at the same times presents the effort to work through what it means to work with embodied knowledge and meanings; to



render (at least partly) transparent the *construction* of representations and power relations within places and with the research process itself.

As has been mentioned, a key factor in situating and fixing this ethnography in place is that on the one hand, there is continual movement and reshaping of people and place: on the other hand, there seems to be a host of familiar trajectories in place. It is for this reason that this methodological work is both a walk through Easterhouse and out with it, to pose some questions on the possibility of knowing, and of the meetings and relations between bodies and the bodies of people living place, moving from place, returning to place and reflecting on place. This abstract concern with bodies and movement from and positioning in social space is thus more than an attempt to describe the changing shape of social relations over the period and how I encountered myself and others in these relations. It is an attempt to engage with reflexivity and the body as a way of knowing people, place and everyday lived life.

This then is more than displaying a method or (although important) finding words for things that have often been lived namelessly.<sup>60</sup> It is also about the process of discovering and actually constituting the '*thicks and thins*' of everyday life that does not denigrate those who inform it or take the easy path into cliché and symbolic violence. This means an engagement with social being that cannot restrict itself to the conscious or to intentional representations but has to get close to this being by actually encountering it in its very conditions of existence, its totality. As Bourdieu notes, '*One cannot really live the belief associated with profoundly different*

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<sup>59</sup> Getting at what Bourdieu (following Neitzche) referred to as *subject substitution*. That is, '*the priest, the church, the apparatchik of every country substitutes his own vision of the world (a vision deformed by his own libido dominandi) for that of the group of which he is supposedly the expression*' (1991b, p214).

<sup>60</sup> Indeed, as Blacking (1977, p4) remarks, '*many things happen to us for which society has no labels*'.



*conditions of existence... still less give others the means of reliving it by the sheer power of discourse'* (1990, p69).

Recognising the fundamental grounding of social being in the conditions in which people exist can enable the researcher to 'rehumanise' and remain critical of what can easily become a discussion of the objective or 'intrinsic qualities' of a place or people who inhabit a place.<sup>61</sup> It becomes easier to understand people as 'historical, practical and generative beings' and it becomes easier to understand people as (in)sensitive and adaptive to their environments in ways that cannot be reduced to some form of utilitarian rationality.<sup>62</sup>

This focus, then, is once more to reiterate the points of contact that are made between the theory and methodology of this ethnographic research and to introduce the research data and the possibility of the data as part of this process. As has been seen, a key element in managing the tension that can exist from according primacy to what respondents say and the primacy accorded to analysing and writing up research with social theory is to re-conceptualise validity in terms of reflexivity or reflexive practice. This dialectical to and fro between the data and

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<sup>61</sup>This fetishism of place (or '*reification of consciousness*' as Lukacs (1923) put it) denies the *interactional* nature of reality and history as but one possibility amongst many.

<sup>62</sup>That is, as Scheper-Hughes (1992) has shown, sometimes this adaptation can involve the internalization of the most aberrant social and economic conditions- they are aberrant because they are understood from a position that has experience of better living conditions (distance can then engender a sense of clarity and objectivity). Paradoxically, from this perspective, individual choice, or agency, is given greater theoretical and practical purchase than the soulless actor of utilitarian rationality- what might be called the '*sadistic potential of a language built on agency*' (Scarry, 1985, p27). In sociological writing there is often an implicit notion that 'agency' must be positive/innovative. Agency in effect is asked to find a 'way out' of any problems the writer finds in reality. Paradoxically, this peculiar tendency is most common in circumstances of grinding and obstinate reality- those situations where fantasy is most likely to emerge. There is no irony, then, in using a quote from an old science fiction novel to get this point across; '*Odd how the human mind, once it became conscious of the unyielding pressure of limits and restrictions, refused to think constructively. There was a lot of loose talk about the indestructibility of the human will, how it strove onward and upward, overcoming all obstacles. But that was just talk, of the most irresponsible kind. Actually the human will to progress was the most delicate mechanism imaginable, and refused to work at all if conditions were not precisely right*' (Clifton and Riley, 1954, p41). Choice, then, in an age of entrepreneurship, is not a taken for granted methodological assumption to be placed



theory is continuous, taking place and being forced at every stage of the research process. The overall purpose of this is not to produce a wholly objective or value free account (objectivity by the back door) '*because qualitative research of this kind does not yield standardised results... reflexivity is not primarily a means of demonstrating the validity of research to an audience.*' Instead, I have engaged with this process as a '*personal strategy by which the researcher can manage the analytical oscillation between observation and theory in a way that is valid to him or herself*' (Wainright, 1997, p8). In the coming chapters I will show that while this movement via the island of reflexive practice is never a straightforward journey it is the continuing spiral of thought and restlessness that the concept introduces and invokes that lends it well to a dynamic notion of social scientific investigation.<sup>63</sup>

At heart, then, this chapter is a struggle with embodied meaning, with understanding and with value (and how such everyday practicalities are often warped when they are searched for meaning). As the authors of the Easterhouse Mosaic put it in 1980 this narrative is concerned not only with a passive description of what is but with active questioning (and so the opening up of new possibilities) of the facts, their emergence and their formation amidst the fundamental transformation of social and economic conditions that characterise contemporary Easterhouse, Glasgow and the United Kingdom as a whole (Taylor, 1999, p10).<sup>64</sup>

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beyond assumption (Holmwood, 1996, p11), choice and what agency means are themselves categories that have to be explained and shown.

<sup>63</sup> For example, see discussion on Hobbs (1993) and his reflections on how he encountered the objectivity of his data through the objectification of him as *representative* of the truth of his data (this chapter). Moreover, the practice of reflexivity is an important methodological tool in that it sensitises the researcher to both the situatedness of what is being studied and to the very process of framing this situatedness as '*life in action ; behaviour changing; people in the process of becoming; groups in the process of formation and transformation*' (Katz, 2002, p71). Quite simply, it is to recognise the 'institutional' basis of thought and how this institutional basis can become a source of reflexive knowledge. As McNay notes this is the sociological rationale for a sociological reflexivity in that '*reflexivity can emerge therefore only from distanciation provoked by the conflict and tension of social forces operating within and across specific fields*' (1999, p10).

<sup>64</sup> The authors of the mosaic describe their aims as 'to improve the physical environment and to critique the social system that created a place of multiple deprivations... to promote imagination and confidence... not passive reflection but active questioning' (from unreferenced leaflet in local library). This idea of 'passive description'



It is with this in mind that the specific aims of the chapter can be addressed by firstly reviewing the key stages in the research process. To do this, the chapter will be divided up into five parts, reflecting the key research stages: (i) selecting and gaining access to the ethnographic site; (ii) getting on in the field or the managing of my relationship with my informants; (iii) data collection and data analysis. Following the fourth section, which discusses specifically the problematic of construction and representing meaning from ethnographical research, the fifth section looks at the writing up stage. Although this organisation of the process might give the impression of linearity and of one stage leading logically onto the other, the reality of the research was necessarily more inter-related, moving back and forward between different stages as it was required to validate and re-evaluate emerging findings.=

In the final section of the chapter I will introduce a few of my key informants to familiarise and prepare the reader for their appearance in the main body of the thesis. I go beyond identifying key demographic/biographic/career features as a means to know them (in at least some small sense) because I recognise that not only is writing and presentation a social form in itself that has to be learned, worked with and used over long periods of time if it is to be successful, it is also a recognition that this form of knowing is social and relational in itself. In this paradoxical sense, I sometimes let the data and its impressions speak for themselves.<sup>65</sup>

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can be interrogated in the manner outlined in that there is no such thing as a passive account. More often than not there is often an unstated politics of identity formation and historical process implicit in such accounts. On the one hand, celebrations of place are often presented as an unproblematic whiggish escape from the cave- perhaps a point that could be used against the metaphor of the phoenix. On the other, there is often a homogenizing and problematising imperative, a point that draws us close to a discussion of the social basis of social inquiry itself, and in particular the manner in which 'professional forces' and writing genres can render data 'invisible and non-existent as textual representation' (Gilfillan, 1999, p68).

<sup>65</sup> Escape from reality is multifaceted. On the one hand, there is the discovery that an academic's paper to be presented at a conference is refused because the language used might offend those present.



Moreover, the data gathered from the interviews and fieldwork is used to show *how* the author constructs these men as men in relation to the thesis and how the author relates to them as other men. This brief focus includes an account of their relationship to place, other men, women and violence itself. Moreover, the data is introduced at this stage to prepare the reader for a sense of how my informants relate to the immediate and local environment and so to impart some of the character of the places that will be visited: in effect, this description is the beginning of my work on what violence is and means. This is an attempt to prevent and complicate a reading of an *already* given and *already* universal '*self as a separate, self sufficient agent*' (Hattey, 2000).<sup>66</sup>

### 3.1 Selecting and Gaining Access: Bringing it All Back home

*'The realisation that I live in an invented place whose only purpose is avoidance and what I seek to avoid, I carry with me always'* (John Burnside).

*'This isnae oot of me. Mibbe livin here isnae a great thing fur me wi aw these bams fuckin fightin an aw that aw the time'* (Richard Longley).

My background of having lived my formative years in an urban housing scheme that has a reputation for notoriety, crime and violence indicates that I may have that partly conscious/unconscious awareness of the values, guides and practices that become part of a

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<sup>66</sup> This is Foucault's critique of criminology and it is also Bourdieu's critique of unreflexive social science in that it is this understanding of the self that generalises the historical and institutional basis for the realisation of reason: it is the scholastic fallacy which has as a consequence that the object of knowledge becomes the 'pure' individual encountered free from all social determinations and as a '*self contained being... divided from other selves... a self protecting, self-controlling entity*' (Hattey, 2000, p9). In effect, everyone else becomes objectified and as lacking according to the intellectualised and institutionalised perspective. As will be seen, this is one reason why I provide a wider and sometimes 'irrelevant' account of who my informants are.



person as they live their everyday life in a particular cultural and socio-economic context. It has been said after all that '*culture speaks itself through each individual's story*' (Rosenwald, 1992, p15). The question is of course, how and in what way does culture speak and indeed what is culture and how does it then come to be known as an individual's story? Indeed, what does it mean to focus on these aspects as a characteristic and of giving meaning to a whole life?<sup>67</sup>

It might thus appear that my 'cultural capital' would stand me in good stead for an ethnographic study in Easterhouse. While this is true on a certain level (I *was* there and my family continue to live there), I also want to show how this set of empirical assumptions can be problematic by drawing attention to some of the difficulties I experienced in researching and writing about place amidst the sociological facts of post-industrial society: that is, a society that is characterised by affluence (and the poverty that exists alongside); the massive importation of commodified culture (and the decline in organised 'organic' culture); massive mobility of people (alongside the determinations of place)<sup>68</sup>; and 'a decline in the ability to remember (far less reproduce) a substantial production of locality and a local public realm in comparison to the '45 generation' (Gilfillan, 1999, p77).

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<sup>67</sup> This is something that Hobbs (1993, p49) writes about when drawing attention to the vulnerability' of ethnographic data. That is, for Hobbs, the 'vulnerability' of his data inhered in the fact that its truth-value, its validity, was not strengthened by its particular correspondence to a reality out there (quantitative criteria). Rather, his data was vulnerable because the strength of its claims to truth, as he saw it, lay in the academic audience's understanding of him as a representative of a particular language/culture or a particular way of being. As the '*Icarus with dirty feet*' (Boon, 1982, p5, cited in Hobbs, 1993, p49) Hobbs argues his east end-accent sealed the '*TRUTH*' of his accounts, whose intended audience '*don't dare say a word against him because he's hard core, and he has that ghetto patter. He's the one who must know*' (Wolfe, 1970, cited in Hobbs, 1993, p51). In this account, it seems as if it is Hobbs himself who is objectified in relation to the structure of a particular field (criminology). Here we have an *individual* who understands the validity of his research in how it is misunderstood through the ignorance of those identified as other. This is again a reason for critical ethnography to refuse to be subordinated by quantitative criteria of validity. Indeed, there seems no valid reason to exclude this sort of reflexive knowledge in accounting for the production of the ethnographic text.

<sup>68</sup> 'The national picture conceals pockets of intense deprivation where the problems of unemployment and crime are acute and tangled up with poor health, housing, and education. They have become *no go areas* for some and *no exit zones* for others' (Social Exclusion Unit, P9, cited in Mooney, 2002, p111).



This last point is not the same as having specific knowledge of a past (or even immediate in many cases) family history, for example, Craig (age 33) exclaiming '*A don't even know ma background! A know ma name is Irish but that's it. A don't have a clue!* Neither can it be reduced to bewilderment at the cyclical 'regeneration' of so called working class environments and the substantive tradition of having no tradition, '*A took ma daughter uptae the skolly hill tae show her where ma school used to be*'.<sup>69</sup> What is also important about the 'ability to remember (*far less produce*) a substantial production of locality and a local public realm' is that the very idea of a local public realm as a something that can be encountered and negotiated with on local's terms is not an unproblematic given. As will be seen, this 'familiarity' although crucial for negotiating meaning and potential 'site effects' of the interview process and generally hanging about was not without problems in itself.<sup>70</sup>

I have found these same difficulties expressed by some of the men I have formally interviewed and made contact with. I see them as expressions of habitus and the experience of living what I take to be a position within the mirage-like structure that is class relations. For example, Jim's reengagement is also a reengagement with a familiar narrative, one that looks back and finds meaning in what was done. He puts it like so,

*'I don't know if I'm the right person to be asking about growing up in the 'Big E'. I don't think I really understood what happened. I just remember, one day reading Enid Blyton and watching Mister Ben, the next walking home past a gang of thugs with a familiar twisting in*

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<sup>69</sup> Now demolished primary school, St Scholasticas.

<sup>70</sup> That is, I no longer really felt a part of what it was I was 'supposed' to be feeling a part of.

*my guts nagging me that this could get messy. Wondering if today would be the day I'd get to acquire the age old Glasgow badge of honour, a Stanley blade in the face!*

*'Youse jist don't know how lucky yeez ur !', the reassuring tones of our fathers, the first generation pioneers, resound to this day in my mind.*

*'When a wiz your age we didnae even huv a toilet' and 'Christmas! a'll gee yay fuckin' Christmiss, whin a wiz a boy, oz wee goat wiz 2 bob 'n a fuckin' orange ya spoilt wee cunt yay' rang those consoling, soothing, numbing words making clear that although glue fiends and thugs patrolled my schoolyard and dealers and dole queues paved my future, I should be 'bliddy grateful' because at least a wiznae born in a single ender!'*

*As I said before, I don't think I really understood what was happening. Outside my head that is. Inside my head there was a growing dread fuelled by morbid tales of neighbours kicking your door in while you're sleeping and people with hatchets and hammers and kneecaps and the glory allotted to such daring exploits. I didn't actually see that much violence. My early teens were spent in apprehension of a messy encounter. I felt like one of those guys who get tied to a table with a big moon-shaped axe overhead, swinging closer all the while. By the time I was 18 my body had become so tense that it felt like I was breathing through a straw. Booze offered a welcome relief. Booze soothed the anxiety. Booze fed the anxiety. The anxiety was growing legs and fists and a mind of its own' (Jim Morrison, age 32, former resident, email correspondence, 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2002).*

In an interview Richard put his own point more succinctly,



*'Aye its like comin back tae questioning yer surroundings an aw that sort of stuff... Aye it makes ye think that much that ye think 'have a got a clue'?' (Richard, age 35, Interview his flat, 2<sup>nd</sup> August, 2002).*

While Jim and Richard are introduced more fully in the next chapter and through the thesis it will be worthwhile unpacking this testimony here to begin the situating of contemporary place and the appropriation of place in text. Both men live/lived and grew up in the Easterhouse area from an early age (two and one year old respectively). They both more or less lived the same 'culture'. They both attended the same secondary school and were in the same year group. They lived in a similar council house flat with their parents and siblings (two and three siblings). Both their fathers and mothers (part time) worked. Their mothers held equivalent part time jobs but their father's jobs occupied different positions in the social hierarchy. Jim's dad worked as gardener in the council park's department and Richard's father was a foreman. Both are aware of how they evidence and attempt to go beyond their father's perceptions of them and their perception of their father. They lived in different 'gang' territories but lived within half a mile of each other. Jim stayed on at school for a year longer than Richard (leaving in 1986) but both left school to enter into training schemes.

The world of work and family they entered was and is very different from their parent's experiences at a similar age (Brynnner et al, 1997). What is important about Jim's testimony in its contrast with Richard's is that Jim is reflecting on when he did stay in the scheme about ten years ago. While his account indicates a sense of how local conditions and social relations can be incorporated bodily and become manifest in particular coping styles and particular pathologies his account is now removed from the immediacy of living those conditions. Jim's going back, his reflections on the local 'culture' is softened by the space and time that now

separates him from that time. Indeed, the quandary is that in his years removed from the scheme Jim now finds that on his return it is the one place he *now* does not feel anxiety.<sup>71</sup> Coming home for a few weeks is not only affordable (money, emotions, communicating) it is positively reassuring. As will be seen, Jim's relaxed relation is far removed from a number of my other informants and their own relations to place as being 'in yer face hauf the time'.

Like Jim and Richard I discovered that reflecting on what Easterhouse is or was involved a lot of head scratching and thinking about what one person referred to as the 'depressing gumph'. Indeed, it is this whole idea of reflection and reflexivity, of trying to communicate the primacy of embodied experience in a language that always seems geared to conscious intentionality that left me thinking like Richard, '*huv a gote a clue*'.

Facing up to this confusion and finding a sense in it means that the choice of the research site (Easterhouse/Glasgow) as a place the author is familiar with and has had regular contact with family, friends and acquaintances is a strength of the research. In this sense there is perhaps little to say with regards to some set of meticulous standards for the selection of the site other than viewing this intimate knowledge of the area as in some sense a long term pilot study.

Again, the issue for this type of research is less a concern with quantitative type explication of site selection in relation to representativeness than in making use of my intimacy as a form of validating the 'data' of the research. That is, the selection of the research site was based on largely (initially) unproblematic access to the views and day to day and night to night activities of those who lived there. My familiarity and my new research interests made intimacy both immediate and strange.

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<sup>71</sup> This is after ten years of annual return visits.



More specifically, though, at the beginning of the research the author had decided to focus on a particular location within the scheme; that is, a local pub with a reputation for violence. The author had learned of the pub's reputation through both word of mouth and from those who had observed and taken part in fights and ongoing feuds. This was chosen as a 'special' research location where the likelihood of violence was high. In retrospect, the author had gone butterfly hunting and did not catch sight of many butterflies.<sup>72</sup> It was a pub the author had visited a few times before but was not seen as a local. Its location is relatively remote in relation to the proximity of housing. In the first year the pub was one that on entering could be described as a spit and sawdust throwback. Indeed, if there were typical characteristics of an aggression inducing environment the Station Bar could almost be described as an ideal type (Tomsen et al, 1991). The pub has since had a make over in its bid to adapt to the new post industrial drinking and entertainment market.

Moreover, if the person who entered was not a local there was always the sense that person had just become a source for visual interrogation and that indeed the piano player (if he existed) had stopped playing to join in the spectacle. In the first year of my research the pub was visited at least once a week in the company of a regular, Tommy Vercetti. The level of alcohol consumed in this first year was considerable. Indeed, as will be seen in the coming chapters this has had isolating effects on not only Tommy but many of those who are encountered in this ethnography.

Tommy visited the pub most nights of the week. After this first year events in the pub and in Tommy's life changed and had a dramatic effect on how often the author and Tommy would

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<sup>72</sup> The majority of the violence that the author did see and experience was at the weekends in Glasgow city centre.

go to the pub. Indeed, in retrospect, although a serious fight proved to be the catalyst in moving away from the pub it was what was happening outside the pub that eventually proved significant in how the author was to develop his relations with those in the research as well as the research itself. That is, although the pub was to resurface as an important field site over two years later it became a background site in relation to people's homes where I was to spend the majority of my ethnography in or travelling to. It is cheaper and safer to drink behind a front door that can be called your own. When Tommy was forced to leave the flat he shared with his partner and his children the Station no longer became a significant place in the research (Tommy uses another local pub as his local).

On the other hand, I could see how I was reducing the place to what I was interested in finding out about it. Even though I grew up in the area I had been constructing a one sided and homogenous representation of it.<sup>73</sup> Perhaps that is an effect of researching violence itself, that is, it homogenizes people, the non-particular, the social as the 'blob'- the '*get intae this mob*' effect. Perhaps it was an effect of what I was reading.

Support from a friend to '*tell it like it is... it's the only way*' (Lucky, Feb 17<sup>th</sup>, 2001) was as much a comment on my growing confusion as it was on my anxiety about writing and researching in the area. I was well aware of the importance of 'Easterhouse the brand' in a time when symbols have an economic value in themselves. I was also conscious of the dead weight of previous representations and associations that residents of Easterhouse have long

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<sup>73</sup> I was fixing the identity of the place in order that I could produce it by consuming it. In other words, Easterhouse as a source of knowledge, for me, was the representation of it- the negative and the problematic. Any value in being working class in post-fordist/industrial society was not really engaged with from the start. I see much of this issue of value as indicative of a total absence of political engagement in general.



struggled against, as well as used and 'resisted' (see above) and generally been totally ambivalent about. I found it both impossible to just describe yet that is all I wanted to do.

In writing about Easterhouse, then, I am very conscious that the familiar triumvirate of concepts (that 'suite of distinctive features'- men, masculinity and violence) is likely to be seen as another negative take on the area. Indeed, this was pointed out to me on a number of occasions during the course of my study and I am convinced it was a major factor in the reluctance of at least one local representative to be interviewed. Who can blame him? The person who was reluctant to be interviewed has a personal and professional interest in how the area is represented.<sup>74</sup> He believes that the area has fundamentally changed (Colin house, Conversation in Pub, May 2001). It is highly likely Colin understood my own approach as mired in the (mis)representations of the past, if not a contaminant on the present.<sup>75</sup>

As will be seen, depending on where you are coming from, there *is* something depressingly familiar in a sentence (paradigm perhaps) that contains the words Easterhouse (replace with council housing scheme) and violence. For one, it is a traditionally common feature, alongside images of poverty and powerlessness, in media representations of the area.<sup>76</sup> Indeed, it is often this image that many people who do not live in the area hold in their mind (Damer, 1999).

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<sup>74</sup> A description that is equally applicable to any researcher, myself included. The academy, as an institutional and professional field, is not free from the commodification of knowledge (Sunyer, P. 1998). In this sense, it is perfectly understandable that a 'concern' with aspects of social life can be construed as self-serving and opportunistic. One woman (Mary, 50 years old) was quite clear in what she saw as my self-interest in talking to her son (Grant) about his experiences of 'violence'- 'That's why you want to talk to him then'.

<sup>75</sup> I was to meet Colin at the end of my research and he offered me his views and his expertise on local politics.  
<sup>76</sup> See Bob Holman (1994; 1998, p7-16) for a brief overview of how Easterhouse has been (mis) represented in the media and in the academy. The often one sided and negative portrayal of the people and the place tends to reinforce the dominant image of 'the poor' as helpless and passive, or on the other hand criminal and dangerous. Indeed, Holman (1994) provides a practical example of what a supported career opportunity can do for a man who would probably fit the stereotypical view of a 'ned/chav/schemie'. As far as representations are concerned the now long defunct local newspaper 'The Voice' was set up precisely to counter such negative stereotyping. More contemporary media coverage of the area focuses on the positive aspects that inward investment and



To add men and masculinity to this association of violence is almost to resurrect the image of Frankie Vaughn, side burns, suit, tie and all, arriving out of the sky by helicopter to oversee the righteous collection and disposal of Stanley blades, hatchets, knives, machetes, antique swords and kitchen knives from crowds of eager young men during the knife ‘amnesty’ of 1969 (See Fig. 1). While local opinion is divided on the benefit (or amplification) Frankie Vaughan’s actions had on youth violence in the area, it is interesting to note that it is cited that official research argues that there may have been a link with his proposals and a reduction of ‘gang’ violence in the area (<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/585544.stm> citing documents from national archives).<sup>77</sup>

**Figure 1 Frankie and his Boys**




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regeneration of the area will bring and there are numerous attempts to involve teenagers in actively producing and engaging with the realm of representations and art.

<sup>77</sup> Stanley (55), Brian (60) and Auld Tam (78) are ambivalent about the impact of Vaughn’s visit. Fred says ‘*I think I was in the young offenders... but a remember sumdae sayin that aw the serious wans (older men) stayed away from it... the weans pickin up sticks an takin it alang tae throw in the bin... it made it look cool tae kerry a knife*’. The Trondra web site lists Frankie Vaughn as one of Easterhouse’s local heroes alongside icons like Gerard Kelly and Elaine C. Smith (she comes from North Lanarkshire but she enjoyed herself at a New Year party in Easterhouse at one time!). Damer, in a discussion of the politicisation of representations of Glasgow as a whole, describes Vaughn’s visit as contributing to a ‘moral panic’. To what extent this term is now valid is up for debate. In the 1970’s, though, Armstrong and Wilson (1973) made good use of the concept to describe the noise a socially concerned pop star could stir up. More recently, there have been a number of ‘non-helicoptered’ visits by Conservative politicians, most notably Ian Duncan Smith, who claims he wants to be in ‘a Party that doesn’t just drive past Easterhouse on the motorway’. But why not ‘drive past Easterhouse on the motorway’? Why does an elected (albeit that the political participation of people he represents is ) representative feel a need to make Easterhouse a place that people will not drive past on the motorway? Why should a place be encountered in such a frame?



On a more positive note, it is reassuring to encounter international film crews who after hanging out with a few local teenagers on a Friday night and finding it all very boring bought them a large carry out from the local off license and then filmed what they had come looking for in the first place. Or the advertising manager who tells his staff that the firm can *'really locate anywhere, apart from places like Easterhouse'* (Malcolm, Conversation). Similarly, John (57) talked about his visit to Birmingham and how the people he was employed with knew the scheme purely through its association with violence, crime and poverty. As he put it, *'How the fucking hell did Easterhouse get down tae England?'*<sup>78</sup>

Finally, and as if to labour a point, a claim to represent a place also implies a notion of Easterhouse as actually being something in itself: a presupposition that takes for granted *'the typifications of communities that made them into distinct and alien cultures' in the first place, and an ignorance of the 'way such distinctions are inevitably hierarchical and tied to larger geopolitical structures of power'* (Abu-Lughod, 2000).

While I doubt the Scottish poet Donny O'Rourke would find the same relaxed use of words to describe Duntarvie Quadrant on a Saturday night as he finds for Byres Road on a Sunday afternoon, it is also the case that the 'idea' of Easterhouse as 'homogenous' would be seen as a contradiction in terms for the many different people who live and who have lived there. The danger here is of both reifying a place and at the same time equating the people who live in it with that representation of it. It is here we can encounter a place or people in all their 'uniqueness'.

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<sup>78</sup> Damer (1990) illustrates how the 'politics of representation' through which Glasgow has been known and circulated abroad have invariably been one sided.

Indeed, of fundamental importance these days is the manner in which areas like Easterhouse *are* singled out as, for example, areas for high priority treatment or as areas of multiple deprivations, social inclusion, community participation and partnership. On the one hand, we have the paradox that the uniqueness of housing estates and their problems '*arises from notions of association and contamination, congregation, inheritance and environmental influence*' (Townsend, 1979, p543). The 'slum making denizens' of Victorian times resurfaces in the culture of poverty thesis and its many mutations emerge, its contemporary icon being that great unwashed 'underclass' forever threatening to knock down the door (if only to shout *chewin the fat style 'ya bunch a fannies'*).<sup>79</sup>

In focusing in on the uniqueness of a place, then, we risk losing sight of not only the prevalence of those 'unique' factors in the wider population, we also make it more likely that particular places are understood as abnormal and completely detached from the wider social, economic and symbolic structure, that indeed culture is distinct from nature. The social and economic 'uniqueness' of Glasgow's peripheral housing schemes was recently dashed in the report by the Scottish Executive.<sup>80</sup> A focus on place, then, can be understood within a different paradigm, one that incorporates notions like politics and the wider social and economic environment.

Harvey argues that space and spatial practices should be understood as part of wider social and economic processes. Moreover, this understanding should attend to three aspects of space: how it is perceived; how it is experienced; and how it is imagined (Harvey, 1989). It is also the

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<sup>79</sup> *Chewin the Fat* is a popular Scottish comedy show on the television.

<sup>80</sup> That is, that sixteen out of the twenty most deprived areas in Scotland are found in Glasgow.



case that these three aspects of space should be accompanied by attention to whom, why, when and what for. In doing this in an ethnography I hope there is less chance that the '*sites and relations of translation are minimised*' (Clifford, 1997).

### 3.2 *Getting On*

As far as methodology and 'front end management' in the field is concerned I *eventually* went looking and found Nast (1998, p95) and her advice on the foregrounding of the body as a '*physical field site upon which the world inscribes itself*'. Here we encounter the importance of the body as space and body as culture— it is not merely located somewhere but part of the whole production of space and social relations. An individual's story is thus encountered as both unique and as a critique of what is unique. How is this to be known, via impressions or through the most exact and cutting stone realism? One answer is found in the concept of reflexivity, one in which '*places are experienced through the body and the body is experienced through places*' (Nast, 1998, p405).<sup>81</sup>

The character of the relationships experienced in the field vary and are dependent on the context and of course how well I got on or got to know those whose company I shared. Indeed, this issue of 'getting on' is something Armstrong (1993) suggests can be a fundamentally important factor in ethnographic research. For Armstrong being *liked* was crucial to getting on. In this ethnography 'getting on' certainly helped when it came to doing interviews or staying overnight in people's flats. Indeed, in the majority of cases those

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<sup>81</sup> There is a caution to be made in a focus on the body as an explanatory category. For example, Klineberg (2003) draws attention to how easily a focus on the body or bodies can be stripped of all explanatory impetus. Klineberg uses the example of those who died in the Chicago heat wave of 1995. In this case, the sheer number of dead bodies and the technical questions of what to do with them disappeared the politics of why their were so many deaths in the first place. That is, the social-economic criteria and the isolation of those who died never became an issue in the press coverage.

people interviewed are people that I remain in contact with. To what extent popularity is a measure of getting on as a researcher and as a PhD student, though, is another thing. That is, that 'truth' and 'knowledge' are often only explicable in their own lived terms and that sometimes not getting on is illuminating: there is both a skill and a sociology in managing what can become experienced as two different worlds.<sup>82</sup>

In each of these interviews and in each of these relationships I have tried to be as transparent as possible with regard to my work and the problems of the work. In a few cases (in those situations it is people I have known or have come to know well) this has meant that I do not sit and agree with everything that is said but will often find myself in an argument or a debate to the extent that there have been fallings out. The main point, though, is that my work and my concerns are largely of no concern to my informants (why should it be). My problem was in forgetting about my work when I was researching and forgetting about my research when I was working.

In other respects, though, the idea of getting on was always something that troubled me with respect to being a participant observer in the pub or on the occasions I was in social company. It was here I felt it easier to remain detached from becoming a 'group member' What I mean by this is that one thing that is immediately clear from taking testimony and listening to conversations is that it is often those who know each other well and who do get on who end up coming to grief with each other. There are numerous encounters in the four years of research where friends come to know each other better through violence. Indeed, there were opportunities to observe four of my closest and key

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<sup>82</sup> In the field I recognised how close friends and family saw a sense of status in PhD work. In the university one academic asked in relation to what I was wearing if I had just come back from a 'field trip'!



informants (Craig and Tommy, Bob and Lucky) communicate with each other through physical violence. In both these cases the relationship to violence is in asserting and challenging the dominance of one person over the other. That is, there is if not a clear and hierarchical aspect to these relationships then there is an attempt at overthrowing or equalizing through effort this hierarchy.

As will be seen, although much of this violence is bounded and chosen there were occasions where knives were used or hospital admissions were required. The most extreme case known through the testimony of others and the scars left by the encounter involved a twenty year old (Steven Sharpe) being slashed across the face twice after interrupting his friends going through his pockets while he slept. They then held him upside down from a top storey flat veranda. The man who had been slashed and marked then watched as his sister was punched in the face for complaining. Steven Sharpe was a 'nice guy' who was not known for trouble or for making a name for himself through violence. Indeed, perhaps this is why he came to experience this assault in the company of men he knew already had reputations as 'mad slashers'. That is, he was perceived as weak in that he had the strength and capacity for reasoning and feeling out with the box of 'hardmen'. Two days later he returned with his brother who stabbed Ronnie (encountered in chapter 5) in the chest and he chopped his other assailant's face with a machete to the extent that he is now called 'hawfy' (half a face).

In a different sense, the distinction between participant observer and 'group member' (Fielding, 1993, p158) was and is in some situations untenable. That is, those people who are being observed can ask questions that offer very little choice when it comes to keeping this distinction. It is to question the generalisation that equates the observing

researcher with power and the researched as passive, simply observable and without recognition of their own involvement in the act of 'observation'.

One example of two similar encounters at parties in the field was in relation to my closest informant Tommy Vercetti and a confrontation that developed at a gathering in a local's flat. The situation was similar to a previous confrontation in a local pub in that it required a response that could not be defused by flashing a membership card of the participant observers association. In other words, a non-response was as marking of group membership as was an active response. In the party it was clear that '*something was about tae kick aff*' and if something wasn't to kick aff then something had to be done that could interrupt the logic of the situation.

Before going further it should be made clear here that the author finds personal resonance in one man's understanding of violence and a wider background discourse of violence in that

*'A no fur a fact that a lot of it is put oan, a never hud it in here. A talked the talk but a didnae walk the walk. When a hung about it wisnae aw about fightin it wis about burds, it wis about booze, it wis about socialising. When it came tae the crunch a never hud the heart fur it. A hud the height and the look an that, just the way ye dressed suggested there wis that violent thing there but a didnae want it. A think there must be loads a people lit that who just get caught up in it'* (George Lukas, Interview in his council flat, Aug 2002).

Thus, playing this thin line between violence and pseudo-violence is not only the dodgy domain of ethnographic researchers it is an everyday way of managing threats. Indeed,



managing threats or constructing alternatives to violence through other means is perhaps a key area in which masculinities are employed (Gilmore, 1990). In this case, the confrontation was defused through the simple presence of standing up next to Tommy and at the same time giving both Tommy and Frank enough humorous respect to 'sit down and don't be daft' without either of them feeling that one had gotten something over the other or that I had gotten something over either of them. It was this 'wee daft thing' that was needed to break the logic of the event that both men realised in themselves.<sup>83</sup> In the immediate aftermath of the face off I encouraged Tommy to leave the party: I believed the effects of the confrontation would last and that if either Tommy or Frank did not leave a fight would develop at some point.<sup>84</sup> Indeed, in retrospect I can now write and reference that when habitual or in this case ritual routines encounter a disruption or an interval the resulting conscious adjustment that is often needed to resume activity is one that resumes with a doubled intensity and intention (Weiss 2003, p3).

It was another occasion, though, that more clearly obliterated this distinction between participant observer and group member as far as violence is concerned.<sup>85</sup> This involved my relationship with Tommy and of becoming a potential target of retribution through association. The threat of this retribution affected my whole approach to the research. It meant that I did not take my children to visit my family and friends in the area unless I

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<sup>83</sup> The confrontation could have been potentially serious. Frank had already spent six years in prison for manslaughter and Tommy was not known to be concerned for the amount of bloodshed spilled in a fight.

<sup>84</sup> My feelings during this square up were a mixture of terror, excitement and a detached curiosity at what might kick off. Moreover, the scene had an utter familiarity to it.

<sup>85</sup> That is, violence is an extraordinary way of showing how distinctions are artificial and can be dissolved by the field. In this ethnography it is the sharing of everyday experiences with people that have come to be known intimately that either make it extremely difficult to remain detached or in contrast 'force' decisions upon the researcher to make distance or generate distance themselves (for example, see Coffey, 1999, p68).

had private transport.<sup>86</sup> When alone I continued using either public transport or cycling up to the area. Whenever I took the bus I would always sit on the bottom deck and at the back next to the emergency exit. Moreover, I fear of my safety I began attending the gym and working out.

### ***3.3 Data Collection and Data Analysis***

At its most technical the database for my analysis is made up from content analysis of newspapers, documentary analysis, participant observation field notes and twenty four largely unstructured (6) or semi-structured (18) in depth recorded interviews and the many hours of meetings that were spawned from these interviews with those same thirteen interviewees.

Library work and documentary analysis involved searching library and newspaper databases for previous research and analysis on Easterhouse the place. Bibliographic searches revealed the plethora of books on Glasgow, its politics and its history. It also revealed the basic lack of local historical or cultural records on Easterhouse itself. Whenever the scheme emerged in the pages of more national or city wide accounts it invariably took the travel guide shape of a two paragraph description of what the housing looked like. One aspect of this search was focused on Easterhouse library itself because it was here that I imagined if there were any works on or about Easterhouse then this would be the place to locate them. When I asked the local librarian if she was aware of any published literature or resources on Easterhouse I was directed to two black A4 box folders that contained a mixture of newspaper cuttings, community information leaflets and orphaned pages left over from various documents. The vast majority of the newspaper cuttings (dating back to 1968) identify Easterhouse as a problem area and the

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<sup>86</sup> In the first year of my research I was rarely without my two girls (aged 3 and 4).



stories are invariably associated with violence and poverty. Although there are signs that this media association is becoming less one dimensional a brief content analysis of two major Scottish newspapers (The Daily Record and Evening Times)<sup>87</sup> reveals that violence remains a feature of the representation of the place.

This ability to name and work with something is a thing that becomes even more pronounced when what is to be grasped and held still long enough to be encountered is a form of being that does not announce itself as *'here I am come write about me'*. In other words, there is a questioning of the political representation of a self or a self in an engagement with a metaphorical public or civil realm. In sociological terms, this means that there is a questioning of this *'symbolic announcement'' of presence, of a conscious interest in a reflective biographical project, proceeds from the basis that there is indeed a free market in thinking about being as being, as if everyone relied on an effort of reason or consciousness for knowledge of such a self'* (Gilfillan, 1999, p132).<sup>88</sup>

This *'announcement of presence'* attends to those public forms of being that are recognised as having value (and so constitute the public realm), as having generated a *'theoretical distance'* between a private self and a public identity or identities. This is an assumption that generalises both access to material, psychological and symbolic resources and also the rates of exchange that are in place at any given time as far as being something or someone different from what the social realm imagines one to be. In other words, the body as a source and reservoir of meaning and action is already negated and the focus is on what is said and seen rather than

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<sup>87</sup> The Evening Times and its sister broadsheet the Herald both have online archives.

<sup>88</sup> This is the starting point for Bourdieu's critique of the biographical illusion.

what can be said from living in and through particular experiences.<sup>89</sup> This announcement of presence, then, is more than a local referring a threat or challenge to their built reputation. It is to understand 'presence' as having a publicly valued form that finds its social basis in the material and cultural conditions it exists. It is to understand presence as a historical and political reference point. It is in this sense that absence can be defined as a presence and how one man can ask me in relation to the value of my research: '*What the fuck are you still dain in Easterhouse*'? (Brian Igbutt)

For Brian there was nothing for me to find in Easterhouse. Or perhaps more accurately he saw my continued presence in the place, out with employment in a service sense or in a real job, as failure: that is, it is related to what he sees (from one moment in time) as being able to be done by studying Easterhouse in the way I was studying it and presenting myself in this studying. The problem was that I was coming to agree with him. I saw the presence of my fieldwork through the presence or what I was attaching potential value too, of the academy and the social magic of education. In many ways I have been writing from a perspective that found knowing and involvement simply through appropriating, through seeing. It is a cheap investment that gives cheap returns.<sup>90</sup>

As far as I was concerned (in my thinking) the affluent working class did not exist yet this reality occupied as much 'emotional space' in my fieldwork as anyone or anything else. What I was feeling was that 'everyone' else was moving on while I was standing still. Much of the anxiety and contradictions I felt came from this relationship, of using what I encountered as a

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<sup>89</sup> In this sense I recognise a separation between speech and speech as bodily practice and argue that speech needs to be seen as bodily act/performance which is enabled/constrained and it is the constraints that need investigation (rather than just listening to the words and take them as 'abstracts').

<sup>90</sup> When it can be afforded this cheap return is a one way ticket.



dominating or 'blaming' discourse to capture local structuration and intentionality.<sup>91</sup> It is a reminder that 'order' should 'emerge *from* the field rather than be imposed *on* the field' (Silverman, 1985). When the 'field' came to mean the writing about family and close friends who had remained or who had moved and left the field I was literally forced to recognise how my own naive concepts were flooded.

In this sense I see the working through of this writing as an aspect involved in my own 'cultural work' and yet at the same time a rational and logical explanation of feeling what was being betrayed: that is, in looking to education as some form of 'therapy' I had reproduced myself as a self that couldn't think. I was fulfilling the role of the sociological victim. I realized I had indeed made the epistemic break with inside experience but had done so at the expense of detailing just what the 'natural attitude' was. In effect I was seeing others like myself, like a rabbit caught in the sociological gaze, waiting not for enlightenment but for the reassurance that reality is real when the full weight of tutelage can be felt like a rubber tyre on the skin. I could see fine well but was waiting for green light of sociology to give reality authorisation. The going back was for me a re affirmation of habitus and facing up to my own cultural inheritance.

In the field I had come to encounter the place I had grown up in, and had left at the earliest opportunity that came my way, in a different light. I was understanding life ethnographically/sociologically, and so to a crucial extent, 'artificially'. In doing so, there was always a feeling that in writing and representing lived everyday life moments of symbolic

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<sup>91</sup> Charlesworth situates this *discourse* as an element of access to the public realm: it is an unrecognized form of capital, unrecognized because it has yet to be codified for the value it holds. '*The transcription is haunted by the effects of a symbolic violence that has been the very condition of these forms of self-hood, even where the narration doesn't situate the speaker as victim or subject*' (Charlesworth, 2000, p265).

violence where never far away. It was as if what I was doing was missing something, diluting the experience to be engaged with in the very act of engaging with the experience as an experience. My methodological reflections and research are thus both an attempt to clarify what it means to live in a particular place and write about aspects of life that are often transformed when they become objects of contemplation from a particular perspective. In writing about people and place, in trying to stop the passage of time long enough to capture a sense of it, there is often both a deep sense of alienation and of also getting it right- there is an immediate sense of constructing something that reality is just waiting to '*kick the fuck out of*' (comments by one man on what an account of reality should be prepared to face: Van Maanen (1995) refers to this as the '*intense epistemological trial by fire*' - both sound painful).

At the same time then these reflections are also a naive commentary and evaluation of particular modes of sociological investigation and theorising itself- and how I came to see these things that are normally looked through as things that could be looked at (that is, the researcher as evidence). This is not obsolete criticism but is used to engage with the issues (such as my own tortured use of language to eventually get to a point). It is from *this* perspective that practice or praxis can be seen as both objective and subjective, both the dualistic structure and the agency of sociological language: it is 'successful' amidst the rigorous demands of everyday life (of coming to recognize and work with), neither an application of the rules nor a willow the wisp agency. Rather practice is a 'feel for the game', a game where the social and the fundamental structures of life are implicated at the very core of the game, at the very core of action, where the 'natural attitude' is already the universal.



It is in this sense that the unstructured interviews are the first interviews done and are characteristically taped conversations with no clear aim.<sup>92</sup> The rationale was simple: to *'allow and encourage respondents to speak freely and at length using their own concepts and terminology'* (Jupp, 1989, p68). The semi-structured interviews have general themes (Hammersley and Atkinson 1983, p112-3; Agar, 1986, p19) that I wished to explicitly address and made this known to the interviewees. These twenty four base-line interviews each lasted at least two hours and occasionally stretched through the night. The interviews took place in the person's home (18), their place of work (1), the pub (3) and in my own flat (when my wife was away with our children at her mother's place). All of these interviews bar one were interviews that were follow up interviews. The interviews were transcribed within forty eight hours and the tapes were destroyed to minimise ethical problems.

As far as measuring time can be seen as an assessment of knowing I should add that my relationship with those interviewees largely continues in some form or another (in some cases this has deteriorated). I did not explicitly work with systematic criteria as far as a representative sample was concerned. My aim from the beginning of the research was to

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<sup>92</sup> In the early interviews and in the later interviews every respondent was informed of my general aim, that is that the research was geared towards how men talk, use and have experienced physical interpersonal violence. In the later interviews this approach was clarified and expanded to include this original description and also a more general biographical approach to both physical violence and how a day was organised. All respondents were also informed that their real names would not be used and any identifying characteristics would be omitted unless they insisted they remain. Moreover, in my proposal to the ESRC I wrote that I would inform potential respondents that I am legally bound to disclose any information they provide that may threaten the well being of other people. In the course of my research I found this difficult to put into practice and that included threats against myself. There are a number of reasons for this. First, if I was to state such a one dimensional and impractical relationship to the field I was to be involved in as a researcher I would not have been able to arrange one interview because I would have identified myself as either stupid or as member of the police or some other interested agency. This could have personal consequences that went beyond the scope of doing the research. Indeed, in the first year of my research I was approached twice and asked if I was (a): a police officer or (b) someone working for the Benefits agency. In defining an ethical position prior to the research is often to akin to a technologising of the research subject as something problematic that in some way can be cured or managed through the already sedimented and professionalized interest in the subject.

snowball from a core group of people and to literally interview anyone who was willing to talk to me and through a tape recorder. The interest was in the insights they would evidence.

There were, however, four general orientating criteria in what was to become the 'sample'; each of these criteria are linked to my perception of the 'cultural capital' that I brought to the field and what was to become the rationale for the participant observation. By my own 'cultural capital' here, I refer to that ability to recognise how particular forms of action and representation are valuable and so in learning how to use those representations in the manner of a jigsaw a person can achieve a certain level of certificated expertise. However, when it comes to facing up to what is already known and what that known is worth in a market that does not value, it becomes less easier to deceive oneself by stating that it was not my intention to seek out people who are known to have been violent or have been the victims of violence. Although Richardson and May (1999, p309) can indicate that violence is 'socially constructed' and that 'violence towards some individuals' may be 'more or less intelligible than others' it is often the case that those who live or have lived with violence know a victim and know those who choose a victim.

Although the criteria overlap and include much of the men's experience that is mentioned I have separated the men according to the criteria for clarity. The first was to interview at least one man who had made a name in physical violence and who had used and experienced physical interpersonal violence regularly. My thinking was that it was often the actions of these individual men that attracted violent comparison and rhetoric from others. Indeed, it was in the account of one of my informants, Stanley Made, that the relations between those who come to be known as the 'berserkers' and those who are the supporting audience are



complicated.<sup>93</sup> That is, the idea of reputation and earning and building a reputation is not a given, neither is it self-funded: there are investments and interests to be made for everyone involved.<sup>94</sup> Moreover, it was in violence that these men knew violence and so were phenomenal specialists in their own way. I met a number of men who could be described as such and indeed I identify the continued importance of potential violence in four of my twelve interviewee's lives (Craig (age 33), Tommy (34), Richard (36), Grant (35)). What violence means to each of these men differs and indeed how they speak about the role of violence in their lives differs. By importance I refer to the continuing presence of actual violence and violent intent.

The second implicit was in relation to those who either *explicitly* refused or described themselves as paralysed when it came to the act of physical violence. The aim was to know how people worked with a background discourse of violence without resorting to violence or saying that they did not resort to violence (here I took testimony from five men who had either made a public statement against violence or who described themselves as '*no huvin the heart fur it*' or more directly and in relation to a hegemonic ideal, as '*shitebags*' (Raymond (64), (Bob (36), George (32), Simon (37) and Phil (35)). Related to these criteria was getting at the actual experience of violence and its effects on the actions and attitudes of the men involved. In chapter five the transformative and substantive aspect of violence is engaged with more fully. In chapter six the 'gap' between a refusal of violence or the conscious attempts to '*get the fuck away fae it*' are assessed in relation to continued threats of physical violence and

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<sup>93</sup> This is the basis of much of Polk's (1994) research on the relationship between lethal violence and the supporting 'audience' (other men and cultural 'norms'). That is, that it is often the case that lethal violence is a form of 'doing gender' or of 'doing what a man has got to do' (Polk, 1994). To what extent masculinity can *explain* this form of violence is a matter of debate.

<sup>94</sup> This feeling that violence is a shared experience unsettled me in that I began questioning to what extent my very presence in the field as a researcher interested in violence could be contributing to violence. I have already mentioned that the threat of violence affected my behaviour in that I avoided particular situations and worked out with the aim that I could defend myself. Moreover, I was beginning to see how much the representation and talk of violence was also part of the whole activity of violence.

the living in and with the everyday possibility of experiencing subordination. This simplistic accounting procedure is of course much more complicated when its implicit psychologism is opened up to historical and sociological understanding.

Finally, I was interested in how the meaning and function of physical violence compared across generations (and in particular across family generations): part of this focus was a motivation to understand what is or isn't reciprocated in the relationship between men and their sons (the making of male culture) in and across time (the making of time). Indeed, it is here more than anywhere else that I found a meeting between the objective and the subjective, what Bourdieu notes in stating that *'To inherit is to relay these immanent dispositions, to perpetuate this conatus, and to accept making oneself the docile instrument of this project of reproduction. This successful inheritance is a murder of the father accomplished at the father's injunction, a going beyond the father that will preserve him and preserve as well his own project of going beyond, giving that going beyond is in the order of things, and as such in the order of succession. The son's identification with the father's desire as a desire for preservation produces an unproblematic inheritor'* (Bourdieu, 1999, p507-508).

To this extent I interviewed Hammy (age 80); Brian Igbutt (age 60); Jack Woods (52); Peter Kelly (57) and Stanley Made (age 55) and had less formal contact with their sons and grandsons and their teenage peers. This focus on violence and the continuities/discontinuities across generations is also a commentary on a kind of paradigm change and the manner in which each generation manages or perceives this change: that is, in relation to how they use and adapt their own (declining/growing) material, physical and cultural resources (work, reputation). Thus, the starting point of an explicit focus on the meanings of physical



interpersonal violence changed in the course of my research to become a much more diffuse concern with opening up the 'structural' and symbolic violence of everyday life.

The snowballing of my research began with people I knew well. I saw this as a way of building up my confidence and as far as developing a composition for the interviews was concerned. From here I moved both outward and inward by making contact with people who had both left the scheme for good and those who had returned. In the majority of cases I would make it known that I was looking for someone to give me testimony for my thesis. If anyone showed interest I would ask them if I could meet up and do an interview. In a few cases this meant doing an interview there and there in their flat. A few people on hearing that I was looking for 'data' offered their opinions and indeed impromptu conversations would be written up soon after the event: one man in particular was keen to be involved in a formal interview because he '*done well for myself*' and '*am fae Easterhoose and am no violent*' (Mark, aged 27).

In contrast, the most common initial experience was being introduced to someone who '*might be able tae help ye*' by Tommy (see below). The majority of these conversations usually took place in the local pub and involved men who had been in a few successful fights or who had spent time in prison and had learned how to manage the threat of social Darwinism at its most basic. In one case I was advised against asking a particular reputation for an interview because '*he won't know where yur comin fae*'.<sup>95</sup> As my research progressed the introductions became more orientated towards the compilation of a list of those who had either become severely

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<sup>95</sup> I never had the opportunity to have this point clarified. That is, the man who advised me not to ask Ronnie for an interview never explicated his cautionary advice or what the consequences might be for misunderstandings. Ronnie himself died aged 40 in the course of the research.

incapacitated or who had died through 'natural causes'.<sup>96</sup> It was only on writing these names down that I came to reflect on how these 'statistics' were a normal part of everyday conversation. They would emerge spontaneously and indeed it is the sheer availability of morbidity and mortality rates in conversation that drew me to what they might mean and how they might be incorporated into everyday routines and everyday postures towards life.

I am aware of the limitations that snowballing as a method can hold for ethnographic research: that is, that the snowball can end up being a collection of settled snow from the same place and perspective. There is perhaps an irony, though, in that Pahl's (1995, p198) acronym of *MARSBARS* (Methods are Resembling Saloon Bar Sociology) is also Glaswegian slang for knife inflicted scars (usually on the face) and that violence and perspectives on violence from a particular place will invariably, whether in agreement or disagreement, be a recognition and so debate with shared understandings and of understandings related to the different and unique realities each individual faces and has faced. Moreover, again the caution is that the disciplinary field can shape the reality of the research field itself by assuming beforehand that a perspective on and in reality will have an extensive and far reaching network of contacts and experiences that will qualitatively and quantitatively alter the experience of being subject to that reality.

As will be seen, my research focus and the places of my research shifted throughout the duration of the work. Similarly, so did the relative fixity and/or movement of my men, their actions and their views. The snowball as method was not a linear and algorithmic process and it did not wholly make up the men I spoke to or or the data of my research. Indeed, as will be

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<sup>96</sup> The word natural is placed in inverted commas because it is a double irony. That is, for example, mortality rates addressed to social causes is differentiating between a social and natural life. Paradoxically, there is an



seen, the metaphor of snowball should perhaps also be seen as one that introduces a dynamic element into the research process in that in some situations things can snowball out of 'control' (as in what is to be expected) and can literally pick up on important pieces of information that might have been missed by more formally prescribed methods. In this sense, snowballing as a sampling method can remain open to new experiences and to contradictory information found in the field. Perhaps a caution, though: in research into men's experience of violence what is picked up through snowballing might also force the researcher to reassess the validity or reframe the 'importance' of the whole research project itself.<sup>97</sup>

As has been noted, as a participant observer I had initially taken this to simply mean writing up notes about what I had seen or heard about after a night in the pub. In the first year of the research this was more or less the case: I would even carry a small pad and pen around with me and write up anything I thought would be of interest or could be of interest later. I would type these notes up verbatim as soon as possible and then read them and begin looking for themes. As my research progressed, though, and its focus moved away from the local pub(s), my role as a participant observer moved out into the everyday life of a number of locals in the area. This involved simply hanging around, spending a couple of nights here and there in local's flats and finding out what people did with their time during the day and later if they

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implicit understanding of human being as somehow separate from the social.

<sup>97</sup> My research snowballed out of control in that I had potentially gained a set of new 'informants' through being recognised as the friend of a man who was in a feud with a number of local men. On a more humorous note the snowballing metaphor is again useful to pick up on what is picked up in the snowball that can become the data of research. For example, in one pub visit I listened to a man explain how on finding himself cold and locked out of his family home he decided to make a snowball and hit his bedroom window to waken up his brother. He made the snowball and threw it at his brother's bedroom window but was puzzled by the lack of noise that the snowball made against the window. He eventually managed to waken his father who let him in. On going into his brother's bedroom he was to find that the bedroom window was slightly ajar and the snowball had somehow made it through this small gap to the wall above his brother's bed. What made this throw even more exceptional was that the snowball had inadvertently caught up a dog turd in its making which now was splattered all over the bedroom wall and on top of his sleeping brother. The laughing woke his brother up and a fight ensued.

were employed. Of course, during this time reading was continuing and the bones of what the thesis was to be about was an ever present presence.

In all this, there are a number of ethical implications involved. These primarily concern issues of gaining access to potential respondents, confidentiality in relation to interview data, the interview process itself, the use of the interview data and finally the process of being an active participant observer in the field.

All potential interview respondents were made aware that I am a University researcher interested in how people talk about, experience and use violence. I am and was aware that my project involves issues that could have been sensitive and potentially upsetting for respondents. In this sense, I was keen that any one who was to be involved were aware of the nature of my inquiry before they decided if they wished to be interviewed. In addition, I let the respondents know that I could offer them a list of agencies that offer support for people who feel their life is affected by violence. At this stage I also outlined some of the possible uses that could be made of the research. All respondents were informed that their real names (or other identifying characteristics) would not be used unless they insisted. The time and place of the research was made in discussion with the respondent.

In addition, each respondent was reminded that their participation in the interviews is voluntary and that they could have withdrawn from the interview at any time.

Permission was asked to record the interviews on a tape recorder. The interviews were transcribed within a twenty four-hour period. Respondents were offered the opportunity to check the transcripts for factual accuracy.



### 3.4 *The Perils and Pearls of Collecting and Analysing*

It was through this 'hanging around' that locals' 'stock of knowledge' (and the opening up of this knowledge to other forms) and indeed the very '*being there*' of everyday life made me doubt what relevance particular forms of sociological work has for getting on with things.

What is meant by this is that the uncomfortable feelings I had been experiencing in what felt like appropriating through representing. Indeed, it was in just hanging around that I realised the limitations of taking people's words as the 'whole story' and indeed what the interview and the transcription made invisible, that is, the very embodiment of the social reality supposedly to be made real in text.<sup>98</sup> My intuition as an apprentice social researcher is that this 'gap' between local knowledge and representations of that local knowledge is one that has a long history and that the disappearance of this gap similarly has a long history, one that has to be continually reclaimed.<sup>99</sup> It is a site where 'misrecognition' or symbolic violence can flourish.

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<sup>98</sup> This is both reference to those things that interviews and transcriptions do pick up on (notice ambiguities, unfinished sentences, etc and indeed the whole notion of the use of an etc itself- that is, the recognition of a pattern or a regularity that is known) and what they don't ('... *everything transcription eradicates, from body language, gestures, demeanor, mimicry and looks, to silences, innuendos, and slips of the tongue*' (Bourdieu, p1, 1999). In this sense, the transcription and writing itself is not to be taken as a simple reflection of reality but one that has to be assessed in relation to other situated and relational factors. That is, the social is inherent and makes possible methodology. Indeed, the force and animation of a voice- what Barthes describes as the 'grain of the voice'- is easily lost in transcription. Speech can thus be seen as more than the words on a page in that '*speech does not consist of words alone, [but] consists of utterance- an uttering forth of one's whole meaning with one's whole being*' (Sacks, 1987, p81 cited in Gardiner, 2000). When language is identified as a source of reproducing inequalities and being capable of inflicting symbolic violence people will and do adapt to this relation. This is the unsaid social ontology that can come to furnish interviews and interview results and is the reasoning behind the claim that interviews and ethnographic research are best done by people most like those being researched (Bourdieu, 1999). That is, that there is a social basis and social dialectic at play in that '*... nothing classifies somebody more than the way he or she classifies*' (1990, p131) and that '*In everyday life we are constantly objectifying other people*' (1993, p58).

<sup>99</sup> Indeed, it is this 'call to order' made in the name of of the universal that Bourdieu, following Marx, seeks to debunk. That is, that it is by recognising sectional interests and how they come to be and operate that the universal can be contemplated.

The 'ability' of the survey method (and its assumptions of a general public) to disappear structuration is well documented. However, as has been noted, much of this critique of survey method is often based within a qualitative/quantitative distinction and the criteria for evaluating the validity and reliability of data in reference to that distinction. In contrast, understanding the whole density of an experience cannot be reduced to a discussion of method: a qualitative interview is not by itself a guarantee of a 'better' understanding of meaning and experience (Stanley and Wise, 1993). I recognised this in my early interviews. That is, in rushing to begin and to make contacts in the field I 'parachuted in' to a few interviews. It was only after spending time in the field and reviewing these early interviews that I could notice interview effects and how the interview can be a site where reality is constructed as an effect of the interview and the imagined social relations within the interview itself.

For example, in a couple of cases it was clear that what was being said in the interview was being said in relation to my position as a university researcher and to what university education meant to my interviewees. For one man who was already attending university this had an effect in what he said and how he said it: the moment the tape recorder was switched on he began speaking in an almost BBC accent and as if reading from a book. In an interview with another man (unemployed for five years) the felt impression was that his speech was wary of what he saw as being 'proper' or 'the right thing to do'.

Moreover, I was mightily happy in getting a hold of this testimony and indeed was happy to get a hold of any testimony. Of course, while this is also sociological data it was often talk that did not square with my observations and taking part in lived experience.



This was brought home early to me when I was ‘in the field’ that was a local pub and I began ‘explaining’ to a local man with a reputation for violence what my research was about.<sup>100</sup> The process of talking about and indeed using the word ‘violence’ seemed empty, lightweight for effect and I knew this as I was speaking it. It was as out of place as someone who mentions they are doing a PhD on violence in Easterhouse is out of place in the pub. There is a sense that a form of language has been brought into a space that is there to be away from that same language. There is a recognition of the relationship between language and social forms: *how* something is said alongside *what* is said. As will be seen in the next chapter, this verbalisation of the very word ‘violence’ is revealing in itself of social relations, power and principles of classification. In Weber’s classic formulation and distinction between force and violence, violence is illegitimate, it is not politically sanctioned. Politically sanctioned violence is expressed as force and is deployed through the state’s executive branches, those being primarily the military and the police.<sup>101</sup> As will be seen, in many working class environments the long chains of social processes that went into making the public representation of the state and the state’s monopoly on violence are also part of the same processes that generated a distrust of the states closest executive branch, the police.<sup>102</sup> Grassing continues to carry a strong social stigma even as affluence and private property increases. I witnessed one particularly severe beating and saw the wounds of

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<sup>100</sup> Even though I wasn’t particularly sure myself, the opportunity to let someone know I was doing a PhD was initially hard to resist. I found that this initial ‘smugness’ wore off pretty quickly.

<sup>101</sup> Although more contemporarily this force is also found in agencies that could be said to make up the left hand of the state.

<sup>102</sup> This is closely linked to the notion of ‘expert knowledges’ and the notion of the ‘colonisation’ of the lifeworld by expert cultures. For example, the sheer number of expert services in Easterhouse that seem to provide what was before just done. It is as if there is an area without cultural resources to ‘resist’ the expansion of a ‘monetary-bureaucratic complex’. Thus, Cultural Services, Psychological services, Social Work and Welfare departments now have clients and consumers of services. There is a technologising of forms and processes and a desire to fix the terms of engagement. Habermas refers to the sense of how these technologising of forms and processes periodically experience ‘legitimation crises’ in that the narrowness of the focus on human experience literally comes up against its own limitations in relation to what it means to be human. Another take on this is how local history groups can somehow manage to evacuate all sense of how a place is or was lived.

many other conflicts. In the one occasion that the police became involved (the man's injuries were to the extent that half his face was hanging off) no charges were pressed by either combatant. Classifying particular actions as 'violence' was to stand as a representative of particular ways of being and knowing. Levels of local violence (or perhaps it is more accurate to say 'force') can thus be indicative of the direction offered and engagement with the 'public realm'.

This man's silence and look at me was *heavyweight* and brought home to me the importance of understanding reflexivity as an embodied process of engagement, and of how the 'observed' are liable to provide their own understanding of a situation, one that is irrelevant to the researcher's recovery in casualty and later textual representation. To be reflexive, then, is to attempt to get as close to the local point of view as possible and that means to live that experience as much as possible. For me, that meant revisiting places, people and memories and trying to think about how the total fact of living is encountered in place. It was to ask questions of the most mundane and taken for granted aspects of existence.

Indeed, this was the primary reason for approaching the research on a number of methodological fronts. That is, in an effort to situate and work with any interview effects I saw hanging around, getting known and getting to know people as an important way of knowing intentionality and what might be contained within the sociological 'gap'.

It is in this sense that I turned for advice to academic work that combined both theory and methodology and refused to separate the '*theoretical construction of the object of research and the set of practical procedures without which there can be no real knowledge*' (Bourdieu in Honneth et al, 1986). Thus, if I didn't get on I could at least talk and write about it. To this extent, I reviewed a number of anthropological/ethnographic texts (Mead, 1928; Whyte,



1955/1993; Scheper Hughes, 1992; Hobbs, 1989; Charlesworth, 2000; Gilfillan, 1999) and methodological debates before finding feminist theory (Oakley, 1974, 2000; Harding, 1987, 1991; Bordo, 1998; Young, 1990) and then eventually Bourdieu's body of work. I felt that (after I had incorporated Bourdieu's difficult writing style) a lot of what this body of work had to say was relevant to my own 'journey' and was the first writing that resonated with what the thesis had yet to really put a name too. Indeed, this idea of journey is succinct in that it captures the importance of epistemological issues, to philosophical notions of truth and indeed what it means for a researcher to feel they have a mandate to speak from a particular 'fixed' or travelled position (issues that are engaged with more fully in the next chapter).

One key informant, Bob Marjuper (see below), remarks that a lot of what we say to each other is at least one step removed from the 'truth': that is, I encounter this as what actually can be said without offence, hurt or in revealing something about a self that leaves that self vulnerable to exclusion is part of the very same material that denies that there are such truths. The reason that there are no such truths is that the process of discovering truth is primarily an emotional experience in that we often come up against ourselves in our relations with others.<sup>103</sup>

This is akin to Bourdieu's take on a '*paradoxical foundation of ethics*' (1998, p141-145). For Bourdieu the idea that the 'truth always hurts' and that representation is a step removed is because representation *does* have a corresponding social truth, one that is found in the complimentary of social relations. That is, it is those moments where truth becomes contested that truth reveals itself. Here representation is a living truth and is embodied with a sense of its

own unassuming power.<sup>104</sup> This is similar to violence and a structure of feeling in that physical violence does not have to be experienced to be felt as something that has to be consciously negotiated. From here, theory (and a refusal of theory) is always and everywhere because 'truth' is always and everywhere social and is always and everywhere 'interested'. It is in this sense that a science of society can be understood as a bi-dimensional '*system of relations of power and relations of meaning between groups and classes*' and that this must of necessity effect a double reading of meaning and relations to meaning.<sup>105</sup> Here then could be a basis of a critical approach and it is worthwhile stating what this approach entails.

On the one hand we have the objectivist moment in the analysis. This is understood as the first moment of the analysis and is granted epistemological priority. That is, the grasp of the objective structure and the belief that society transcends the individual.<sup>106</sup>

For the objectivist these structures can be grasped independently of those who live within it. That is, it is a something in itself in the same way that criminal statistics can be seen to be produced yet stand as objectivity. 'Structure' in this mode is those relations that people enter into in order to produce their social existence. From this point of view

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<sup>103</sup>Is this identification of emotion and reason in others a form of mimesis, a recognition of a bodily hexis: that is a recognition of the mythology of the '*political mythology realized, em-bodied, turned into a permanent disposition, a durable way of standing, speaking, walking, and thereby feeling or thinking*' (Bourdieu 1977, P93).

<sup>104</sup>This is why people can feel they have been 'assaulted' in formal situations where they have been spoken to. It is also to recognise how people can avoid certain spaces or how body forms move in spaces and in relation to other bodies. Identifying zones of necessity is to then recognise the emperor without his clothes.

<sup>105</sup>This has fundamental implications for understanding how understanding is framed, negated and worked through. For example, the separation that exists in social science between meaning, truth and knowledge is a separation that cannot see the social basis of ethics and the social basis of social theory itself. The technical 'ideology' of this perspective as a social science perspective attracts condemnation in that '*at the moment interpretative schemes seek to establish the independence of human ideas and values from the constraints of nature, philosophers of science have tried and failed to 'establish an independence of nature from ideas of nature*' (Holmwood and Stewart, 1991, p26).

<sup>106</sup>Exemplified by Durkheim's position, one that stands in direct opposition to methodological individualism. The dualism of these positions is taken as self validating: they affirm each other. Bourdieu asks instead for a turn to methodological relationism.



structure and structures are in 'us'. Ethnographic description, cultural patterns are ways of accessing contingent relations to this structure.

An account of these triggering moments, or people's encounter with structures in themselves and others, are needed if the objectivist moment is not to become a reified model projected onto others. Thus, society is encountered as also 'representation and will' (Schopenhauer); in other words, the word is encountered both as meaning and as informed artful practice: the social is thus an ongoing accomplishment that is literally willed into being. This second moment in social analysis, a social phenomenology, back to the things themselves, identifies agency and everyday knowledge as the stuff of life, the prime ingredients in the continuous production of what comes to be known as 'society'.

Thus, a *Social Praxeology* (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992) has two moments of analysis each necessary to the analysis but each accorded differing epistemological weight. This 'total social science' is thus aiming at grasping the 'total social fact' of human being (Mauss).<sup>107</sup>

In addition to this identification of the double nature of social reality, a social praxeology must also attend to relations of power and struggles over meaning. This refers to the power to define or to thwart definition of what the real actually is. As above, this

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<sup>107</sup> In an ethnography this is a demand that asks the researcher to continually move back and forth between an emphasis on real acting individuals (in sociological jargon: conceptions of agency/a theory of action, including the researchers themselves) or features of the immediate environment (for example, ideas of context, the character and development of institutions, housing and ownership of housing, CCTV or public amenities) and those structuring processes that are not always immediate or given (for example, the wider economy, the character of social relations, the idea of space, of discourses, and its relation with other people and other spaces, the relationship to time itself). This focus itself is anxiety producing in that it asks for a certain distance and space to produce an intellectual product as an intellectual product. It asks how can we render sense made by others intelligible.

principle of classification must be grasped as attending to both an objective and subjective reality. In this sense, representations are encountered as a social struggle for meaning and how meaning is to be found.

For Bourdieu, how we see and what we see and the value given to particular knowledge can be explicated in relation to the 'time and place' and the relationship to the 'time and place' that knowledge emerges from. In other words, our cognitive structures of perception are related to the social structures (and our position and movement within it) in which we perceive. As has been seen, this point is developed to understand the dispositions of the acting agent more fully, that is the genetic link between the individual and the social environment is explained in part through the concept of habitus: how the external world gets inside us. There are a number of consequences of this development.

First, the close correspondence between objective structures and internal structures dissolves the antimony of structure and action (Giddens' like structuration), outright functionalism and methodological individualism. It dissolves this dualism because it asks for reasoned empirical proof of the relationship to 'society'.<sup>108</sup> Second, and in accordance with the first point, social knowledge and symbolic systems are not neutral but can act as instruments of domination: thus, culture and cultural forms, ideas of freedom and so on, are not understood unproblematically. That is, talk of freedom and of democracy is not exclusive or proof of fact in itself. Symbolic systems can thus conserve systems of thought that are conducive to the 'just' social order and indeed struggle over what is just can

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<sup>108</sup> Indeed, from here individuals and individuality are not subsumed under the banner of society but are recognised as individuals living society. This is to recognise how people develop as individuals and the possibility for developing as individuals. This is akin to Erich Fromm's belief that the task for human beings is



become a struggle over what just can actually be taken to be in the first place.<sup>109</sup> 'Truth' in this sense is not some forever all and be all. It has never been that way. This does not mean that we abandon truth or thoughts of freedom or democracy. Rather, it is to be aware that this reification can take many forms and because of this the substantive is always never enough in itself. Struggles over meaning and over representation are thus struggles over what the world is and can become. Symbolic meaning systems are thus contested social products with real effects.

This brings his thought to a point that addresses contemporary ethnography. That is, that *'in a class divided society, the social taxonomies of groups are 'at every moment produced by, and at stake in, the power relations between classes'* (Bourdieu and Boltanski, 1981, p149). A failure to render working class reality or any experience in its own terms of perception can thus be seen as the proverbial flight from reality.

From here, representation is both will and power and there are real effects and consequences in telling how things are seen from a particular position and experience of life. This is why those who are seen as *'having nothing to lose'* (because they are not institutionally 'affiliated') are often those who are understood as having no stake in the game and yet who can then report large returns from their involvement in the game. From a particular subordinated position within social relations and more importantly those who are in 'possession' of an account of reality that does not depend on having learned the Byzantine games that are played on the level of public representations.<sup>110</sup> In other words, what is said or can be said is itself a social

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*'precisely the paradoxical one of realising his/her individuality and at the same time transcending it and arriving at the experience of universality. Only the fully developed individual self can drop the ego'* (1980)

<sup>109</sup> What Bourdieu refers to as the *'struggle over the legitimate principle of legitimation'* (1996).

<sup>110</sup> This is a point that Bourdieu makes with regard to the field of higher education in France. 'The institutionalized circle of collective misreading which creates belief in the value of a discourse is only established



product that has its own relationship to history and to its own emergent reality and interpretative key. Similarly, what is known or what is perceived is to some extent the incorporation of the social structure into the cognitive structure (Bourdieu, 1990, p14). It is this 'what is known' that is creatively worked with and successful amidst the demands of everyday life (and of course it is the identification of this what is known or what *is* that is the object and contest of will and power) and it is this 'what is known' that often escapes the confines of the interview and the public realm of representation.<sup>111</sup>

To situate this sociologically, then, is to ask questions of what being and identity means and what identities can be afforded by being. It asks that we get closer to the phenomenon. In relation to living with the threat of violence as an everyday norm, it asks what it means to live with and amidst these observations and everyday threats, to what extent this everyday normality becomes or can be 'built in' and so transform the character of everyday social relations themselves.<sup>112</sup> These are not things to be avoided because they do not fit pre-packed categories or await some 'magical' justification. Jackson (1989) talks about how '*lived*

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when the structure of the field of production and circulation of this discourse is such that the *negation* which it operates (by saying what it has to say only in a form which tends to show that it is not saying it), encounters commentators able to *re-misread* the negated message; whereby what the form denies is re-misread " in other words, acknowledged and recognized in the form, and only in the form, which this self-denial creates. In short, a formally constructed discourse solicits a formal, or formalist reading which recognizes and reproduces the initial negation, instead of denying it in order to dis-cover what it has been denying. The symbolic violence that any ideological discourse implies in its misreading, which demands re-misreading, is only operative in so far as it obtains the assent of its addressees to treat it as it wishes to be treated, that is with all the respect that it deserves, observing the proper formalities required by its formal properties. An ideological production is all the more successful as it is able to *put in the wrong* anyone who attempts to *reduce* it to its objective truth: enunciating the hidden truth of a discourse causes a scandal because it says something which was 'the last thing you should have said' (Bourdieu 1991, p90).

<sup>111</sup> The critique of this 'successful' is the critique of everyday life. That is, it is tied to the idea of *competent* actors on the scene and whatever this might mean. If success is often understood as the 'reproduction' of the social structure (Holmwood and Stewart) and nine tenths of history is understood as 'taken up by the reproduction of the social structure' (Gilfillan, 1999, p210) the success and competence of local actors demands particular attention to how this competence is achieved not only achieved but on how this competence is experienced.

<sup>112</sup> Similarly, the other side of this question relates to the acceptance of this background. Unlike the offer of a drink, though, the effects of violence are still encountered even when the drink is refused.



*experience overflows the boundaries of any one concept, any one person, or any one society*'. It is in an earlier but similar fashion that Mann (1986, p4) mentions that *'societies are much messier than our theories of them.'*

For some, this generality can be qualified by attending to the sociological basis of those theories themselves and the manner that they have encountered and constructed a world, and indeed how a world has found those theories. It is in this sense that it is important to account for the ways, the conditions and the circumstances our concepts are formulated and 'flooded' (Gouldner, 1967, p73). There are two ways of looking at this; first, lived experience overflows concepts because those concepts are themselves *saturated*, that is, the concepts have done whatever work they could have done and through overwork are now redundant or dogmatic. Second, that those concepts had no purchase on what they sought to put a price on in the first place. Again, lived experience overflows conceptual categories because lived experience is itself not always cognitive, does not always have a 'theoretical value' or a reference point in the manner being speculated by the interested observer.

Such conceptuality in lived experience is for instance found when Dreyfus implies in asking is anxiety 'conceptual' (1994, p179, cited in Charlesworth, 2000, p80); the answer for Dreyfus must invariably be no because conceptuality as a way of addressing lived experience is already presumed to be purely cognitive and found in evidence of 'conceptual thinking'. However, the emotional and embodied realm is itself a relation to the world out there. And while anxiety can be encountered as an existential predicament, as a moment when our 'thrownness' into life as a primary condition of person and world, becomes visible (Charlesworth, 2000, p68) this relationship between a person and the world is not to be left with out an explanation of the forms and situations anxiety is brought into existence.

Lived experience, in this sense, can become something to get back to or escape from; it always holds its own investment and its own terms and currency of exchange depending on the relationship to that lived experience. From here, place, like any other naming, is always a process that involves specific individuals in a specific moment of time, attending to what a philosopher might call particular ontological and epistemological conditions of existence, particular social trajectories and interests (however conscious or made conscious by interests). In reality, lived experience is lived experience and that livedness is always in danger of evaporating in the process of writing.

In the development of making sense and naming, the 'name' marks something in space from a space, and that space is social space and social time. This mark is both relational and structural; it is infused with power and power is recognisable to those who are with out its use. From here, knowledge is not easily equated with power. To make official and to put a name to something is to already prejudge a reality that is both formed and can be accessed by that same language and by conscious representations of that reality. It accepts silence and statements such as

*'lost for words'*

*'couldnae say anything'*

*'a sat there wi ma mooth shut'*

*'whit mare could a say'*

*'the only way a know how tae speak is shit'*



as points for *departure* and not as the be all and end all of what there is to understand and say about a particular reality. To take this as said and done isn't to rely on a drive of human will to then move beyond a reality as something that can no longer be accepted.

As Low recognises, although such verbalised statements are revealing of how locals '*retain the integration of mind / body experience*' (1994, p145) they are also indicative of a personal and embodied relationship to the structure of reality itself. This point beyond language but what language itself reveals of that reality is the reality of the social and what Merleau-Ponty philosophises about when he remarks that it is '*quite clear that constituted speech, as it operates in daily life, assumes that the decisive step of expression has been taken. Our view of man will remain superficial so long as we fail to go back to that origin, so long as we fail to find, beneath the chatter of words, the primordial silence, and as long as we do not describe the action which breaks this silence. The spoken word is a gesture, and its meaning, a world*' (1962, p184).

Recognising this structure in and beneath language complicates issues of class or class representations. It questions the assumption that there is an 'emic viewpoint' that is easily identified and recorded or just waiting for the appropriate method to uncover its truth. This positivist fantasy is known as a fantasy by the ethnographer who knows fine well the difficulty in constructing and shaping an 'emic viewpoint' in text.<sup>113</sup>

This difficulty of knowing what and how to situate what I was finding was something that forced me to confront my own limitations and the limitations of the tools I was using to think and construct the 'field'. In talking to a fellow student about thinking with and what is to be

done when in the 'field' a well known face remarks that he is off to do some 'evil', I was informed that *'not all the working class are like that'*.<sup>114</sup> This aspect of the *vulnerability* of ethnographic knowledge did indeed make me think about not only the universality or generalisability of ethnographic knowledge it made me think about how this most utter and mundane point was fundamental; as far as I could see it was and is a feature of every 'field', that is, the different points of view expressed by individuals within a so called homogenous social space. What Gilfillan (1999, p176) refers to as the different 'personal structuring realities' in that *'as there can be no 'formula' for working class structuration, so there is no one existential truth... nor one correct representation for the ethnographer to grasp as the structurations brought to bear are different for each person. Structures then are themselves mediated by other structures'* (Gilfillan, 1999, p176).<sup>115</sup>

It is in this sense that I deepened my role as a participant observer by taking part in as much of the daily activities of my informants as possible. I wanted to 'speak' from a position of having lived the conditions of their lives to the extent that I would no longer be representing the experience as an 'othering' of both them and myself and could work with the data without moralising. If no understanding is to be found then that is because there is no understanding in the researcher themselves. This is how I came to see reflexive practice.

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<sup>113</sup> This positivist fantasy, because of its very positioning, is one that often encounters its data as coming 'cheap', as having an easy and immediate access to what is already 'present' to its own constrained understanding of human beings as social beings.

<sup>114</sup> This is Grant's description of what he was planning to do to the heads of the fellow combatants who he was about to visit at their flat. They were not in. This self-conscious reflection on a self's violent intent is what is evil.

<sup>115</sup> This marrying of micro detail with macro theorising asks the researcher to think beyond the 'experience of determination and the handling of this in conscious ways' in that not only does it unpack the structures and relations that the word 'determination' can gloss over, it does not take for granted that this determination is handled in a form that grants that determination visible and so representable (Thompson, 1978, p298). Working



The paradox of this is that of course the 'data' is people and places I know and have known. Moreover, the data is also my personal experience of living in and through particular social structural relations. It is to recognise that being alive to the facts is not a straightforward issue. It is in this sense, that it is easy to see how the weight of reflexivity is something that can sometimes lead to accusations of posturing, narcissism and ridiculousness; a form of mental-masturbation or 'wankery' as one man put it- what Bourdieu might refer to as an attempt to impose order via the universalisation of self. This is all the more pertinent when it is understood that a *particular* reflexive project is not a something that is a given and achievable (if even desirable) everyday practice- that is, it is not a universally embodied relationship to the world, a recognition of a self as a social self, a biographical project amongst others. Indeed, to talk about a reflexive project, an acting and intentional project in the same breath as 'everyday practice' is to conflate two very different worlds, two different forms of 'embodied practice' and relationship to the world.

### **3.5 Writing Up and Typing up**

Writing up the research has been a personally fragmenting experience in that in attempting to find a 'voice' and a narrative style that could capture my own attempts at academic writing while keeping the data of my research alive the finished writing can seem to be written by a number of different authors. Indeed, at the times of writing this has probably been the case: that is, that each period of writing can be qualified from each other by its relation to a relation of 'interruption'.<sup>116</sup> A central theme in this fragmentation and construction of fragments into a

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class was a word I had come to through university. Its traditional political ethos was never something I encountered in the field or in my own experience.

<sup>116</sup> This is one reason why I encountered writing and thinking in relation to the space between urge and action as a political space.

legible and linear order is again to come back to the management of time and the question of the difference or correspondence between lived time and 'writing time'.

Gilfillan (2000, p73) seems to capture the essential difficulties of projects such as this in that *'The task of representation has its own internal exigencies so that simply being working class is not enough for a writer whose avowed aim is to 'write about the world I know best'*. It is because working class being does not announce or represent itself that its accurate representation is just as exacting as being this being can be. That being and textually representing that being can be radically discontinuous is the fundamentally reflexive issue. It pushes to the forefront issues of representation and distance, values and the possibility of social scientific knowledge. As Caputo puts it, there is *'no naked contact with being which somehow shakes loose of the coded system'* (1997, p. 17).

Indeed, it is in the writing up that the institutional categories of perception and the distance between these accounts and 'everyday life' and perhaps how affinities towards the banality that is that there is no reality or that there are multiple realities can become known. Like Smith (1994) I became pre-occupied with sociology's *'strange divorce from the local actuality of people's lives'*: indeed, half way through my second year I desperately stopped reading and writing in order that I could 'appreciate' what I was experiencing: my difficulty was reconciling the lifestyle with the writing. Again, though, I believe that my attempts at a structure and a style and the anxiety I felt in writing up experience is related to the recognition that the forms of appropriation are themselves situated in concrete social situations and that, however illusive, the researcher should endeavour to incorporate these different perspectives into their analysis. It is a truism that words, writing and concepts are living things.



In the case of ethnography, this has meant a closer look at what it means to be 'there' and to be 'here', the ways in which 'authenticity' and 'distance' are managed, and a more reflexive account of what the ethnographic data 'says' or 'registers' about reality.<sup>117</sup> It is a set of questions that asked me to understand the process of understanding and relating itself, of literally and bodily being alive to the facts and how difficult this is or can be.

Indeed, as a traditional 'non-traditional'<sup>118</sup> entrant to higher education I am aware that particular forms of representation of social groups can be just that, representations that in 'deworlding' or 'anonymising' those it has drafted in its academic nets paradoxically reveals something of itself- the uncanny familiarity of social forms, of the statistical 'others', of the scripts that often run when people from different social locations encounter each other. In some cases these accounts border on the ridiculous, in others the assumption of a universal subjectivity and access to symbolic and material resources shines through.<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>117</sup> 'There is then a quotidian struggle over definitions of being an authentic person that, owing to individual's different positions in social hierarchies, are ordinarily fated never to meet directly in a face to face encounter but when they do in fact happen, much of what transpires can have the feeling of being utterly predictable' (Gilfillan, 1999, p123).

<sup>118</sup> In the UK Government policy aimed at 'widening participation' Glasgow there is a concerted aim to increase *awareness* of, and by doing so, participation in, higher education in what is or was known as working class populations: in relation to education those populations are now called 'non-trationals'. In contrast to the methods of *awakening* 'real learning' in pupils who have *already spent* 12 years in the education system (doing what and for whom?), It could be argued that a widespread carefully organised reflexive project concerned with actual and *immediate* social and cultural history (*not* an identity project) would awaken both value and meaning, not only in education but in what it means to talk about an 'identity' as a non traditional in the first place. There is no implicit reason why this should *inevitably* be, as Harvey would argue, 'anti-progressive' (cited in Massey, 1994, p135). Perhaps what is anti- progressive is the traditional flight from self- knowledge as knowledge. In any case, interesting times are ahead: 'Working class' access to higher education has increased and so the different particularities of working class experience will face the problem of representing this experience. Indeed, it has been through the experience of university that I have come to fully understand that there are different ways of knowing the world, different forms and movement for embodied consciousness to take (Hartsock, 1985).

<sup>119</sup> This is implicit in Hobbs (1997, p807-8) review of Parker's (1974) study of delinquency and the relations between the older and younger generation. That is, that rather than their activities being measured according to a prescribed set of values that appear to come from no where and apply to all people, they instead can be seen as 'an accommodation to a particular structural situation, rather than a rejection of dominant values and lifestyles'. This point has a fundamental gravity in that it implicitly attends to how different values are *ascribed* or *prescribed*. It asks researchers to evidence any distinction between mental structures and social structures.



In many ways I found accounts of the tension between the field and the academy, the 'here' and the 'there' of ethnography, as a means for expressing some of my own confusion and anxiety. I found some comfort in the ambiguity and worries that peppered the pages of ethnographic reflections (Charlesworth, 2000; Gilfillan, 1999; Coffey, 1999; Winlow, 2001; Hobbs, 1989). For example, I can empathise with ethnographic researchers who talk about 'living at the edges' (Ribbens, 1997) or of 'othering' (Aull Davies, 1999, p189) their social self. These accounts strike a chord with my own experiences. There is a continual sense of being *neither* here nor there, like some hybrid sense of social (non) being. Why? They illustrate my own bewilderment and incoherence when asked to reflect and research a place that was once familiar in its familiarity, and at the same time communicate this to my colleagues in the sociology department in a language that always seems to verge on the parasitical. However, at the same time the experience is also one that (as one friend put it) enables a 'dialogue of selves' however 'partial and precarious' that dialogue may be (Laclau, 1990).<sup>120</sup>

The identification of a relationship of difference between academic and field accounts has also been discussed in relation to what extent the interpreted data is an authentic representation. In the process of producing an academic product for consumption in a specialised field it is argued the finished product 'betrays' the intentions of those who are its subjects (Hobbs, 1993). On one hand this question seems straightforward, it simply asks does the writing reflect or capture the spirit of the field, or is it orientated towards the demands and rewards of the academy? And if so, what are the benefits and consequences?

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<sup>120</sup> The dialogue of selves is a dialogue that in fact dissolves and re makes the idea of a unitary *asocial* self. It asks the *researcher* to think beyond the self, beyond a unitary notion of culture, indeed beyond a unitary notion of subjectivity. To what extent this discovery of multiple subjectivities is an effect of the space and time experienced and afforded to a full time university research student is perhaps a research agenda in itself.



However, like the limits of utilitarianism when addressing ethics, there is more to validating the relationship between reality and our representations of it than employing triangulation methods or ticking off the boxes of an ‘authenticity’ checklist and comparing scores.

Knowledge itself is a social product and it is neither a priori, neutral nor objective (Smith, 1990). Forms of knowledge, and indeed what comes to be actually implicitly accepted as *the principle of legitimation for legitimating knowledge*, emerge under particular socio-economic and cultural conditions and relation. This relation between different forms of knowing is itself a possible object of knowledge and one that can increase understanding of the processes that make us the ‘social beings’ we are in a particular time and place.<sup>121</sup> On another level it may be an essential ingredient of a dynamic and progressive social science.<sup>122</sup>

Indeed, it is often in these moments of transition or difference that we come to ‘confront the limits of our own epistemology, our own visions of personhood, agency and history... they produce one way... of decoding those signs that disguise themselves as universal and natural, of engaging in unsettling exchanges with those, including scholars, who live in different worlds’ (Comaroff and Comaroff, p10).

For example, the distance between the field and the academy, between ‘authenticity’ and distance is also a reflection on the relations between those positions, and the different

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<sup>121</sup> This is a statement on both the different epistemological realities that people have access to and at the same time a questioning of what it means to be ‘social’ or ‘philosophical’. For example, Turnbull (1973, p289) notes that *‘those values which we cherish so highly and which some use to point to our infinite superiority over other forms of animal life may indeed be basic to society, but not to humanity, and that means that... society itself is not indispensable for man’s survival, that man is not the social animal he has always thought himself to be, and that he is perfectly capable of associating for purposes of survival without being social’* (my emphasis).

<sup>122</sup> As Horkheimer puts it, ‘However socially conditioned the thinking of individuals may be... it remains the thought of individuals who are not merely the products of collective processes but also make these processes the

orientations and choices towards everyday life that those positions can often entail. That is, the idea of authenticity is dismissed from the perspective of the researcher in the field yet authenticating authenticity is understood by the researcher to exist in a relational form. This reflexivity reconceptualises what might be meant by methodology (reflexive accounts of experience in a 'field' are one step removed from taking the 'instruments of knowledge' as the object of knowledge'). It is a way of seeing that situates experience (research and researched) and the social relations that those experiences give evidence to.

In discussing the methods and methodology of research it is clear that there are both advantages and difficulties in adopting the ethnographic approach. In particular, for research which not only involves the submergence of the researcher into a (supposedly foreign) culture, but one which, at least for the first twenty years of life, has been one's 'own' culture. Here, a challenge to notions of *a monolithic culture* has been presented as well the issues involved in returning, regaining (and maintaining) access to people and places. Explicating these concerns of research relationships are for this project as necessary as a detailed discussion of reflexivity and the construction of knowledge. Throughout this chapter, the groundwork for this has been laid. These methodological (as well as epistemological) concerns will remain at the heart of the thesis and surface throughout the empirical chapters, to which the discussion turns now.

Up to now, the informants of this project have emerged at various points and in many ways they have done so without much contextualising. Yet, as I have argued earlier (notably in Chapter 3), it is precisely this contextualising, the embedding (and trying to

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object of their thought' (1974, p219, cited in Arato and Gebhardt, 1978, p382). In this way objectivity can be 'maximised' (Harding, 1991, p164).



make explicit) of people's social relationships in specific places and times, that is required to understand the relevance, meaning and dimensions of interpersonal violence amongst men. It is for these reasons that the empirical part of this thesis will start with an introduction of 'Some of my men', as Chapter 4 begins to chart the biographies of several key informants and situates them within Easterhouse and the research project.

#### 4 Some of the Men

*'Before they met you man they already had you made'* (Bob Marjuper, lyric in song Golden Cadillac)

*'Most quarrels come from conflicting ideas of a man's character but nobody fights over his phone number, and if we were content to describe each other numerically, giving height, weight, date of birth, size of family, home address, business address and (most informative of all) annual income, we would see that below the jangling opinions was no disagreement on the main realities'* (Alisdair Gray, 1981, p108).

In writing about individual characters there is a worry that I may be compounding what for a number of them is the daily relation to the threat of symbolic and physical violence. It took me some time to realise that it wasn't the act of representing or writing about 'my' men itself that worried me it was the way in which I was doing it and what it was I was trying to represent. This felt sense is akin to my worries about the practice of reflexivity; that is, that it can become a post- hoc self- serving exercise: a 19<sup>th</sup> century romanticism encountered as 21<sup>st</sup> century solipsism; my thoughts, my work, my ego on a rampage of unique uniqueness. It is an emotional runtery that objectifies to possess and uses emotion to mystify.<sup>123</sup> In this case, I was transposing the very modern and successful method of learning that I had learned in my undergraduate degree to the field of post-graduate research.

What I mean by this is that when I was asked to reflect on myself and to reflect on what my research was about the most common answer I could find was 'nothing'. I did not know what I



was looking for or what I had to do. In this sense, I fell back on what I always and already knew: that is, how to work with what is taken to be power and taken to have value- get a grip on anything that seems to be moving. For me, what was moving was always moving away from the 'ethnographic', the ethnographic was a fixing in place of people and place. With retrospect, my 'tactics' were to work with this 'instrumentality' and at the same time attempt to reconcile my urge to constant criticism. Writing and representation seemed more real.

As a late entrant to higher education I recognise that what is meant by education has often very little to do with how things are formally learned or what is formally learned. In other words, there seems to be an instrumental posture towards what the experience is worth or what is being looked for. What I theorise as an aspect of my use of reflexivity is that I have learned to see time and its emergence and implication for practice as of fundamental importance in coming to assess practice and how other people's practice is objectified.<sup>124</sup>

Of course, the other side to this is the reactionary and defensive, the smallest gap between the urge and the action as where reality is disappeared and run from and yet at the same time evidences a relation to reality. My worries, then, were that an aspect of my gendered class habitus is a relationship and sensitivity to relations of domination. I followed this along two main strands of thought, that is, masculinity and its constitution as a form of practical reason that is founded in physical violence; and an awareness of symbolic violence and the means to symbolic, cultural and material resources that is explicit in a society that values technocratic and bureaucratic forms of thinking.

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<sup>123</sup> This is why reflexive accounts that reduce reflexivity to the feelings and positionality of the author are often encountered as crude or illusory in their sincerity.

<sup>124</sup> What remains is that ultimately, '*... all statements of objects are statements of relations among objects*' (Holmwood and Stewart, 1991, p17).

While I have a certain sense of anxiety in giving an account of some of the men who I met in my research (however brief) I believe that it adds to the construction of the thesis in that it animates my discussions of violence with a sense of lived life and its contingencies and sometimes utter expectation and stereotype. Indeed, while violence remains a key theme in the following discussions I have attempted to go beyond that list of descriptive bullet points or demographic statistics that often seems simply to reintroduce the utter familiarity or structuring structures of social and economic relations. In this sense I use the men's own words as often as possible to describe their relationship to violence. The following account is of some of those men who gave me their time and patience in the interview setting and beyond.

### ***Brian Igbutt***

Brian Igbutt is a key informant: he gave me two formal interviews (taped) and we had many informal conversations over the period. He was born in the east end of Glasgow about 60 years ago. He came to Easterhouse in 1970. He is married, lives on and off with his wife (depending on his relationship to her and to alcohol) and has three grown up children. He is of a heavy build that has through time become accentuated via his belly. He is, in the words of a Dennis Leary song, a self-proclaimed 'asshole'.<sup>125</sup> This is Brian's description of not only himself but of most people who enter his company when he has been drinking alcohol (vodka, beer, cider). For Brian an asshole is someone who in recognising their own feelings of being 'shafted' (exploited/used) does not lose what keeps them human. It is his way of relating to himself and to others. If he was someone who frequented the local pub and could then survive the night without winding anyone up Brian could be described as a local philosopher. The

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<sup>125</sup> The song 'Asshole' is found on Leary's album *No Cure for Cancer*.



manner, style and volume of his *'your nuthin but an ASSHOLE'*! is legendary amongst those who know him. When I asked him to expand on the meaning of his 'arseholeness' Brian duly obliged by telling me his rationale: *'A see maself how other people see me... as a da an aw that... What a love tae dae Pat is tae burst people's balloons... a'll take them tae themselves and then it's a fine line between bein asked tae go outside... whenever that happened a wis away pronto... whenever it came tae the crunch a wis aff'*. People's balloons are what Brian sees as the amount of 'puff' they have blown into a particular reality or vision of themselves. In effect, Brian (dis)engaged with the more common notion of 'getting bursted' by adapting psychological guerrilla tactics. That is, he attempted to remain in control in situations of potential violence by pre-empting them! Brian's son describes Brian's talent for challenging amateur psychology as 'Brian: The Great Manipulator.'

I have known Brian for twenty years and have shared many a merry and not so merry night with him, Gemma (his wife) and their children (my peers). As a teenager I have memories of his fear of losing *'my time'* and the coming of *'your time'* (a reference to him growing older and the *'young wans comin thru'*). To hold back this 'coming of age' or end of paradigm and to reinstate himself as one of the boys Brian challenged the teenage company to a scotch pie eating contest. Brian ate five pies and drank about a bottle of vodka before falling asleep after a brief visionary ramble. Brian remains as generous a character as ever with both his time, his offerings and his opinions. He has had three significant, steady and well paid skilled working class jobs in his life. The last of these jobs was the end of his own adaptation to the local employment market; that is, he left the building trade and reinvented himself as a self-employed driving instructor. He eventually gave up his self-employed status and went to work for a company doing the same things he did when self-employed. After a lifetime of work he was given a weeks notice and that was his paid working life finished. In the aftermath of

losing his last job he filled the available socially mutilated time by supporting himself with one of the enduring remnants of that worked life: primarily drink and secondly golf on sky sports (Before his eyesight deteriorated Brian used to read a lot of biographical novels). In that period of fugue he arrived at my door at ten in the morning looking like a shambles insisting I follow him to a nearby street whereby he described what the area was like when he lived here as a child and how 'coppers' and teachers lived alongside the people they worked with. In that small hour I failed Brian because I did not take him in with the same capacity for openness he had shown to me. Brian described an enduring memory: *'Think aboot this, a wis aboot ten and wis asked tae spell that street name... so a stood there memorising it... that teacher's sister lived oan that street... when a wis aboot seventeen/eighteen a wis up her hoose fur a party lit that, remember me spellin that street name... Whit ye've gote tae remember Pat is that that street wis lit a village'*.

Brian can talk and has an opinion on most matters. He often evidences an underlying tension in his life in that on the one hand he is well aware of how our understandings and moral horizons can change through experience and through time and yet there are recurring themes in his memories that have a certain dead weight. He remarks that *'a read that Catch-22 when a wis eighteen an wis rollin aboot the flair laffin. Tae me then that book wis spot on and wis sayin everythin a wanted tae hear... a read it when a wis forty an coudnae get past the third page'*. He is aware of how he has physically changed and how people's relationship to what makes us laugh can change: what *animates* the 'sense' and meaning of an experience in one time thus can be seen to fade away in another: the impression or memory of the impression remains but the He tells me that *'a canny look at ma mug in the mirror anymare... its as if it isnae me... when thur any photos getting took a scarper'*. Brian knows what age means in all its glory for him. I know him as a friend and I asked him for a few formal interviews in his



home. On telling Brian that I was using what he had said in my thesis and that I needed to introduce him to the reader it was then he asked that I describe him as an '*arsehole*'.

### ***Tommy Vercetti***

Tommy Vercetti is a key informant in my research. He was born in the east end of Glasgow thirty three years ago and has lived in Easterhouse since then. He is about five foot nine and of a heavy chinned over leaning and towards you build. When not working and not lying about the house he likes to wear black trousers, shirt and black leather jacket. His grey hair makes him look older than his thirty three years. He is a welcoming and friendly character when he is sober which is rare. In conversation with people he knows well Tommy has the tendency to 'talk over' and to utterly dominate conversations often with conversation that has nothing whatsoever to do with the informational content of the very conversation just drowned; this is something he seemed surprised about when told by a female friend whose company he shared at a party.

Tommy asked me if this was an accurate description of him and I was glad to tell him that this is the case. However, as far as my own understanding is concerned, it is a tendency that is present as a feature of local conversations as a whole (albeit in a diluted form): that is, the space to talk is never given as a platform for expression before moving onto the next speaker (the formalities or rituals of speech are already abbreviated), it is one that is literally and continually overlapping and being 'fought over' to the extent that there is often little listening going on as far as content is concerned. It is as if everyday talk is always economised and always kept by for when it is really needed. Much of what is and can be said has already been said and so is communicated in the tone and emotion of the voice and the meanings related in

body language. Again, the form of the body and its relation to emotion is conceptualised politically and materially.

Indeed, in the small and cramped living room at one party I watched with others as a brief exchange of 'ha's!' and 'aye right' were communicated between Tommy and another man which became a refusal to modify their body stances and then eye contact in relation to each other. This theatre of 'communication' or 'mimetic rivalry' developed into a face to face exchange of invitations to share actual symbolic space and to assess the density and capacity of each others physiognomy expressed in the evolution of such terms of reference as 'come intae me' and 'ye think yer hard enuf' to the more contemporary immediacy of 'here huv this' and 'fuck you'. In this particular case both men informed the other that they were well aware of the other's reputation but in this case that reputation would be put to the test. There was no 'history' between them other than the shared reputation of being known through violence, the local 'badge of honour' in that *'every fight and every successful fight is lit a badge of honour. Av battered fuck oot a him so a can batter fuck oot a you. Don't mess wi me, don't piss me off'* (Bob Marjuper, Interview in my flat, 12<sup>th</sup> May 2002).

Indeed, as will be seen it is often this public and 'shared' violent repute that brings men together in a fight to remain the imaginary local number one. In this sense, what is often called the will to refuse the dominance of other men is also to *refuse* the symbolic threat to their status as the local with the reputation. This is because reputation as violent repute is perceived as having value, hence the equation respect equals enjoyment and anxiety. One woman describes it as having a close relationship to envy, *'Bein the big man, bein the biggest. They've gote tae show that they're big oot there'* (Velma, Interview in Stanley's flat, 15<sup>th</sup> June, 2002). This 'refusal', then, is often a justification for *enacting* actual physical violence in that



seemingly unrelated acts of violence can bring together those who share the same horizontal social space. There is no reason yet everyone who participates knows.

Tommy very rarely travels beyond the city's boundaries. He has been out with Scotland once when he visited Europe on a golfing holiday with his work mates, a holiday he refers to as consisting mainly of drink, diarrhoea and being glad to arrive back at Glasgow airport still alive. The other occasion he can recall really leaving the city (as opposed to its implantation on an island called Bute on the west coast of Scotland) was on another golfing holiday with his work mates near the English/Scottish border. He describes how the local hotelier promised that bookings from Glasgow City Council would no longer be accepted to the area as a whole after there had been running battles outside the hotel/pub with the local men. Tommy describes the long weekend as a League of Gentlemen style experience, one that saw his involvement in a fight with a local tough and his subsequent participation in what he now describes as a porno video set up; he describes how him and his friend were asked to come back to a local's (*she wis lit a big Bridget Neilson*) mirrored bedroom and have sex with her in front of a mirrored wardrobe. During the sex Tommy and his friend were asked to stop laughing, position themselves in front of the wardrobe and '*take this seriously*'. On return to the local hotel the local taxi driver was surprised that only two men had left the house and informed Tommy and his friend that the woman in question was a Mrs whose husband had been known to enjoy his wife's home movies.

In sociological text Tommy could be seen as 'out of place' or perhaps a throwback to a different time and as always 'out of date'.<sup>126</sup> He rarely listens to music but if he was to name

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<sup>126</sup> Even when being out of date is fashionable.

his favourite song it could be found between *'Somewhere over the Rainbow'* and *'The Fields of Athenry'*. Indeed, it was only recently that Tommy was involved in a 'my hi-fi is louder than yours' debate between a neighbour who on opening his front window would invite Tommy to pick out the words of *'The Sash my Father Wore'*. Tommy responded by playing *'The Soldier Song'* continuously throughout the afternoon and evening. This 'banter' lasted on and off for a few days and generated a lot of heat that later died down to a malign paranoia and everyday tension that Tommy would rhythmically threaten to break. Tommy's favourite movie is found somewhere between *'Chopper'* and *'Goodfellas'*.<sup>127</sup> His affection for *Goodfellas* is often made known in his playful parodies on the theme of *'cutting cunts up tae fuck'* in an American Italian accent (namely those Tommy sees as deserving of this. This invariably means those who have challenged him and who thus see him as a lesser ego than he sees himself). On watching *Chopper* I sense that Tommy empathises with the central character's ambivalence and complexity when it comes to matters of actual violence as a feature of everyday life.

Tommy hides nothing in that everything that is Tommy is there to see. It is in this respect that Tommy understands himself as privileged and able to point out to people the very thing that they would least like to hear. At the same time this relationship to himself is one that Tommy understands as leaving him vulnerable and open to stereotype- he understands what a democracy of feeling means to someone lives outside the social and outside of politics. In getting to know Tommy this vulnerability is experienced most in formal meetings; those times

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<sup>127</sup> The film *Chopper* centres on the life of Mark Brandon 'Chopper' Read, an Australian criminal whose violent exploits and appearance in the public eye have lent him an aura of legend. The film is both unflinching and challenging in its portrayal of Read's relationships with his victims and those that know him. *Goodfellas* tells the story of one man's aspirations and eventual realisation to be a gangster.



when objectivity and *'aw the lingo'* is part and parcel of the occasion.<sup>128</sup> More importantly, my understanding of Tommy's relationship to life as a singularity is one where it becomes possible to see how Tommy often encounters people as 'two faced', especially those with the resources to psychologically fund multiple identities.

Tommy is now separated from his partner and their children. He lives with a male friend who has experienced similar circumstances as Tommy in that he no longer has custody of his children. Tommy left school without any qualifications. He was talented at sports and admits that if it wasn't for drink he could have developed himself more in these areas. At present he has the same skilled manual job he has had for the last fifteen years. It is the one structure in his life that provides an element of support in that it structures his day and pays him a weekly wage (Tommy says that he would blow a monthly wage in a week). I have real fears for Tommy's well being if he was to lose his job.

When not working Tommy heads to the local pub or to the local off license. He is keenly aware of his own reputation and capacity for using violence. Much of Tommy's talk is about not only his own potential violence but the motives and intentions of others (*'av always said that people choose their victims'*). He is adamant that there are 'some' who will *'staun oan yer heid'* if they *'get ye doon'*. *'They junkie bastards kin take a liberty... the big cunt asked me fur a fag an then started tae dig me up cos a didnae huv any... he booted me right in the solar plexus, y'know, he knew whit he wis dain, the cunt wis tryin tae deck mi. A wis lit this, 'awright big man, cmon then'* (face red with rage, neck muscles bulging, arms beckoning).

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<sup>128</sup> This is a reference to the 'officialese' of the Social Work meetings that Tommy was compelled to attend under threat of his children being taken into protective custody.

*A took ma jaickit aff an the big fuckin wummin ran away across the road greetin fur mae no tae hit him!*

Indeed he is always keen to offer his advice on what I should be looking for with regards to writing about violence and the 'meaning' of violence and who I should be wary of or who would be useful for me to talk to. I have known Tommy for a number of years and did ask him for a formal interview which he declined. He was to become my 'gatekeeper' to one of the local pubs and I had and continue to have regular contact with him throughout the thesis.

### ***Stanley Made***

Stanley Made is a key informant in my research. He is fifty five years old and has been on incapacity benefit for the last twenty five years after an acute and serious medical condition. Up until that time he has been employed in a number of jobs that included labourer, post man and road sweeper. He is a widower and has four grown up children (one died aged twelve). He is about five foot six and has the shrunken physical appearance of a man ten years older and jokes about how on digging the shared back garden he pulled a muscle where '*ma muscles used to be*'. Stanley is an alcoholic and alcohol is one part in the explanation of his physical appearance. Stanley came to Easterhouse in the 1950's as a young boy in a family of three siblings. It is here I have to pause for thought and think about how I am using what I know of Stanley to animate a thesis on violence. That is, to what extent these extracts make contact with the contingency that is his life and to what extent I call upon categories of thought that are already in place.



In his teenage years through to his thirties and his hospitalisation he invested a lot of energy in the emerging cultural apprenticeships of the time, that is, the activity that to some was being a 'good guy' (Brian Igbutt's description that Stanley's motivation for violence was always 'just' or that he was provoked) and to others was being an 'evil cunt' (Stanley's self description of beating people up for '*nuthin at aw*') or as '*somethin else*' (a peer and fellow 'gang' member- 'jumpin about the gather sounds more apt- Joe Kelly's description of Stanley's fighting repute).<sup>129</sup> In simple terms, in developing and honing his physical capacity and skills for violence in borstal, prison and then a 'free' environment Stanley would use these skills to enhance his reputation as a local fighter. His relationship and reputation in violence was one that moved through everything he took part in and like every other man interviewed who was born into the 1945 generation this relationship to violence found expression in the family home and was shared unselfishly with the wife, children and extended family.

Indeed, his relationships with other men (and with his wife who stood as his relationship to women) were invariably weighted in this regard and can be seen not as a wholly subjective or individualised choice of 'career' but as an element of a 'collective inscription'.<sup>130</sup> This collective relationship to individual reputation and what it means to be comes through in his description of both drinking and in his other main cultural activity which was 'fleein the

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<sup>129</sup> In *The Naked Lunch* (1959) William Burroughs describes the '*face of evil*' as '*always the face of total need*'. In other words, 'evil' is being disclosed in its relations of complete dependency and domination of a self. For all Stanley's local legendary status as a fighter I sensed that his description of himself as a '*complete fucking idiot*' reveals something of how he used and resorted to violence through the eyes of others and so reveals the narrowness of his own experience. Moreover, I also sense that Stanley bases his descriptions of his past activities on his current experience of life. This expertise in violence cannot be brought to life in its fullness except by thick descriptions.

<sup>130</sup> Every man under forty I have formally interviewed and spoken to in conversation reports their father's intimacy with violence and alcohol.

doos'.<sup>131</sup> Similarly, in this short account there is a recognition of the 'double intensity' of violence as an element of culture when large amounts of people find themselves crammed into the one space. Moreover, Stanley's last paragraph is a succinct recognition of the changing ethos and outlooks that can join activities across generations and at the same time mark the end of a paradigm: for Stanley the extent of change is such that thirty years ago is like '*twenty million fuckin years ago*';<sup>132</sup>

PQ: '*Wan thing a remember when a wis younger aroon here wis the amount a hassle that doos caused*'.

Velma: '*A remember that a naw. A remember going doon if there wis hassle an we wid be fightin the lassies. Goin doon wi a dug's leash, an they've gote something as well*'.

Stanley: '*That wis me getting a bit calmed doon by this time a naw. CID told me a tale wance, said they hud been aw ower Scotland, lit Govan, the Gorbals. They wur telling me exactly how much trouble they'd seen through doos. Lit they went up a guy's loft an seen everywan of the guy's doos nailed tae the wa'. The guy wis aw ripped an stabbed tae fuck an aw that. (PQ: Fur doos?!) This is whit the CID told me.*

PQ: '*Wis it tae dae wi the money ye made aff the doos?*

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<sup>131</sup> Fleein the doos is, as Katz (2002, p73) notes, one of those activities where culture can be seen to emerge as a solution to specific problems. That is, in this case, the character of the necessity is that there was 'fuck all tae dae'.

<sup>132</sup> Velma is a neighbour who visited Stanley while I was interviewing him. She joined in.



Stanley: *At the end of the day, it wisnae then. In they days money didnae come intae it. It wis how good your doo wis against his hen or how good your hen wis against his doo. If ye gote caught dain a dirty trick, or the dirty tricks ye could dae.*

PQ: *That's aw a remember aboot the doos, wis the dirty tricks. That's aw ye ended up seein.*

Velma: *Aye, lit aw the throwing stanes up ontae the roof of the loft.*

Stanley: *A never done that, they used tae dae that tae mine.*

PQ: *Its funny innit, its lit a code about fleeing doos that's always in the making.*

Stanley: *Don't dae this, don't dae that. There wis rules an lit everythin else some people break them. It's a really auld pastime that wis made up before the television an aw that. A remember when a wis that height an a stayed in the toon, an goin intae a guy's room an the whole room wis full a pens. He used tae flee them oot his bottom flat windae. Twenty million fuckin year ago. A load a people huv tried tae keep it gawn but a load a people huv fell away. A wid never go back tae it. A coudnae be annoyed wi it again.*

*Ye needed a good distance between ye's tae play it right. Then it wis hard tae dae a dirty trick. See when everybody started tae put them next tae each other, it wis too easy tae dae a dirty trick. When a flew them there used tae be a guy away up there who used tae be the best doo fleer. Noo its aw too near ye.*

*We wur talking the other night, noo that wur talking aboot how people get intae fights an aw that. See wee Malky, he murdered a guy outside the doo shop. It wis a guy who wis screwin his*

*dookit. He's oot noo, that's how long ago it wis. Ye know who it wis he murdered? It wis Trish McMahan's brother in law.*

*PQ: People getting murdered fur doos. I can see it though, a can remember the trouble wi doos.*

*Stanley: The anger an aw that, av hud it, av hud it, an other things. The guys fae (up the road) they went up an screwed sumdae's dookit. The guys fae (doon there) came up, big Harry he's dead noo, he wis telling us, walked in tae the pub an said 'is Gary Peters here'. Gary stood up, pishin 'imself, these guys took oot a sawn aff shotgun, wur gonny blow them aw away.*

*PQ: Where does aw this come fae?*

*Stanley: Somedae dain something wrang tae somedae else. Could be doos, could be something else. Wee Bob O'Shee, he screwed Billy's, took aw the doos doon tae his da but his da hud that strict code of ethics, so he kept them doon in his basement. His da widnae take them.*

It is here that Stanley found a harmony between his own structures of feeling and the returns afforded to him by his own socio-economic and cultural resources. That is, violence as a systemic feature of life can hold a simple currency in itself, one that resonated with the social relational processes of the class structure, the very processes that contribute to the creation of a substantive something. Stanley remarks that *'A fought this big Brian, this big cunt. Ye go through yer whole fuckin life lit that... The rage, just fur gein ye a shown up in front a people. It wis lit, that's aw ye hid, a didnae huv a penny in ma pocket, it wis ma respect an that. That*



*wis it like. Ye felt great efter that. Same as other guys but... It wis aw self-esteem an respect or whit ever ye want tae call it like. It wis just like ye couldnae get brote down, nae cunt could laugh at ye.*' This profound sensitivity to 'being brought down' is this embodied sensitivity to national politics and how it is transposed to local politics and so to the attempts to escape local politics through the generation of a better self: that is, the nature of that historical reality itself and the 'successes' of those affluent working class and those who inhabit those perverse televised national averages and are seen as having 'nothing' (spam valley) because they have invested so much in a something that from 'here' (Stanley's position) was weak, diluted and yet generated such emotion.<sup>133</sup>

This 'nothing' was everything that did not encapsulate being a man: for Stanley being a man in Easterhouse in the 1970's and 1980's was everything that a wife both expected of a man and their children would come to both hate and love in a man.

For Stanley *'makin a fool of ye wis worse than hittin ye'*. Being made to look stupid or being laughed at was worse than being hit because hitting was at least understood as a

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<sup>133</sup> 'Spam Valley' was a description of those who lived in the nearby private housing scheme in the late 1970's and 1980's. The descriptor 'spam' was used to refer to Easterhouse council tenants' understanding of the amount of money the people in the privately bought houses must have left to buy food after paying their mortgage. The perverse national average is in relation to the 'national average wage'; this did not relate to the amount of money earned in the local economy. Again, though, this 'snapshot' does not capture the sense of living or of projecting past experience and the rendering of risk as a meaningful category. As one man intuits, 'its when the money runs out that the shit hits the fan'. When an economy based on economic principles slows, everyone's backs are to the walls. It is then that ideals of natural harmony between the different classes are tested. Of course, from a perspective that identifies 'working class' or 'middle class' as income based or as a static category this sense of resentment would make perfect political sense. Anger and violence would then have a rationale and a path that has already been trodden. The point about national averages though is that for 'activists' like Stanley the techniques for 'overclocking' what was already known were known through the everyday processes of everyday life. In other words, the engagement with averages was an engagement with himself and all those who he knew: those who stayed remained losers and those who left magnified this position. This is why the recurring theme of the 'wee stupid things' as incitements to violence have such clarity. This has some correlation with Lea and Young's point that *'in economically abandoned locales the 'average risk' calculation, which claims that in Britain a 'statistically average' person can expect to be the victim of violence once every 100 years, ignores the*

commensurate language, as a relation to being that could be 'conversed' with. It is this general character and sensitivity to ridicule that reveal the thin skin and *singularity* of Stanley's *adult* experience: it exposed him to himself and in the process revealed those relations to power and domination that structure social, economic and cultural processes. Stanley's expertise in violence 'protected' him from this anonymity and at the same time allowed him to find a value and sense of both enjoyment and achievement in this total experience: it was as real as real could be. This paranoid reality is attractive because of this 'authenticity'. However, this use of the authentic and singular self as a form of capital is always one that operates on high risks. Indeed, perhaps it is this high risk strategy and singularity to the market that generates the perception that there are only 'good guys' or 'wankers' and that to know a good guy or a wanker is to know them as soon as you have met them.

It was not until his early thirties and just after the sobering (and incapacitating) effect of his own personal brain haemorrhage that (Stanley) '*a went lit that, 'fuck it, av hud enough a this'. Its lit some a them just gote worse and worse. Umpteen a them are dead noo or livin a horrible life.*' Indeed, in the many conversations I have had with Stanley during the course of my research it seems as if he is one of the few men still alive from the crowd that used to '*jump about the gither*' in the 1970's and 80's (Two of his peers are encountered in detail in my ethnographic chapter).

The majority of his peers continued to live in Easterhouse and indeed his violent memories of these now older men was a source of much reflection and up to the minute information. I do not know how many people Stanley '*jumped about*' with but I do know that in the course of

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extreme variation of victim hood across social and geographical space and the reality of '*... the daily spontaneous outbursts of violence in the margins ...*' (1993, p39 cited in Hall, 2002).



four years I have heard him as a fifty one to fifty five year old account five 'natural' deaths of his peers and one murder: there is a desire to outlive the bastards. He revealed the violent thread that runs through the hidden local history of the area.

*'He (three doors up) done about 20 cunts roon aboot here. An that wisnae him hingin aroon wi oor gang or that. He just done it fur money lendin an other things lit that through drugs, chappin cunts doors and rippin theirjaws fur nuthin, well no nuthin. That George Dayer, a guy a huv known aw ma life, his fuckin boy as well... We wur talking the other night, noo that wur talking about how people get intae fights an aw that. See wee Malky, he murdered a guy outside the doo shop.<sup>134</sup> It wis a guy who wis screwin his dookit. He's oot noo, that's how long ago it wis. Ye know who it wis he murdered? It wis Trish Murphy's brother in law... As a said, that time away back when ye would run aboot wi the gangs an aw that. We used tae hing aboot wi loads. See the amount a guys roon here who huv been in an out fur murder, through aw the gangs, in they days. See him right across fae Robbie, he's that guy that Tommy (Vercetti) says he's the only guy that he likes roon here, a wonder if he knows he's been done fur murder an aw.'*

For Stanley, violence as 'cultural capital' is revealed for what it is worth in today's rates of exchange when he described how an old acquaintance (*him across the road*) attempted to intervene in the running battles between two groups of local youths and found that paradigm

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<sup>134</sup> In conversation with a local man I was told that this man is the only man in Scotland (*he's fucking cuckoo, you should speak to him*) who on being convicted for murder was returned to the same council house flat that he had lived in before his conviction.

shifts can be abrupt .<sup>135</sup> *'Whit dae a dae Stanley, a went doon thinking a wis still the age when we went aboot an they wid still know us an aw that. A wis lit, right, fuckin rap it up, tryin tae stope them fightin an stope this, an dae that. Broken ribs, broken leg, broken erm, battered tae fuck. Know whit a mean. In those days he wid huv went ahead, the cunts wid huv run away, huv respected him. Just like another wan, just get fuckin intae 'im. He wis tryin tae get them tae rap up whit they wur dain an aw that.'*

Back then 'in those days' Stanley sees 'respect' (*wis aw ye hud*) as founded in violent performance and capacity. Here we see how a real –time biologically disempowered body can find the gap between the symbolic and the material (*a still feel the same way a did when a wis twenty one, Brian Igbutt*) very real. The experience and use of symbolic and physical violence, then, was a significant feature of Stanley's life and remains a strong element in what he has to talk about in conversation when he is drinking. Indeed, the intensity and the dark *Ad Sensum* core of Stanley's early adult life stands in complete contrast to what is often the vacuum of his present everyday existence of boredom and *'findin something tae dae apart fae drink... a went up the back road tae the shopes tae make it mare interestin'*. Indeed, the 'shopes' and then in for a pint is what Stanley does. This routine is interspersed with intricate descriptions of what and how much food he has had to eat that day: he structures and measures his day in this way and indeed it is why I think he still lives in relation to his friends. This is how Stanley 'spends' his leisure time.<sup>136</sup>

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<sup>135</sup> Again, it is to see the body in situ as a 'simultaneously biological and social phenomenon' which through time has 'provided people with different opportunities fro action' (Shilling, 1993, p213). To recognise vilence as cultural capital

<sup>136</sup> Stanley described the overwhelming feelings of facing reality without drink in terms that pointed to the quality of the experience- everything seemed to look clearer, taste better, feel stronger and this in itself was also applicable to the experience of boredom. The drink seems, in one respect, an aid to forgetting a self and to neutralising boredom and frustration. Again, what is important here, is the identification of an everyday activity as somehow missing something. Everyone has to eat and everyone has to prepare food or pay someone else to prepare food for them. This 'realism' is challenged by its very boredom for Stanley.



I interviewed Stanley once which took place in his one bed roomed flat. The interview took place reluctantly after much reassurance that what he said would only be used after he had seen the transcript and that all names would be changed. I had regular contact with Stanley over the period of the research most of which took place over a few cans of beer in his flat or in one of the local pubs. I knew Stanley before my research but had not engaged in conversation with him to any great degree. I chased after Stanley as a potential interviewee after Tommy Vercetti advised me that *'if ye want tae talk aboot violence talk tae Stanley. A don't think ye really know how much of a name he hud in Easterhouse'*. It was in talking to Stanley that I could see that the relationship between violence and power was both real and illusion.

### ***Bob Marjuper***

Bob Marjuper is thirty five years old and now lives just outside Glasgow. Officially he still lives in Easterhouse with his mother and father. I have known Bob for over three years. He lives with his partner and their ten year old daughter in a two bed roomed flat in a block of eight. At present, he returns to his parents house in Easterhouse at the weekends to escape the torment supplied by the local fourteen to eighteen year olds who hang around his back court and his close drinking white cider and fortified wine come Friday and Saturday nights (more on this later). Bob is about five foot ten and of a heavy bordering on the sixteen and a half stone bouncer build. Since leaving school with two O levels Bob worked in a variety of temporary jobs before finding himself in his most recent and long held post as a senior care assistant working with those people known as the elderly. It is a job he enjoys but one he sees as closed as far as promotion and a career are concerned. Prior to this employment Bob

worked nights as a door steward on pubs and clubs. He is also a musician in a band. When not working Bob writes songs and plays video games. He enjoys smoking hash regularly.

Bob is an open and warm person and indeed recognises this in himself as his special ability- yet there is something revealing in his self description of himself as a '*selfish bastard*' and as '*needing looked after*'. In the context of a formal interview he states violence disgusts him and is something he does not want any part of. In knowing Bob I know this to be largely true except for one minor detail; that is, Bob *is* violent when it comes to conflict with his brother and people he knows who know him in relation to his physical strength. Bob's fantasy is the western movie and the bar room brawl: that is real violence equalized according to his own choosing and akin to the phenomenological 'bracketing' of experience from history. For Bob, reality should have codes of engagement and clearly defined algorithms. Out with his own algorithms Bob doesn't know what to do. His violence with his brother is invariably bounded and known for its limits but has on occasions left the realms of brotherly love and required a visit to casualty (this incident is discussed in detail in chapter three of the thesis). I asked Bob for an interview because I wanted to tap into his experience of door stewarding and the apparent conflict with his non-violent stance ('*am a shitebag and always have been*'). As he puts his own relationship to violence

*Bob: Its more feelings, than actually able tae put it into words. Ye know whit ye feel, ye feel well put aff when ye see somebody hittin somebody else. Ye want tae step in, an the person even though they might be in control lit a bouncer, yer workmate, ye still want tae staun in an tell them tae stope an calm doon an dae it the obvious way. If somebody is creatin trouble an they're no gonny walk oot ye obviously grab them and eject them fae the pub in such a way that your no really resortin tae violence yerself and your no gonny get any damage tae yerself.*



*Yer no wantin tae get involved in somethin that disgusts ye, an it does me. A don't want involved in any violence in any shape form or whatever.*

*PQ: It seems a strange sort of jobe tae go intae if ye don't want tae be involved in violence!*

*Bob: Aye, a wis only dain that cos big Richard (Longley, see below) asked me and there wis a lot a wimin there. That wis the first thing he said tae me, its yer easy access tae wimin an it certainly wis. A hud so many wimin comin up an treatin me wi awe. Am lit this, 'whit did a dae tae deserve this', dae a look good. But it wisnae, it is the stature of the jobe an they au wanted tae huv sex wi a bouncer an a happened tae fit the bill so it wis great fur me... A met Sandra an eventually a lost ma jobe cos of Sandra (his partner of eleven years).*

As will be seen, as my research progressed Bob's deteriorating home situation and his reflections on the options available to him to deal with this situation provided me with some insight into the demands of representing conditions and personal structuring realities that are not intimately lived by the researcher themselves. For Bob, his anxiety towards violence was one that he came to associate with his very sense of himself as a man and as the sense that he should be the protector of his *'wummin and the wean... Wonder whit she must be thinking about me'*. It is worthwhile fixing this feeling in relation to how Bob perceives his current 'home' situation.<sup>137</sup>

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<sup>137</sup> For Bob the saying that *'ye feel yer hoose isnae yer ane'* in relation to anxiety about noise and threats to well being (and their effects on sleep, health etc) is compounded by the fact that officially he does not live there. In a later conversation Bob revealed to me that *'a broke doon in work right in front of everyone'*. He described how the image of his mother and father struggling up a grass verge through a hole in the railings to get the bus home after visiting him was like a catharsis. Like Brian Igbutt Bob's father recently lost his job and in the process could not afford a car. Bob expressed that everything that had been happening of late *'just came oot an a wis greetin fur about five minutes.... A coudnae stope... everythin seemed better efter it'*.

Bob phoned me late, one in the morning, to tell me his close was on fire. It was one in the morning and a group of well known faces, teenage males and females, had carted the plastic communal dustbin from the back court into the ground floor landing. The bin was set on fire. As the bin burned the flames melted the phone lines out of the building and sent black smoke through the close and up the shared landings. Bob had phoned the fire brigade on his mobile phone because the land lines were burned out. He was telling me '*we can't get out the building*' (his partner, their nine year old daughter, their dog and him). Bob's building is at the end of a street in an area that is being regenerated/demolished. His close is the last one on the street and most immediate to the local licensed grocer who has become an object of fantasy for locals themselves.<sup>138</sup>

The smoke had spread throughout the building and they had resorted to hanging their heads out of the window to breathe. From the window Bob saw the fire brigade arrive to extinguish the fire. He also saw the young men and women who had started the blaze 'whooping it up' close by, cheering and laughing at what they had done. Apparently they lived half a mile up the road. Bob said he didn't know what to do. His partner recognized a few of the young men and reported their names to the CID when they came by the next day. Bob was worried that he might be targeted if any of the arsonists were charged. His daughter went to stay with relatives for a few days. His partner wrote a letter to the council housing department asking for a move. She has since went to the local GP 'pretending' she has a list of anxious and depressive symptoms. However, the times when GP'S could add bonus points to someone waiting on the housing list are long gone because 'everyone is at it'. Bob didn't know what to do. He felt it was because he and 'the other guy up the next close' had been targeted because they had

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<sup>138</sup> For many people the problems lie with the off license itself. This has resulted in talk about what it would be like if the off license was not there or came to be not there.



actually confronted the group in asking them to stop ripping off the fencing on the back court. Indeed, this man has since been slashed across the face (29<sup>th</sup> July, 2004).

A few weeks after the close had been set on fire Bob gave me another late night phone call.

*'They're hangin about doon there again... Av hud enough of it... If they start any shit am goin doon wi' a fucking knife in ma back pocket 'rambo style' ... A feel like a coward fur no dain anything about it... Am supposed tae protect ma family... It makes ye feel yer no a man... aw fuck they're comin up the stairs ...'*

The 'family' and the idea of being a 'man' felt to me forced and pale in comparison with the idea of fear and anxiety that tightened Bob's voice over the phone line.<sup>139</sup> I could hear on the phone the 'twenty of them' who did indeed come up the two flights to his front door to sit and laugh loudly. This meeting had come on the cusp of a stag night with plenty of beer and I knew Bob would be feeling edgy. No 'shit' was started and Bob didn't go out with a knife 'rambo style'. We had discussed the 'pros' and 'cons' of going out to confront the people who were causing him so much grief. It was reasonable to believe that reasoning with them was not seen as a valid option. Indeed, Bob believed that it would increase the likelihood he would be victimized- it had happened before. Bob recognised the artificiality of roles and of positions to people who did not have any investments in those roles. Moreover, phoning the police was seen as a waste of time. They would either not turn up or would be ineffective when they did. In any event, Bob had taken the fire in his close as an attack on him. This sense of anxiety and of 'not knowing what to do' is pervasive.

I recognized that his statement of intent was totally out of character. In the course of my research I have encountered similar talk about confrontations. In three years I have heard numerous testimony from people who did go onto confront their 'aggressors' (in some cases the line between victim and victimizer has been clear cut. In most the distinction is arbitrary). The outcomes have ranged from death to ongoing feuds that have increased the numbers (and potential casualties) of those involved. In most cases the wind up is the aim and the one who bites is the one who has just bought the season ticket. One man who had already served time for manslaughter was unequivocal in his use of maximum force to protect himself, especially if his antagonists were armed. *'It wis thame who came tae me wi blades... a stabbed them up tae fuck wi a machete'* (Garry, Conversation at Party, April 2002). For Gary there are no grey areas as far as violence was concerned.

In contrast, Bob is not someone who could, for example, *'use force unsparingly, without reference to the quantity of bloodshed'*. He also did not have immediate 'back-ups' in the area. He was not known as someone with a reputation and the capital that it can bring (*'You know who a fuckin am'?!)* Bob recognized this himself, *'Aye, if yer a nobody they will get stuck in but if they think yer somebody an ye can fight because ye've been involved in it so many times afore withoot any fore thought then they will staun back an watch ye'*. In effect, he would have to prove himself as someone not to be messed with in a situation that because of its visibility demanded violence. If he failed any of these 'tests' he would most probably get seriously hurt or face reprisals in the future.



## ***Richard Longley***

Richard Longley is 36 years old and lives by himself in a tidy and tight one bed roomed flat in Easterhouse. He is in a long term relationship with an older woman but prefers to come back to his own space. He is about six foot two and of medium muscular build. He is tee-total and enjoys smoking hash every night of the week to relax and think about things when not working. Richard is someone who could be described as knowing his own mind: he is forthright and confident in what and how he has to say things. He is currently employed as a skilled manual labourer, heavy physical work that he enjoys. He sees work as whatever '*gies ye peace of mind... Av been in fur everything, workin fur British Gas, the prison service... A spent so many years dain this an that an that wis the downfall of it: dain things fur money. That wis it, tryin tae get money in an keeping yerself aff the broo. An that wis lit goin tae work oan doors an pubs an things. Tae me that changed me totally*'. Door stewarding was the first real job that Richard enjoyed and got satisfaction from. He had been working the occasional night as a bouncer in tandem with a day job when the opportunity for a full time position came up. His words present a sense of him entering his new profession.

*'I saw this advertisement for the stewardin jobe, the advertisement looked good, and where it was held was in the club... A went in, there wis so many guys an I wis lit dressed fur the nightclub. A went in an there wis that guy who a met while workin on the pub door. A wis lit, 'how u doin', he wis lit 'dae a know your face fae somewhere'. This wis about a year later. A just wanted a wee cushy number, a fiver an hour, easy, that sort of thing. Then this big guy, we just started talking away, he went, 'yer quite a tall guy an that, yer no very well built from whit we can see but yer fairly confident. Whit gies ye aw this confidence?' A wis lit 'that's just me'. He went 'so if we decided to huv a wee wan-oan-wan ye widnae be bothered'. A went 'if a thought that situation wis gonny arise wi a couple of amateurs then a widnae be here but if the*

*thought arose, aye, I dare say it wouldn't be any problem. But then again if ye want somebody tae stand at a door of a pub ye huvtae be wi that attitude'.*

I came to know Richard through a meeting with an old friend in the local pub. When I told him what it was I was now doing he offered to put me in contact with him. Richard was someone whose face I remembered from growing up in the scheme. I was to discover that through door stewarding he knew Bob Marjuper- as far as violence was concerned Richard knew Bob in the way that Bob knew himself, that is, as a potential 'empty shirt'

*'It wis getting tae that fearful aspect lit when it gote tae the crunch wid he be up for it. He thought a wis just pickin him up an runnin him tae work but a wis the supervisor fur 200 guys. Bob thought a wis just there tae pick up him but ma jobe didnae end there. He didnae know whit a wis uptae an he didnae want tae know whit a wis uptae. It was heavy, a met aw the heavy mob. Even Bob hud a run in wi thame. A wis lit that, 'they run Greenock'. They're under suspicion just noo, they're digging up parts of Greenock an finding bodies. They had a greviance against some boy we hud workin there and they hud came up tae sort it oot. A wis lit, your wan of the team that work here, so your involved, sort it oot').*

I thought Richard would be someone who could provide a keen insight into actual physical violence as an adaptation to the new opportunities provided by the night time economy (see Winlow, 2000 for example). As will be seen this did turn out to be the case. Indeed, Richard's interviews and times that I spent in his company revealed to me the weight of different structurations and their relationship between the idea of a reputation, euntrepreneurship ('aw av built up'), local culture, the opportunities afforded by the wider economy and cultural institutions (for example, the role and impact of marriage and sexual relationships). For



Richard physical violence was to become a way of life/earning a living. For him, his entry into the masculine world of door stewarding was logical and practical. That is, he would later describe how his 'abrupt attitude' and 'livin wi extremes' lent itself well to the new fast track opportunities afforded by the night time economy and in particular door stewarding and his capacity and understanding (dead, dead simple) for dealing with instances of extreme violence.<sup>140</sup>

*So a went tae The Crow's Perch in Dumbarton. There wis always fights in it but there wisnae any fights fur the first few nights I was there. Then wan night a fight broke oot. It wis dead, dead simple. They made the mistakes, the guys oan the door. It wis like the pub hud their own four bouncers and the other four were from an agency... The head bouncer made the mistake of backing oot and wan of the stewards got punched in the face. He should have just grabbed him. As a wis comin up the stair this guy wis comin doon shoutin 'a fuck it'. The other steward hud a hold of him. The guy put his feet against the wall and tried to push us off. I kicked his legs away an he hit his head off the stair an just lay there. A wis lit that, 'cmon!', fuckin away up the stairs. The cunt tried to lay me with a kick as he tried to turn. As he tried to turn I pulled his leg and he caught the stairs with his face, with his teeth. The cunt wis fucked. A went up the stairs an there wis still wan guy up there causin trouble, an there wis five stewards. The trouble wis they coudnae throw the guy oot cos the British National Party wis tryin tae get in! They wur kickin the doors in (laughing). They wur lit, 'whit we gonny dae, we've phoned the polis'. A wis lit 'get these bodies oot'. A opened the doors tae throw them oot, an aw these bottles wur flyin in..*

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<sup>140</sup> This is one example of many that are encountered in this thesis were it is clear that words like 'capacity' and 'understanding' are indicating a logic of practice that is not possessed or used in the sense that it is something

*So, throwin the guys oot wan of them comes roon and is huvin a fit, wi the drink an efter getting a severe kickin. So as a threw him oot there wis guy, a fuckin steamer, a skinhead, he grabbed ma leg, an he just widnae let go. There wis gless smashin all over me. The stewards didnae know a wis oot there, they shut the door. A wis lit, 'ye better open the fuckin door!' It wis just like, a don't remember a couple of minutes, basically I had the skinhead guy, I was choking 'im, holdin him up and battering his head off the wall. I ended up pullin the door an its nearly came aff its hinges. I saw the head steward and went fucking 'boof' (punch). I was wan of those guys, efter bein oot there a wis lit that tae the other bouncers 'don't ever fuckin lock me oot there!' The next thing we hear the police sirens, wan of the guys wis lit, 'we need to get you oot a here big man, yer in some state'. I will always remember this Pat, I was tryin to get out with the lassie from the cloakroom, she was absolutely stunning, fuckin beautiful man. A wis lit that, a didnae realise why she had given me a strange look. I was obviously psychoed up and covered in blood but I didn't realize exactly how bad I was covered in blood. There wis clots oan me an things like that, an my sleeves were just constant. Am lit that, oot the back, doon the underpass. A went doon wi a couple of other guys, firemen, they're no meant tae be workin oan other jobs. A wis lit, 'a don't think I will be back here'. We wur getting cleaned up wi the bar towels an that, as we wur walkin. This is aw happenin quite quick... A wisnae allowed back there.*

*The good thing wis, a got a phone call tae go an meet at the pub. A wis lit, 'a hope yer no gonny tell me am no workin, if ye ur ye better huv ma money there as well'. Harry wis lit 'yer gonny huv tae change yer attitude their big man'. A went in an it wis that main man... He wis lit, yer job description's changed, yer now a head steward. An that wis that. Only thing wis a*

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*'chosen' but is instead an example of how a habitus possesses what is understood or 'chosen'.*



*coudnae work in anymare of those pubs, the guys a done in wanted tae press charges against me. A broke the head stewards nose and fractured his jaw. A still see that guy, quite friendly wi 'im. He wis sayin a don't know whit ye done but that British National Party boy, he loast his testicles. A thote that wis brilliant. He wis askin me why I searched his pockets, a wis lit so a can see who he is. Am easily rememberable, aw they cunts look the same.*

*After that it just went oan for a lot a lot of years. Makin a lot of money, daft things like bein given motors tae get tae ma work...*

As Richard puts it himself (like many others), in moments of perceived threat and confrontation, his consciousness was eased to the extent that afterwards there was no recollection and he could not '*remember a couple of minutes*'. This aspect of what is embodied and incorporated from living (in this case working in a place recognized as temporary) in a particular place is often expressed bodily in comportment and this is often the case when past scenes like the above example are reenacted. This idea of the immediacy and transparency of the moment, of how moments pile up one on top of the other to reveal the ephemeral character of history and the weight of a habitus became clear in the character of social relations and the recognition of people as 'others'. This is not to deny the work and the agency that is invested in a particular worked self. Indeed, in Richard's case the use of violence as an occupational skill was something that he '*grew intae*', had to be worked at and then came to enjoy.

In his account above the sheer detail and awareness of how a particular body is weighted and moves through real space (that is, don't take anyone at face value except those who are out of their faces) and how talking about violence and thinking about violence as action can bring

attention to the fluidity of responses (aw this is happenin quick) and how they can rush to fill up time. The attention to the detail of where a body was positioned and where threats could be expected and so counteracted is evidenced by its sheer availability to consciousness. For Richard, the moments he lost to consciousness where the moments he did not feel in control. There is a sense that the moment of violence is a 'possession' in an exceptional or 'excellent' state, a form of feeling that has been cultivated and is now being reaped. 'Virtue' is being made and lost in his violence against another man's body.

Richard has since left door stewarding. Indeed, in talking with Richard he has always been employed and had a daily/nightly structure in his life in relation to employment: I wanted to contrast this with my informants who were unemployed. In addition to this I knew that Richard waited a substantial amount of time before a council flat in the area became available. In this period he lived with his parents and other family members. I was interested in how this affected his relationship to his 'violence' work, to others and to himself as an adult. This is something Richard is well aware of in that

*'A think yer life changes when ye walk back intae yer ane family hoose an they tell ye your no stayin there. Then you've moved oot tae ye rain digs and yer ane place and that is when life changes. That's when ye grow up. They first couple a times when ye walk back intae yer parents hoose and ye go 'a don't live here anymare'. It's a wee bit strange even no matter where you are stayin efter it but when ye go back tae where ever you ur and ye go... That's whit makes ye think. Wheras me walkin in here an gawn, this is mine's noo. Before I wis stayin in ma sister's or wherever. That's no the same, its lit that board an lodgings aspect... lit a need to get out of here an get ma ain flat, this is just no happenin... av seen ma ma and da change, that aspect of being oot the hoose so long an then walkin back an ye see the age of*



*your parents... they wurnae lit that when a wis there, they're mare relaxed... its as if the hoose is empty noo, they can chill oot.*

I approached Richard for an interview after explaining what it is I was doing. Richard works long hours but I got to speak to him on a number of occasions. Moreover, I was grateful for the time he gave in the two long interviews over the period.

### ***Luke Wyfally***

Luke Wyfally is 32 years old. He is of stocky five foot seven build and is now married and working as an IT instructor. In the early stages of my research he lived with his mother and he was generous in giving me his time for interviews over this period. On leaving school Luke worked in retail before attending a University Access course and went on to gain a social science degree while working in various part time jobs that ranged from bar man to door steward. Luke describes himself as a 'nice guy' and an 'activist' as opposed to a pacifist whose *'been in a lot of fights but never had a doin'*. Luke is a character and can talk at great length about nothing in particular. I watched as Luke photographed a bottle of Buckfast Tonic Wine up against a tree to capture Glaswegian culture for his father in law on his father in law's one thousand pound camera. Luke has been involved in a number of fights that I have witnessed and all of them have been in response to a personal provocation or a perception that he had to act on behalf of someone else. I use Luke's testimony in discussing linguistic habitus, mimesis and violence. For Luke much of what violence is, is an attempt to *'take a liberty'* or as a *'vent fur sumdae's anger'*. He recognises that violence can be used to resist *'sumdae taking ye somewhere ye don't want tae go'*. In the many conversations I have had with Luke his references to taking a liberty are also a reference to violence as having its roots in a

struggle for hierarchy or in the attempt of another person to dominate you. Like George Lukas, Luke identifies what is already there as a background source of identity or of a lack of alternative sources of identity and how this singularity can emerge as a violent habitus. In this case he draws attention to how he sees a perceived weakness as a source of value for someone who has no other way to fund (however temporary) an illusory notion of a sovereign ego and how 'easy hits' like this could be used towards gaining a reputation and a sense of value.

*Luke: Its strange you should say that cos a remember a naw, an this is withoot a word of a lie. A wis comin back fae fitba or somethin like that an a hud a dodgy, dodgy ankle an am sure it wis a night when there wis a few of us oot. The exact same thing came across, mibbe no the exact same thing but a guy wis windin me up, mibbe no windin me up but tryin tae make a couple of comments in the crowd. A remember I could not, ma ankle wis just duffed, a wis oot getting a few drinks but a wis still feelin as if ma ankle wis so dodgy. It wis so strange but at the back of my mind I wis gawn 'how is this happenin tae me'. Av never hud it in ma life before but its probably lit that goin back tae Brian, its probably yer mannerisms that's slightly changed, even if its yer posture an everythin tha's changed an yer holdin yerself in a slightly different way because ye knew ye hud an injury. Its lit the wounded fish or the wounded animal wur even anythin that's oot fur pray will move in fur somethin that it can see. Even if it's a body, somethin that moves oot of ye lit a pulse that yer geyin oot that ye ur the wounded an that ye ur vulnerable an that somebody can home in. Even if yer no showin, ye huvnae gote a cast oan or nothin, its just the way yer posture, yer movin lit that ye might no huv the full way yer mannerisms would come across, yer no movin as freely. Somebody could even pick up oan that. Its lit the senses an pulses comin oot fae you that time an that guy saw you in that corner wi a lassie an ye look as if yer a bit of a wimp an that's it. An as you say if somebody*



*has left any institution lit jail, anythin lit that... (PQ: That's wan thing they're totally tuned intae)... A do think that's a common thing fur thame, when they're in there an the only way they can move up the way that they're in is tae pick the easiest outlet, pick him up, make an example of 'im an the next thing ye know the other guys are gawn 'nutter'.*

### **Grant Mitchell**

Grant is 30 years old and has spent five years in prison for armed robbery. There you are that's him classified and known. I mention this straight off not because I sense an ironic value in using a criminal subjectivity but because I recognise an ironic value in how objective statistics are used as a means towards subjectivity. He is over six foot and of medium to heavy build. Since leaving prison he has worked on various voluntary projects and is now married and self-employed. All of this, of course, implies an identity and a relationship to an identity. What is significant about Grant's talk is the ever present sense of anger and the small space that can be imagined between the 'urge and the action'; something he recognises himself ('*a just feel angry aw the time noo*'). I was to discover that this sense of singularity was not rhetoric or for effect in that I was to meet with people (this included his friends and family and also those he had entered into 'debate' with) who knew and had watched Grant make this small step between his urge and his action. Indeed, in the first year of the research I tried to act as a peacemaker between Grant and his friend after hearing of their drunken midnight battle on the street only to find that such intervention was unneeded and most probably unwelcome: in the ensuing aftermath Grant invited the man he had threatened with a knife to his wedding two weeks later.

In the course of conversation and a formal interview Grant believed that while prison '*made me worse, it didn't make me any better*'; his growing sense of anger and of '*not being happy*'

began before this. In the interviews and conversations I have had with Grant he evidences a keen awareness of the micro-politics of violent encounters and the way in which '*facing up*' to violent threats can become a source of violence itself.<sup>141</sup> Grant is articulate and yet there is a sense that part of his anger is that he cannot say enough or get across all his meaning at once: how a quick temper is a reduction of a self to a self's domination by the experience of time and how this 'mindless moment' has been built up over a number of years.

Indeed, talking about violence seemed to accentuate this idea of making sense of something that has been 'happening' all along: '*it's a bad temper all together*'; '*it's a lot of things building up*'. He describes how his descriptions of himself can come across as a '*fucking idiot*' and yet senses that there is a reason for this in that '*this is how things are*'. While he feels unhappy about his collection of violent memories he sees no point on dwelling on this. This continual reciprocity between himself as a free agent and as having to deal with things as causes is a thread in the interview. Like Tommy Vercetti he identifies a sense of communication in violence and a weakness in violent expression (as opposed to responding verbally or with humour). Moreover, he recognises how a habitus can be formed and how a habitus can be trained and indeed what can take place when different habitus meet.<sup>142</sup> In his own words,

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<sup>141</sup> Sim (1994) describes how domination in prison and working with this domination to 'do your time' can be understood as '*part of the normal routine which is sustained and legitimated by the wider culture of masculinity*'. Prison, as an embodied and emotional institution, '*sustains, reproduces and intensifies*' this relationship between masculinity and the use of violence. A process that as Grant would agree '*is not left behind the walls when a prisoner is released but often become part of his taken for granted world on the outside*' (1994, p103). My argument is that the walls of the prison are instructive in that they represent a membrane between the outside and the inside.

<sup>142</sup> As will be seen, it appears from Grant's perspective that a particular upbringing and a particular 'training' are more suited to adapting to prison conditions and prison relations. In this artificial setting Grant describes how '*guys were picked oan because they weren't like these people. Guys like lawyers an financial advisors. They weren't picked oan as such but they weren't seen as one of the boys. They just didn't know how to talk to people the right way. You couldn't bother with these people*'. Grant's experience of himself in prison as one of the boy's in relation to those men defined as different and as being to 'expensive' too deal with- in relation to the prison



*'When a really think about it now I wis a violent person. I didn't think I was at the time, I thought I was OK. I thought it was other people who were making me this way but it wasn't really. It was just how I was perceiving people. I was picking them up all the wrang ways. I was quite a violent character for a while, I'm not happy about it but its fucking happened. People didn't want to be with me a couple of year ago because I was that way. And drink did bring it oot me a wee bit as well. I think I was that way to start off but drink did make it a wee bit worse. Its funny talking about it noo but I was a fucking lunatic a few years ago. It was just all the things that happened and built up, then thur wis the jail an that...*

*In the jail your involved in situations aw the time. It happens every day near enough and you can't be seen to be backing down to people in situations like that. You've gotae put oan a front most days and I take it that's hard to shake aff wance ye come out. It must be hard putting on a front everyday and then all of a sudden you are back into society again... Its just a different face to who you really are, do you know what I mean... A lot of people try to take advantage of people. That's the worst thing that could ever happen to you in jail is to let sumdae pick oan you. Wance it happens wi wan person they aw start oan ye. Ye've gotae make a stand an make that stand aw the time. You can't be seen to be going back on yourself or else it would happen all the time. So ye've gotae be quite hard in there tae start aff with just to survive or else ye wid get picked oan everyday. I built this person up, this face, an cos your this person everyday, this person who you aren't usually.*

*Violence isn't the same for different people. You can get a lot of people who can take abuse and try an start up a conversation with people even if they're tryin tae noise them up. Wheras am that quick tempered. A mean a could turn lit that. Am soundin like a fuckin idiot here but I am just trying to tell you how things are. See, bein quick tempered is just a thing that has built up over the years. Av no always been lit that. Its just different things that have caused me tae be this way. It's a bad temper all together. Sometimes its horrible, I mean I've been sitting in the pub getting bevved a few times and people have just been over talking to me and sort of kidding on noising me up and I've just turned lit that. I mean its not lit being violent all the time its just the occasional time but its something I don't want to be.*

*It was around about this time that I came out (prison) that was when I was this fucking kind of evil cunt; ye know, a bit of a mad bastard. It took me a couple of years to get over that phase. You just think you are the same person but you aren't really. Your this person you made up in there. You can't get away from it, its hard to explain. But there are a lot of guys who are just quite violent all the time. I mean I wasn't. They are few and far between but there are guys who are just institutionalised and that's the way they grow up in there. The majority of guys are just like myself who put up a front but there are one's that aren't. I never tried to be someone I wasn't. I put on a face but I never tried to be harder than I was.*

### ***Hammy English***

Hammy is 82 years old and has lived in the Easterhouse area for over 40 years. He is encountered in detail in the Path to Easterhouse chapter. Hammy provided me with numerous recollections and memories of living in the early years of the scheme and how he perceived



change over these years. Hammy is a 'connoisseur' of horse racing, whiskey, cheese, coffee and speaking his mind in clear language.

### ***Craig Davro***

Craig is thirty three years old and lived all of that time in Easterhouse until six months ago (August, 2004). He is encountered in detail in the main ethnographic body of the thesis. Craig is a key informant. I asked Craig for an interview because of a number of factors. The main factor for me was that Craig can talk and comes across as a character. Moreover, I was aware that he had been the victim of a severe beating and I wanted to know how this had affected him and what actions he had taken with respect to the beating. I was also aware that he remained (often alongside Tommy Vercetti) engaged in an ongoing feud with those men who had beaten 'me tae a pulp'. I wanted to know how this affected his daily living. Second, I wanted to know how all of this fitted in with his relatively unusual family situation. That is, Craig had custody of his four year old daughter from Monday to Friday. I had asked Craig for an interview and we ended up with two long conversations about growing up in the scheme and what he felt his life was about.

### ***George Lukas***

George Lukas is a six foot sixteen stone 29 year old. He left school with one O level and describes himself as self- educated. I met George when I signed up for a local five a side football team. George gave me two evening long interviews. In both these interviews I recognised a sense of how he was working through issues as he spoke them into the microphone and onto paper. He is articulate and the most explicitly 'political man' I came across in the course of my research. Indeed, he was the only man out of many who spoke

politically and one of the very few who lived there who expressed his desire to get away from the scheme in words (*'a don't know whit stage a wid get tae before a started defending it, but am always decryin it'*). At the same time that George verbalised his attitude towards place he sensed how perception and a psychological habitus can be tied to place and necessity in that

*'A think sometimes that there are nae rules in Easterhoose, nae system if ye know whit a mean. Its just chaos in some places but then again that's ma attitude tae the place. Its whit ye bring tae the situation which isnae necessarily the reality. Its like yer mate can walk down that exact same street and not feel threatened and no feel challenged, disnae feel the same way. A walk doon Auchinlea Rd and see these people and feel threatened. A know George can walk doon that road and go 'how you doin', community, the whole thing man. A see the world, its lit a see ma community in the same way a see the world. That makes me think that some people don't see the bigger picture they don't see the world cos their wee microcosm is the world. Ye live in Easterhoose an its lit this wee baw that sometimes ye poke yer heid oot of noo and again'.*

George is employed by Glasgow City Council and like many men his age lived with his parents until very recently (aged 28). For George the more a person knows about the world the more they know about themselves and so the more they can take part in the world. In this respect, his relationship to formal education is realistically ambivalent.

*'Education can be quite interesting when ye think aboot that. It lit the way its delivered it can feel lit a fuckin chore. Its only when ye grow up an mature a bit an realise whit the world's aw aboot man. The world is a bit of a borin place if ye don't know some education. Ye can*



*contribute a lot mare if ye know stuff, ye can contribute mare as a human bein, yer mare aware of stuff an things that are happenin aroon ye an yer no just goin along wi the norm'.*

George has a clear understanding what going along with the norm means: that is, it is to go along with the crowd and too not achieve a sense of a self as an individual and as a political self. It is in this sense that George's own perception of Easterhouse and politics coincide in that

*'Rab C Nesbitt gote it right when he wis talking about class'<sup>143</sup>. A think there's a fourth class, there's aw the scum, the neds, there's aw they people who don't have a sense of social realism or socialism. How kin ye if ye've never worked a day in yer life. A think scum is a good word fur that... Its no like America, especially the ghetto thing, wur they can aspire tae be sumdae... there's inspiration there (PQ: Aye), but we don't huv that. No longer is it that the whites of the forties and fifties will aspire tae be movie stars, an ye see people lit fuckin Robert Mitchum an John Wayne, an a want tae be lit that. We don't huv that. We huv hardly anything. Its no like a think Tom Cruise is cool or Harrison Ford is ma idol, its no like that, a don't know whit it is. The role model's that we've gote are the wans that are about two or three years aulder, lit the kinda hard guys wi their baseball caps and thur joggin suit bottoms away up there. Its mad.'*

For George the sense of absence or vague sense of nothing is acute. He recognises how alternatives to what has to be lived are limited and that the masculine cultural resources that can be drawn upon are often based on those who cannot imagine alternatives themselves. George indicates how he has progressed from his teenage times when he

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<sup>143</sup> Rab C. Nesbitt is a fictional television character in a Glaswegian based comedy sitcom.

*'used tae kerry a machete, never used it ever, never willin tae use it, it wis aw aboot show, aw aboot front. That's whit it wis aboot. And that he recognises the background discourse of violence that is both pseudo and activating of real violence. At the dancing:*

*'If ye go 'o am sorry' ye'd be getting cunts comin uptae ye an takin the piss. This wan guy banged intae me a few times an a just looked at im as if tae say 'c'mon tae fuck mate'. A done this (put hand up in air imitating a football referee) an said 'yellow card mate'. The next wan wis gonny be red, he never banged intae me again. He wis expecting me tae turn aroon an go whit the fuck ye dain ya prick, he didnae know how tae react tae that sort of stuff. Its lit that wan oot the movies wi the baseball cap (turn it back to front), a done that the other week there, it was amazing the effect. These two guys wur mad wi something, a don't know if it wis drugs or whatever. The next thing they started talkin doon tae me, as if they wur really funny an then askin if we wur gangsters ur something. That's when the atmosphere changed a bit. Aw a did wis a took ma baseball cap, turned it fuckin backwards an went 'whit ye sayin?' The guy went 'och no mate, sorry mate', an just fucked off. They gote that idea that cos I hud turned ma cap aroon a wis gonny punch him in the face. If he had stood up an went 'right c'mon then ya prick', a might've went, ye might be forced intae throwin the first punch but a hud nae intention of dain that. A just turned ma baseball cap back roon, a hud seen it in movies, it usually ends up in a bar room brawl but a wis usin it tae defuse it. That wis ma thing, tae defuse it. When a done it it wis like the guy thought, 'oh-oh, this guy has done this before', or mibbe he had seen it in aw these movies as well... (both laughing)... aw naw, there's a fight gonny happen noo. He wis lit, see ya's later, aye get tae fuck. A wis li that tae Rab, 'that wis brilliant'. It wis so good how it went from a real tense situation tae these guys gawn, 'see ya's later'. It's the same as before, they seen us comin roon the corner an wur lit, 'where'd these cunts come fae, wierdos, fuckin fannies man'. That's happened so many times.*



In this chapter I have introduced some of the men who are explicitly encountered in the thesis. I now want to situate or know these men more sociologically by engaging them in place and in their relationship to place and time. It is in this sense that I move onto the formation and experience of Easterhouse and its development from its inception up until Thatcher-1979 and the early 1980's. Again, this account of experience and historical development will not be linear or 'progressive' but will also involve movements back and forth in its attempt to capture how lived experience is 'remembered' and embodied. As will be seen, the extended rationale in accounting for living place in and through time is to draw attention to the continuous/discontinuous sociological realities experienced by each generation. These earlier accounts of embodied experience will be contrasted with contemporary sociological realities in chapter 7.

## 5 A Path to Easterhouse

*'By attaching things more firmly to their contexts... we increase our recognition of their individuality and make them more nearly unique. At the extreme limit of distinction by means of context, things should become utterly unique'* (Bourdieu, 1989, p60).

*'Like you see in the papers 'that Easterhouse is at it again'. I don't know if it is because we stay here that we don't think it is as bad but I never thought it was as bad as it was made out to be'* (Grant Mitchell, Interview).

### **5.1 History, Representation and Habitus**

The general aim of this chapter is to present a picture of the historical emergence of place and the experience of this place: to present a narrative and structure that, as Grant (above) makes known, itself captures the complexity and the sense of being and knowing in both space and time.<sup>144</sup> In this sense, the chapter is concerned with the relationship between social and economic forces and the formation and experience of those forces in and through time from a perspective that privileges embodied understanding. To do this the chapter will focus on some (largely) men's first hand accounts of moving from, moving to and living in the early years of the scheme, as well as drawing attention to more formal sources of historical data. From here the chapter will explore the continuities and discontinuities in experience of a place and social-economic relations through time. This concern with space and the experience of space is to again underline *'the distribution of social being as a psychological and affective entity actively forming itself in the process of adapting to the imperatives encountered in the spatial locations deposited by the historical process'* (Hall, 1997, p18).

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<sup>144</sup> Massey explains this relational approach in *Space, Place and Gender* (1994). Time and our relations to it have an important place in research and I have tried to understand time as an integral part of human being and agency in a world of capitalist social relations infused with power.



In this sense, although never encountered as a thing in itself, of particular interest is the 'conceptualisation', experience and use of violence. I want to draw attention to the threads of everyday violence (interpersonal, structural, symbolic) that can run through generations and how the emergence of physical violence can be seen as a form of communication and reproduction of symbolic modes of domination.<sup>145</sup> Thus, the key aim of the chapter is not only to situate the place and the people within the wider political and social worlds of which they are a part (Comaroff and Comaroff, 1992, p22) but it is to understand some of this spatio-historical process and to lay the ground for my later analysis of '*those visceral forms of being whose contemporary empirical appearance suggests a durable disposition to habitual violence*' (Hall, 1997, p18). That is, through the concrete representations of space and lived space as through the eyes and bodies of men in Easterhouse and their accounts of violence. This, then, is an attempt to illuminate the links between macro processes and the emotional involvement of people in the transforming and reproduction of those processes: an unfashionable engagement with the durability of culture and habitus.

It is important to clarify a couple of points here. First, I should reiterate that this account of place is largely from a male point of view and because of this there will be a biased representation of place. In one sense, this follows a traditional 'Scottish' practice in that historical accounts of Scottish culture and society have been written by men about men.

Indeed, the role of women and the active part they played in Scottish culture and society have only recently become addressed in representational forms (Hendry, 1992). The stress on representational forms is, of course, to recognise and reiterate that while there may be an invisibility with regard to whole swathes of real human experience, this representational absence is not mirrored by the presence of those many women '*who spent years in active struggle to break down limits imposed on their lives*' (Breitenbach and Gordon, 1992, p3;

Gordon and Breitenbach, 1990). Philosophical issues of coping and 'struggle' were not simply philosophy: they were and are real. As an ethnographic balance to this over representation I would add that I have not come across an academic account of lived experience as lived experience in Easterhouse from either a male or female point of view. What I have recognised is that representational forms of knowledge are recognised as representational and often have no meaning on the level of lived reality.

Second, and in relation, to imply or evidence history as having some level of meaning and cause is also to give life to the idea that written historical formulations are themselves not unproblematic givens. How does history present itself, how is history presented? This is a perennial issue. One aspect of this is simply that a depiction of a place and time may tell us more about the prevailing ideas of a time than about anything else. Thus, the many comparisons between Victorian times and the policy and discourse of contemporary neo-liberalism finds resonance not in particular historical events themselves but in their understanding of what both history and people are (and how both work, or don't).

Underlying history and representations, then, is that understanding is one sided and that it is a sympathy that no one really wants to listen too. This is the importance of historical documents and their relation to lived reality. It is to question the politics of history and so to question the politics of what will be seen as a 'culture of disbelief' and its relationship to those city spaces and places that in contemporary jargon are often ordered and managed in relation to '*how can this be happening in the twenty first century*'? That is, how issues of welfare, violence and responsibility are connected on a theoretical plane. The question that is then asked is does

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<sup>145</sup> As will be seen, this notion of social reproduction and 'running like a river' through generations is an area that has been neglected when it comes to theorising working class violence.



history matter and if so how? How can *history* matter when it has never been concerned with time or matter but only with space? What is history?<sup>146</sup>

In the early years of the twentieth century a moustached American Spanish Anglo man employed as a philosopher wrote that '*those who cannot remember the past are condemned to fulfil it*'.<sup>147</sup> It is a statement that is so oft heard that it is almost taken as yet another truism. From here a cognitive awareness of the past, a familiarity with a particular understanding of history, is offered as a means to engage with the future and more so, to engage with the future in a way that avoids the implied or most obvious mistakes or successes of the past: those notions of people, forms of thought and ways of life that are seen as condemned or appreciated by their very contemporary factuality. History here has a *progressive* quality and function as well as a generalising and specific complexion. Find out about what went wrong and you will have a better chance of not repeating the mistakes of those who you base your inspiration upon or against. History is understood as memory and memory is understood as representation.

In this chapter and later, the argument is that '*remembering the past*' is itself, in part, a political, social and cultural *activity* that attends to conceptualisations of people (and their capabilities), notions of history (and the form it is encountered) and so to the importance of lived social and economic relations as a structuring element of what has happened and what will or can happen. This is not only to be read as an understanding based on an enlightened

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<sup>146</sup> As will be seen, another 'historical' theme that emerges in this research is the importance of social distance and a 'culture of disbelief' in dealing with poverty and deprivation – these can be found both in Victorian reports on inner-city slums as well as in today's debates about the future of British cities (Ogborn, 1993). Furthermore, what seems to be at stake in relation to these accounts are wider efforts of ordering, managing and not at least controlling urban populations through the provision of welfare as well as through more openly punitive means (Johnstone, 1992; Imrie and Raco, 2003).

<sup>147</sup> Santayana, G. (1905) *Life of Reason, Reason in Common Sense*, Scribner's, p284.

*'look over the shoulder'* at what went (or didn't) before.<sup>148</sup> It is also a reference to context and its relations with the different forms in which things were actually done and recorded and so are remembered or encountered. It asks questions of both history and reason, like who, where and why, all the way down to those moments where these grand thoughts find their worshippers.<sup>149</sup>

At this moment in time, style and culture are taken as both forms of capital and seduction, indeed memories of place themselves are now often commodified, romanticised and sold as the genuine article (which in a monetary economy they often are). This is a representation of local and Scottish history that has at its base a notion of human being as ephemeral and without substance, already and always disappearing into the thin air of history as progress.<sup>150</sup>

In contrast to this interpretation, then, I want to argue an alternative, one that tries to grasp the materiality of historical processes and one that captures the body and its belief *'in what it plays at: it weeps if it mimes grief. It does not represent what it performs, it does not memorize the past, it enacts the past, bringing it back to life'* (Bourdieu, 1992, p 73). Here, history is problematised and asked for what it has disappeared: that is, what reality has been going on despite its invisibility in some mythical public realm. It is here that what Diamond (1974) refers to as *'historical understanding and self amendment'* is possible. To some extent, this chapter is an exploration of this possibility. It is in this sense that I turn to, and go beyond the *'history of Easterhouse'* and how this place has embodied the social relations of gendered violence over time.

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<sup>148</sup> What Samuel Coleridge referred to as having a 'lantern on the stern' (cited in Tuckman, 1994).

<sup>149</sup> This is attention to those behaviours and orientations that come to be built in or trained into the body as part of routine everyday activity.

<sup>150</sup> History as the real and the rational progress towards enlightenment is an area that both Marxist and Capitalist economists share. In both the real is paid work and the rational excludes practical reason as a force constituting social reproduction, that is, history.



## 5.2 *In Search of Easterhouse*

For many people who live in Easterhouse it might be as much of a surprise to find that someone can find it a surprise that the place name of Easterhouse is centuries old.<sup>151</sup> Up until 1938 Easterhouse was situated within the boundaries of Lanarkshire before the land was purchased by the rapidly expanding Glasgow City from a certain Wilson family for the princely sum of £150,000. At this time the area consisted of no more than a collection of farms<sup>152</sup>, a village, a disused coalmine and an estate of the same name.<sup>153</sup>

The already existing small population of Easterhouse village looked on in apprehension at Glasgow City's extensive plans for developing the area (Westwood School Saltire Project, 1966).<sup>154</sup>

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<sup>151</sup> Local history is not a feature of local education. Thus, the Battle of Hastings and the date 1066 is more likely to be known than the date the scheme was formed and why the scheme was formed.

<sup>152</sup> Many of the sub-district names within Easterhouse are originally the names of the farms that occupied the majority of the land the scheme now stands upon. The official decision to divide the scheme into sub-districts was a later attempt to reduce the stigma attached to the name Easterhouse. In 1968 there was debate whether to drop the name altogether; the sub-district option won the day. More recently, the same argument emerged with regards to the current 'regeneration' programme. Of importance is the squabble that occurred when advocates of the newly developed private housing scheme on the Easterhouse's outskirts 'Springfield' (500 yards from Easterhouse boundary) successfully argued against being post coded as Easterhouse. As one man put it, '*They wur gonna call that new housing development up at Swinton 'Easterhoose'. They went 'no way hositie'! Their address comes under Baillieston... So that's a bought hoose. They people are aspiring... there's no way they're gonna call that place Easterhoose. Easterhoose hus a stigma... there's nothing called Easterhoose in Easterhoose... When yer in Easterhoose ye've gote all the signs pointing tae Provanhall, Wellhouse, blah, blah*' (Brian Igbutt, Interview in his home, 2002).

<sup>153</sup> Campbell (1993, p319) states that it is ironic how the meaning attached to the word 'estate' changes. '*The word that embraced everything feared and loathed by the new orthodoxy about class and crime was estate: what was once the emblem of respectability, what once evoked the dignity and clamour of a powerful social constituency, part of the body politic, but which now described only the edge of a class and the end of the city. Estate' evoked rookery, slum, ghetto- without the exotic energy of urbanity*'. The parallels between discourses on Britain's 19<sup>th</sup> century social landscape and contemporary underclass theory is striking.

<sup>154</sup> The Westwood School Saltire Project is one of the few documents I could locate on Easterhouse that did not primarily identify the area as a problem. Of the small number of articles, pamphlets, newspaper stories I could locate Easterhouse has been largely represented in negative terms. Phrases like 'zoo', 'the killing fields', melt into the more contemporary jargon of policy 'multiple deprivation', 'Safer City', Partnerships and Social Inclusion programmes. In 1968 World in Action programme was described as making Easterhouse look like a zoo (Glasgow writer Archie Hinds or was it John Nolan who said that). It is not surprising that such one sided representations can be understood as having a purpose (Goodman, 1968, p27-31, cited in Hobart). Durkheim's



Longer-term historical records refer to Easterhouse as the '*Holy Land*', a reference to the route throughout Glasgow and the area that visiting monks would take on their way to the Bishop's residence on the shores of Bishop Loch. The only surviving legacy of these walks (or of the Bishop's Palace for that matter) is Provan House in Provan Hall (sub district in Easterhouse), a 15<sup>th</sup> Century stop over for monks on their way to Bishoploch.

While the area is now better known to its residents for its Orange Walks than for its Monk's Walks it remains a place that attracts its fair share of visiting dignitaries (although, as will be seen, not many stopped over).<sup>155</sup> Contemporary Easterhouse is situated in all its gravity and spin approximately five miles east of Glasgow City centre. It currently has an official population of approximately 35,000. At one time it had from a certain perspective, the unenviable position of being the largest and most heavily populated public housing scheme in Western Europe with over 60,000 predominantly white working class people calling the place home.

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point about the creation of the deviant as functioning in the creation and maintenance of moral sentiments, moral boundaries and group unity comes to mind.

<sup>155</sup> Bob Holman (works in the scheme, stays in neighbouring district of Baillieston) and Hollywood actor Charlie Sheen (reputedly) being the exceptions who have stayed more than a day. Billy Boyd who starred as a hobbit in the screen adaptation of 'The Lord of the Rings' grew up in the scheme. A low profile half morning visit by the doyen of his own polemical and ideological version of underclass theory, a certain Charles Murray, was enough for him to warrant that Easterhouse was a 'classic' example of underclass populations. On his 'underclass verification tour' of Britain, Murray described himself as 'a visitor from a plague area come to see whether the disease is spreading' and he tells us that the question facing Britain is '*how contagious is this disease?*' (1990, p42, cited in Charles Murray and the Underclass Debate, 1996). More recently, the same language has been used by the Scottish Minister for Communities Margaret Curran in referring to 'neds' as a modern day plague on society. This kind of classification of groups of people into a pathological *class formation*, an identity, using the metaphor of disease and so implicitly medicine naturalises *cultural* identity as if it was autonomous, can then be lopped off or medicalised- a logical consequence of Murray's proclaimed ethnocentrism, indeed, Murray's 'solution' to 'plague areas' is social and economic quarantine- let them get on with it, a cancerous growth on an otherwise healthy social. For some, this particular conceptualization of an underclass is a symptom of the withdrawal of politics and political responsibility in contemporary society: that is, their social scientific diagnosis and prescription finds harmony in the wider political context. In popular culture the commentary is expressed in the recent output of mainstream zombie films (for example, 28 days later, Dawn of the Dead, Shaun of the Dead) and in grittier terms in the socio-economics of the housing market. Others who have visited include: Princess



When the place was built in the early 1950's it was seen by those people called the planners and developers as a solution to the rapidly growing abysmal living conditions that characterised Glasgow's inner city areas (Horsey, 1990). However, and as will be seen, by the late 1960's the scheme was already beginning to be understood as a problem area in itself (Mooney, 1988). At the moment, the area is undergoing a massive face lift as part of a redevelopment and regeneration plan.<sup>156</sup> The 'traditional' jam packed profusion of three storey rough cast tenements are making way for a mix of semi-detached houses (of varying sizes) and one bed roomed flats.

Easterhouse, then, is a place that is both local and extended beyond its own paper boundaries. By this I mean that it is a human 'community' that has been '*shaped by the interplay between internal forms and external conditions*' (Leach, 1954, p212, cited in Comaroff and Comaroff, 1992, p22).<sup>157</sup> It is a place and a space that people have created in their social and economic relations with each other. Indeed, as a housing scheme within the city of Glasgow, Easterhouse has been well placed as a record to the '*endless historical struggle over the definition of urban meaning by antagonistic social actors who oppose their interests, values and projects*' (Castells, 1983, p335). It is a place that through its history, its people and its

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Diana, Prince Charles, French President Jacques Chirac and Queen Elizabeth II, each approaching with a 'dignified' distance.

<sup>156</sup> Indeed, if anything, change, and a lack of permanence and tradition, is one feature, or orientation, that has been built into Easterhouse the housing scheme from its inception. To what extent the metaphor of a face lift is metaphorical

<sup>157</sup> This is a profound statement. Understanding place on these terms has implications for understanding located understanding. For example, it makes a purely ethnomethodological account of living in place problematic. It asks questions of both the researcher and those researched. It asks questions with regard to education, culture and power. As Gledhill (2000, p134) would argue, '*what actors do is seldom easily explained without reference to wider relations of force, structures and processes of which the actors themselves, and particularly local actors, frequently have no direct knowledge or consciousness*'.

emerging culture, is fertile ground for the emergence of challenging thought and action: it is literally a place of invention.

In this sense, although it is very easy to talk about Easterhouse and those who live and have lived there in the singular, sealed and segmented sense, the truth of the place and its development only come into form when we try to understand those '*wider influences, [to] power relations that stretch well beyond their means to control or influence*' (Mooney, Pile and Brook, 2000, p346; Massey, 1994). Power is the operative word here, the 'ability' to understand, know and control the sphere of your own life and the recognition of different political interests if those interests and forms of understanding are identified as equitable and as fully known through a one dimensional concept of power.

Thus, although, and perhaps because, most often described as a peripheral housing scheme, Easterhouse doesn't exist in isolation and it would be naïve to talk about the area as if it existed in a social and economic vacuum, just as it would be naïve to write about the people and place as if they did not have a history (albeit that there is very little written historical or cultural accounts of the area. Mooney (1988, p5) also notes the '*political unimportance attached to these areas historically*').<sup>158</sup>

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<sup>158</sup> The internet may provide the potential for a new form of cultural expression and historical record as the Royston Road Project shows, <http://www.roystonroadproject.org/>. Indeed, there is now an official web site <http://www.greatereasterhouse-pathfinder.com/>. The traditional 'political unimportance' of Easterhouse is now echoed in the political unimportance of national politics for many local people precisely at the time when there is a devolution and prioritizing of politics at local level (for example, see literature on 'new regionalism and re-scaling of governance'). Paradoxically, then, the historical political *unimportance* of the housing schemes is contrasted with their contemporary *importance* as sites of political struggle (for an explanation of this see Bourdieu, 1999, p181-88).



Despite this, the word periphery is important to get across the physical and symbolic distance from the city centre (and from anywhere else) that characterised the early schemes.<sup>159</sup> If it is true that space can often be understood *as* society (Lefebvre, 1991, p286) then Easterhouse can be understood as having occupied a marginal if no less important relational position within that system (Mooney, 1988). To some extent, this spatial relationship can be understood in retrospect as a form of symbolic and material segregation in progress (Baker, 1997, p31). Indeed, it would not be an exaggeration to refer to Easterhouse as having a particularly strong 'symbolic location'. Easterhouse, much like Gartloch Hospital, the Victorian built asylum on its border, became a kind of mini-world.<sup>160</sup>

Easterhouse, like the other four housing schemes on Glasgow's periphery, was built shortly after World War Two. At that time the scheme was symbolic of the wider socio-economic and political changes of the period. It was literally a time of massive social and economic

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<sup>159</sup> As Taylor (1999, p106) notes this distance was at one and the same time recognized as a 'sphere of egalitarianism and freedom, but it was also, of course, an urban social formation that expressed and helped reproduce very specific and structural inequalities in housing and space'.

<sup>160</sup> This is a description that will justify itself in the interview and anecdotal accounts to follow. The theme is that for many people the world 'out there' was indeed 'out there' but that this out there was always something that people defined themselves in relation to. Much like contemporary understandings of psychiatry things have changed fundamentally in a number of ways. Gartloch hospital is now the proposed site for the building of a luxury village. The seclusion and wooded grounds of the old hospital make the site attractive to buyers. It is enough to state at this moment that historically the geographical location of Easterhouse, the style of housing, the density of population and the type of work (paid and unpaid, for men and women) were features that everyone who lived their faced and shared. This 'artificial' scheme engendered a 'natural incubation' of community, generating a particular intensity of *communitas* or publicly lived experience- one man in contrasting it with his own '*everything is more middle now*' described it '*as always livin wi extremes*' (Ronnie, Conversation in his garden, July 2002). This idea of 'extremes' or 'sensuousness' has relevance for understanding particular ways of being in the world that will be developed in due course, safe at this point to say it will be an analytical tool for understanding some aspects of violence, especially those that are associated with '*public repute and fame, to the image of self fed back... by the community... important as validations of the embodied self*' (Gouldner, 1967, p69). They attend to what Gilfillan (2000, p129) proposes as a dialectic between *ad sensum* behaviours- '*the tendency based upon the daily production of an existence... marked by an existential privileging of the corporeal and the prioritization of satisfaction of the body and a tendency towards sensation*'- and *ad humanum* behaviours- '*tendency towards humane or solidaristic behaviours and sentiments... [that] emerge from the necessity of accommodating the 'negative' ad sensum behaviours*'. As will be seen, in an afternoon in a local pub this equation of extremes, bodily forms, reputations and social relations emerged as one way of getting at the meaning and function of violence within a particular place.



'restructuring' for the Scottish economy as a whole. It was a period of fundamental change that had its different socio-structural impacts.

As has been mentioned, the schemes were initially perceived as the answer to the perceived urban blight that people faced in the inner city. Although Glasgow shared many of the same problems of other urban areas in Scotland and Britain it was unique in the scale and density of its material deprivation (Patrick, 1973, p118; Damer, 1990; Architect Journal, 1933; Mooney, 1988, p43). For example, the 1951 Census statistics shows that 750,000 people in Glasgow lived in an area of only 1,800 acres. That works out an average of 400 people who had to know and negotiate each other over the expanse of one acre of land. In some really sociable places this went up to 700 people per acre. The working class areas of Glasgow literally teemed with people who had to know how to work, live with and negotiate the everyday close presence of lots of other people. This emotional and social intelligence was never institutionalised in the same way that Binet institutionalised those school children who did and did not reach what were to become academic *norms*.<sup>161</sup>

For example, just under a third of Glaswegians had to leave their household living space to shit, piss, sit, read or whatever they done in a communal toilet up a Glaswegian close. The close proximity of so many people allied to factors like limited access to the Atkins diet, clean water and the living with unsanitary sanitation meant that both outbreak and spread of diseases like cholera often reached higher levels than those experienced in areas that did not experience these same conditions. Of course, this did not prevent a metaphysical fixing in place. As

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<sup>161</sup> The most important aspect of Alfred Binet's work on cognitive intelligence is his worry that the test would be used rigidly and *without intelligence*. As it goes the main and prijean application of his work on intelligence measurement was adopted for the military. Scientifically, then, how far has 'society' progressed when in the 21<sup>st</sup>



Damer (1990) notes there was a real sense of Presbyterian zeal that accompanied the Corporation of Glasgow's response to the overcrowded conditions.

Is it any wonder that the smell of unperfumed bleach became a mark of godliness, cleanliness and working class female culture? The census also reveals that approximately 43% of people had no inside bath (in contrast to London which had 5.5. and 1.7% 'respectively'). During this post-war period, more people were cleared (or cleaned) from Glasgow's inner cities than during the whole of the 19<sup>th</sup> century from the Highlands (Damer, 1990).<sup>162</sup>

These 'cramped and unsanitary conditions' of Glasgow's 'wynds' and 'backlands' appalled visiting dignitaries who could not believe that '*such conditions could exist in a civilised country*' (Prince of Wales, visiting Glasgow in 1930's, cited in Mooney, 1988, p68). Nearly a century previous, Tancras had asked very much the same question and perhaps with the same level of incredulity. The mortality rate in Glasgow at this time was one death in 22 per year, a tremendous shortening (or prolongation depending on your perspective) of life that was invariably the burden of the people living in the 'backlands' (Tancras, 1842, cited in Campbell and Dow, 1968, p226).<sup>163</sup> In the same period, Symons, a Government Commissioner took a visit to those same profitably over packed houses to document the conditions that those people who made money as hand-weavers and their families faced: there is more than a hint of pathos

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century educational debates gravitate around new forms of streaming and the move to link schooling and education directly to job markets?

<sup>162</sup> See Devine (1992) for an account of the Highland Clearances.

<sup>163</sup> While mortality rates between areas geographically close remain technologically regressive, that is on the level of black and white, contemporary research is less concerned with mortality and morbidity rates as an expression of class relations than it is with identifying the specific routes to such differences- in an age of entrepreneurialism it is individual lifestyle '*choices*' that '*make us less equal in death*' (Dorling, 1997) . Daly and Wilson's (1997) psychologically focused research on internalising 'life expectancy' is an example of such research. Their paper is unusual in that they situate behaviours that would normally be defined as 'non-adaptive' or 'maladaptive' in the realms of sociologically 'rational' action. That is, in attempting to work with the concept



(ritualised) in his statement that *'I did not believe until I visited the wynds of Glasgow, that so large an amount of filth, crime, misery, and disease existed in any civilised country'* (cited in Engels, 1892).

Of course, in Glasgow, things have changed dramatically. Material conditions have improved (if not on the scale that is often preached) and a sense of pathos often moves accordingly.<sup>164</sup> In this sense it is perhaps laughable to comment that over one hundred and sixty years later the current Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, Anthony Charles Lynton Blair, carried on this tradition by pointing out that in relation to the UK as a whole *'over the last two decades the gap between these 'worst estates' and the rest of the country has grown. It has left us with a situation that no civilised society should tolerate'* (1998, p7).<sup>165</sup>

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of time and how time is formed in people's methodical relation to their world they finish their article by placing rational in inverted commas.

<sup>164</sup> Recent research has shown that there are a number of areas within Glasgow that are ranked amongst the poorest in the UK. Indeed, when using the Scottish Deprivation index in relation to Scotland as a whole seventeen of the twenty most deprived areas are found in Glasgow (Scottish Executive, 2004). Again, though, to what extent is it useful to identify particular areas within themselves as both problem and solution to the problem. For example, *what* has changed when we discover that the difference between contemporary mortality rates between the neighbouring areas of Drumpchapel and Bearsden is ten years or that children living in Easterhouse are five times more likely than the UK average to die before their first birthday (Macintyre and Hart, 2000; McCormick and Leicester, 1998; Dorling, 1997). How does the conclusions of contemporary research echo with what was written in 1895 that *'When we find the rate of mortality four times as high in some streets as in others, and twice as high in whole classes of streets as in other classes, and further find that it is all but invariably high in those streets which are in bad condition, and almost invariably low in those whose condition is good, we cannot resist the conclusion that multitudes of our fellow creatures, hundreds of our immediate neighbours, are annually destroyed for want of the most evident precautions'* (Engels, 1892). What has this to do with a focus on physical interpersonal violence? It is to recognise that a focus on physical interpersonal violence will always find evidence for the interpersonal genesis of that violence within its own institutional perspective and to then critique this 'institution' and its formation as part of the very 'problem of violence'. That is, that in a society that is organised hierarchically (that is, stratified) it is *fundamental* to recognise how the emergence of violence is related to this 'ordering' (Wilkinson and Bezruchka, 2002; Marmot and Wilkinson, 2001; Wilkinson, 1997).

<sup>165</sup> Again, to what extent this comment can be specified to a time and place is beyond the scope of a PhD that has as its focus men's violence. To mention it here is to state that the scope of a political announcement as a universal announcement comes at a time when politics is not a universal relation to the state or to 'citizenship'. Similarly, the scope of this intolerance has its corollary in Tancred's time, namely the hostility of the pre-1844 Scottish Poor Law to provide monetary relief for the able bodied unemployed and contemporary rhetoric of with rights must come responsibilities.



The tradition of disbelief and predictability, social relations enshrined in social distance, is alive and well.<sup>166</sup> As will be seen in the next chapter, the source of the great disbelief and civilised intolerance is found in that other enduring Glaswegian tradition, that is, despite and perhaps because of improved access to material goods and the emergence of working class affluence, there remains the persistence of relative deprivation, poverty and explanations that reduce inequality to matters of individual choice (Brown et al, 2002).

While these parallels between and within centuries might indicate a space for some Kondratieff wave research the intention isn't to impart a trans-historical or context less view from nowhere.<sup>167</sup> This is exactly the form of representation that can render both the researcher and meaningful data invisible. Circumstances change, as do the meanings and forms that people work with (Hall and Horne, 1995, p6). Thus, each particular generation can be understood as having and embodying its '*own characteristic sociology and each its different socialisation/accluration*' (Gilfillan, 1999, p77).

In other words, rather than understanding particular problems in history as evidence of a peculiar continuity (not to mention evidence of subjectivity- *reading off* individual's from their represented social and economic conditions), those 'problems', their 'resolution' or their persistence can be understood as particular and contingent and deserving of attention in their

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<sup>166</sup> Again without wanting to simplify what is a complex area there are recurring themes. For example, '*More than 150 years after Benjamin Disraeli wrote Sybil, his famous novel warning that Britain was becoming 'two nations between whom there is no intercourse and no sympathy; who are as ignorant of each other's habits, thoughts, and feelings, as if they were dwellers in different zones, or inhabitants of different planets... the rich and the poor,' the prediction looks to have become reality*' (Doward et al, The Observer, November 23, 2003). To what extent there is intercourse between different populations depends on what notion of intercourse is used and in what manner this intercourse takes place. Both points are heavily sociological.

<sup>167</sup> Saying that, Massey (1994, p109) draws attention to what has been called the 5<sup>th</sup> Kondratieff in the UK and in this sense it would make sense to draw attention to what these peaks and troughs might mean to everyday experience. More importantly, though, while the aim is to contextualise, there is also the notions of comparison and contrast. The importance of history and anthropology to sociology is significant.



own right. As Bourdieu puts it, there are no *'eternal answers to eternal questions'*; instead there are solutions to practical problems (Bourdieu, 1961, cited in Fowler, 1997, p19).

What is important is to understand the character of the relations between 'civilised society' (or more importantly, what exactly is civilised society and *who* or *what*, if anyone or anything, populates it) and those conditions it shouldn't tolerate. Who or what shouldn't or can't be tolerated? What is tolerated? Why is there this continued theme of disbelief when encountering ways of life that are relatively close geographically?

Why is the voice of reason in these encounters dominated by the shocked visitor?<sup>168</sup>

Many of the themes of nineteenth century literature on city life resurface in 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century accounts. Indeed, as has been mentioned, the parallels between the late Victorian period and the late 20<sup>th</sup>/early 21<sup>st</sup> century are striking: amongst other things these include similarities in notions of childhood and parental responsibility (especially motherhood);<sup>169</sup> a return to a focus on the deserving and undeserving poor; a concern with danger, the dangerous classes and *their* crime (and a return to the highly visible and visceral body for explanations of

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<sup>168</sup> Perhaps there is an accompanying theme in this tradition of disbelief, one that can be explained by the expectation of who would most likely be consuming the stories of disgust, filth and those 'living an abnormal life in abnormal conditions'. What this 'gap' is and what it means for those who negotiate it remains a matter of intense argument, not least within sociology. Indeed, perhaps the sociological 'gap' or the tendency to retreat to methodological debates or sensationalism hides the relations of social reality itself. As Charlesworth puts it, *'The incapacity of specialists to constitute a phenomena of such intense personal significance with anything like terms suited to its nature arises from the distances that leave the lives of poor so mysterious that they have to be 'discovered' through data-generation. In other words, it is the political condition of this group that allows them to be endlessly constituted in data serving the institutional interests of 'experts'*. In this sense, this theme of disbelief touches upon not only the 'condition' of those discovered but also the manner in which they then become known and used 'politically'. That a group can be encountered as means for 'data generation' by another group does imply differential access to power as much as it also implies a particular relation to each other.

<sup>169</sup> Recent recommendations for drug addicts to be paid not to have children lose their 'radical' edge when seen in this light.



same); men and a male culture of violence; the health of the nation and in particular knowing the *'state of the nation'* through preparedness for war.<sup>170</sup>

If we are to take Tancras' account and those after as indicative of a theme of disbelief then there is a wealth of material to be found on the social and economic distance between 'civilised society' and the 'worst estates'. However, does revealing this plethora of statistical information reveal anything about what are really contingent social and economic relations? Does this accounting do any justice to the tradition or to the way in which this tradition presents itself? Are statistics akin to the already identified 'mechanisms' of social reality in that they can come to deny the contingency of reality in being taken as self explanatory totems? As McDowell notes, *'despite the durable nature of these divisions, the social attributes associated with categorical differences do change'* (McDowell, 2003, p20).<sup>171</sup>

A concern with morality appears to be at least one root of this theme of disbelief. Indeed, in the academy there has also been a renewed focus on morality and the purpose of research and the consequences of the research process (Leibling and Stanko, 2001). There is a concern over the ethics of social research as if ethics and morality were somehow found outside the box of the social rather than constituted within the social. Here we are reminded of the importance of recognizing those *'zones of necessity and freedom'* and how *'moral action'* is not to be

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<sup>170</sup> Recent research involving new army recruits reveals that a significant percentage have the reading and writing skills of an 'average' 11 year old. This is seen as having negative consequences for future plans to develop the British Army into a highly skilled and technological armed force. In other words, this deficiency affects the soldier's ability to fight in situations they are called upon to fight. The 1902 Royal Commission in Scotland, motivated by the poor health of recruits to the Boer War, argued much the same. Their conclusions linked ill health to poverty and in particular dietary intake. In an age of increased affluence the poverty of the recruits is linked to education and their participation in the educational system. In both cases, the links between class and army recruits are implicit. In the latter, education and culture rather than nutrition and identity attract explanatory importance.

<sup>171</sup> Of course, how attributes associated with groups defined as excluded change is also to recognize how public forms are political and how politics and access to resources can shape public forms of perception.

understood as utterly divorced from the reality of social relations. Perhaps in an age of 'ontological insecurity' moral certainties should be afforded the same sociological clarification.

Is this recurrence a tragedy or a farce? The most general theme that can be ascertained is the emergent desire to identify and so control people and places understood as both morally dangerous and threatening. There is an unstated emotion that seems to envelop this ordering. This regulation, classification even, can be understood in both a symbolic and material sense. Muncie and McGlaughlin (2001) note how some authors have shown how responses to 'danger' helped to shape the modern city, and in particular, how the city itself became the focus of efforts to incorporate and domesticate the working classes. In this sense, the 'civilized society', like notions of 'community', 'marriage', the 'family' and the 'public body', can be understood as terms that are politically 'loaded' (Much like the proliferation of inverted commas).<sup>172</sup>

### **5.3 *Living and Remembering the Disbelieved Scheme***

Indeed, there are numerous problems in discussing just exactly what a community involves or is (Hoggett, 1997).<sup>173</sup> This is especially the case when it comes to remembering a community lost in time, or importantly, a 'community' that does not have equal access to the means for

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<sup>172</sup> The implications of ordering the city or a community primarily through the lens of crime and safety are explored in Muncie and McLaughlin (2001). Stuart Waiton (2001) looks at how this focus has influenced the relations and perceptions of adult-child relations in Scotland. Similarly, the idea of 'marriage' and the 'family' are encountering their own sociological realities in 21<sup>st</sup> century Britain; they are becoming evidence of emerging social relations. In both cases, words are encountered as concepts themselves. The nearest analogy I can get is to seeing words in conversation like houses that have already been built in a 'community'. All the work that has gone into building these 'words' is taken for granted and the work itself is 'forgotten' in the process of representing and naming.

<sup>173</sup> In the Globalisation literature, there is an increasing distinction and clarification between what is meant by place and community and the relations between the two.



generating and maintaining representations of itself. This, of course, means nothing in itself. In this latter case, the power to name and represent a community can be understood as being imbued with political significance. This was a feature in the debates of the time that emerged alongside the statements that were the local newspaper '*The Voice*' and the Easterhouse Arts Festival of the 1970's and 1980's. More recently, contemporary writers have explored the assumptions and consequences that inhere in ideas of community and in relations of social and economic reproduction (Hastings and Dean, 2000; Levitas, 1998, p8).<sup>174</sup>

In relation to the idea of 'work, for example, work is reduced to paid work and paid work becomes the focus of discourses of social exclusion/inclusion. This is the common bond that runs through liberal, conservative and radical accounts of society. All the other aspects of everyday existence and survival, all the little strategies and relations, victories and defeats, what Rowbotham (2001) conceptualises as 'livelihood' are reduced to the economic, to the working wage and fundamentally to some representational ideal or 'abstracted value': a value that has its market at the level of representation.

Indeed, as Levitas (1998) reminds us the economic in the dominant economic discourse is the invisible hand of the market, it is '*market activity*' (p26). In both accounts, though, work, whether paid or not, is taken as the benchmark towards self actualisation or towards understanding. Indeed, in critiquing abstracted values, it is as if the explanatory methodology is constituted in abstract value. In neither is there any impetus towards even the thought of a self as out with the parameters (or chains) of work or a self as *able* to construct a life from the

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<sup>174</sup> Indeed, this is the basis of the links between image management and regeneration.

structured perception that is imagined to be. From here, concepts like the underclass are already built but are just awaiting planning permission.

#### 5.4 *From Blackhill to Easterhouse: A Man's Perspective*

Memories of living with what are *now* seen as the 'hard' conditions of the slums are often talked about alongside notions of reciprocity, solidarity and affection.<sup>175</sup> Then, of course, the conditions of the slums where *lived* and largely worked with by those who lived there. What other choice or desire was there?<sup>176</sup> The brutal fact is that people can adapt to the most atrocious conditions. Indeed, it is how this adaptation proceeds and endures *outwith* the conditions and relations that spawned it that is of importance here. It is to recognise that poverty by itself is not an explanation for the absence of human happiness or for the proliferation of violence and brutality. Hammy, now in his eighties, recalls living in what is often understood as the social and economic enclave that was 1930/40's Blackhill referred by pulp crime writer Reg McKay as the 'Leper Colony',<sup>177</sup>

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<sup>175</sup> When people have no power over decisions as were to live and how to live they adapt, and can adapt to the most difficult conditions. The overwhelming impression I got from Hammy when he talked of Blackhill was a deeply positive experience. Indeed, in talk at least, there is a strong sense of what is right and what is wrong, a sense of what it means to be equal despite differences, a sense of finding respect in 'small' everyday matters. Of course, this sense of sameness is also part of the shared experience and this shared experience also reveals that '*... such communities were also suffocatingly homogenous and intolerant of difference where nosey parkers lurked behind the lace curtains and where deference was not only practised to the old and wise but to the educated and clever as well*' (Hoggett, 1997, p14).

<sup>176</sup> Meg Henderson (1994) describes how as a child growing up in Blackhill she incorporated particular ways of behaving in relation to moments of perceived danger and how these moments became normalised. She goes on to describe the failed efforts of her 'Nan' to move out of Blackhill and of how residents broke up the area into differently named sub districts in an effort to escape the real stigmatising effects of the place: how it had become identified '*according to specialised criteria of identification and activity*' (Giddens, 1995, p264). The reality was that for many Blackhill was an area difficult to get out of for those who lived there and one which was not visited by those who did not live there.

<sup>177</sup> The building of Blackhill began in 1933 after the recommendations of the Housing (Scotland) Acts 1930. The first tenants moved in, in 1935.



*'... Aye, it wis hard. We stayed wi' Jean's ma... there wis fourteen of us in that four apartment, us six in wan room and the rest of them in the other. Her ma wis always getting at me but gie her her due she didnae throw us oot or ask us tae leave...'*

Hammy's 'hard' is partly for the benefit of me, for the contrast between now and then.

However, in one sense, the comment that rooms are *'the smallest units of civilization'* (Scarry, 1985) has a particular ironic density here that begin to express one aspect of the relationship between being and consciousness, between a person and their immediate and extended concrete, geographical and social environment. The 'room' and 'our' understanding of the 'home' and our living in the home can thus be important ethnographic sites. For Hammy and his family, like many others, this single room was, for the most part, both a *'magnification of the body'* and a *'miniaturization of the world, of civilisation'* (Scarry, 1985, p38).

The space afforded to them was an indication of the value afforded to them by 'society'. This miniaturization of the world is the real that is relational and the importance of these small places for the real. This singular space was the space they had at that moment in time and this singular space was where they would move on from and take with them. This singularity and presence to space and to the proximity of others is the space of the 'home' and it is from this space shared between people that in some sense the home and none intimate relations are made.<sup>178</sup>

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<sup>178</sup> Of course, this creation of the 'home' invites and demands that the analysis goes beyond the interpersonal and indeed beyond an account and an analysis of the nature of living in and amongst particular bricks and mortar. It asks questions about housing policy, the quality of housing and the relations between agencies and occupants.

Indeed, in Hammy's case, this shared and extended family home was not a space and place for a man in the same way that it was not the same place for the 'weans'. *Everything* on the inside is outside and everything on the outside is inside.

Jean's ma was always getting at Hammy because she did not see Hammy as providing enough for his family or for aiming to get out of not only her flat but the scheme itself. She did not see him as looking beyond the present circumstances. As far as Hammy was concerned anything to do with 'the hoose' was his wife's business.<sup>179</sup> Indeed, as mentioned above, Hammy never talked about his in-laws hoose as anything other than '*Jean's maw's domain*'. As far as his own wife was concerned it was Jean who organized the later move to Easterhouse, it was Jean who done '*everythin*' in and '*aboot the hoose*'. That is, that it was largely women who got to know the neighbours as neighbours, who got involved in 'community' level meetings or organized day trips for the street, who would even 'answer the door' under particular circumstances.<sup>180</sup>

In a time when the socializing force of the structure of marriage and shared social and economic conditions were a communal basis of identity '*the sphere of social reproduction was distinctly gendered and held together in emotional terms by the mother*' (Taylor, 1999, p49).<sup>181</sup> Of course, these accounts of 'female culture' are exactly the same accounts that are

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<sup>179</sup> Elspeth King notes is in agreement with Hammy (but perhaps for different reasons), housing was 'always a women's issue' (1993, P136).

<sup>180</sup> There was often an explicit reason for this. For example, Hammy routinely had a close-cellar full of whiskey he had 'blagged' while working in the whiskey bond and was always alert to a possible visit by the police. What I want to argue is that the material and the symbolic are often complicit in social being and that purely economic explanations cannot capture the socially constructed character of being. This is the reason for using the quote by Bourdieu below.

<sup>181</sup> How freedom from domestic ideologies have been experienced by women and men according to these factors, how the disappearance or change in the structure of family and rit de passage employment has asked different questions of people socially located, asked them to draw on other sources of resources to constitute 'responsibility' and 'choice'. Bourdieu would explain Hammy's going to the door and Jean's involvement in



used to deconstruct the construction that was the distinction between gendered public and private spheres. Most of what seemed to be going on out with the idea of what paid work was and meant was being attended to by the women. Many men found themselves in their relations with other men and in their expectations to be a man.

Hammy, and this is the emphasis, enjoyed life in Blackhill because

*'Naebdae thote anybody wis any better than emdae else. When sumthin went wrang ye wid aw rally roon. When a broke ma erm at the scaffoldin ma mates gote a collection goin fur me oan the Fridays. It wis mare or less ma wages... it wis Jean (his wife) who wanted us tae move... that wummin thing wi' the hoose'.*

Here we can see the co-joining of what Gilfillan terms the *ad sensum* and *ad humanum* (1999, p129) character of working class life in the scheme of Blackhill.<sup>182</sup> Here we can see how the 'force of circumstances' (a relationship to wage/manual labour/embodied and corporeal prioritizing of experience, of what counts as real and the living together of many people in

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what was going on as an indication of the gendered and class status of particular ways of being and speaking- what it meant in the 'market' to talk and speak in particular ways. *'Since it is accepted (and above all by women, although they may pretend to deplore it) that a man is defined by the right and duty to be true to himself, which constitutes his identity (that's the way he is) and that he can rest content with a silence which enables him to preserve his virile dignity, it is often incumbent upon women, socially defined as pliable and submissive by nature, to make the effort necessary to confront dangerous situations, like meeting the doctor, describing symptoms and discussing the treatment with him, sorting things out with the teacher, or the security people, etc'* (1991, p101).

<sup>182</sup> Gilfillan (1999) conceives of the self in its relations with other selves as an extension of being and how being is formed in work. It is worth quoting in full in that he conceives the 'worked self in itself... in terms of a psycho-physical reduction effected by the expenditure of energy in labouring and I introduce the generic term reduction as a way of conceptualising how the labouring body incarnates its incarnate orientation to the world. Within this reduction I identify two specifications or modalities of this specific being-in-the-world: the *ad sensum* tendency based upon the daily production of an existence (or *esse* i.e. act of existence) marked by an existential privileging of the corporeal and the prioritisation of satisfactions of the body and a tendency towards sensation, and secondly, an *ad humanum* tendency towards humane or solidaristic behaviours and sentiments among workers that reflects finding in work the founding necessity and rationale for cultivating such behaviours among themselves and in their relations with others' (199, p129).

cramped environment) can engender a specific type of sociality and a getting on that is formed in its very accommodation of others into what it means to be and act in a way that recognises a self as a *dependant* self. Hammy found his *self* in this space and place and in the relations between his mates and it is in this shared relation to work that the reality and myth of a discipline of individual psychology is born. That is, in this shared experience of coming up against a self through the experience of work itself and work relations: of surviving. It is a coming up against a social self, the desire for a self is found in relations with others who share the same objective exigences. This is an encounter with a particular aspect of working class male culture within a specific place that can be used to recognize that 'community'; that is a community that does not depend on representations of itself for its reality, is a community that finds its feet in its own reality. People adapt and will find the means to survive if access to the means of survival is denied. The reality for Hammy was working with this knowledge of himself and immediacy and how this sense is found in its meeting with 'others'.

This tendency to find an integral humanism in necessity, to find a human authenticity where praxis is constrained, referred to in terms such as '*salt of the earth*', can be understood as the place where '*the habitus makes coherence and necessity out of accident and contingency*' (Bourdieu, 1977, p86-89). Of course, the issue then becomes if social 'incentives' for *Ad hominem* behaviours fade will those behaviours fade also. That is, if the social is encountered as negative and debasing is the self encountered as negative and debased? Or is it more worthwhile and accurate too understand the relationship between these behaviours dialectically? That is, that neither can be described as missing in human behaviours.



Thus, within a whole range of dark ad sensum behaviours humanity or a relation to humanity is to be found. In this way, ad humanum and ad sensum behaviours are consubstantial in that the recognition of either one or another as dominant reflects their constitution within a whole set of particular social, cultural and economic relations: This differentiation between 'social' incentives and 'cultural' reality of the class structure is perhaps one aspect of what Hall is theorising in his work on the enduring remnants and heritage of the '*violent habitus*'. That is, in the context of English society, the *unmaking* of the working class (vide Thompson, 1978) has been the unmaking of those cultural traditions that channeled the 'instincts' of the corporeally prioritizing habitus into *Ad hominem* behaviours. The replacement of these 'traditional cultures' by free market economics is thus seen on a scale akin to those psychosocial effects identified in the aftermath of a *natural* disaster (Gleser et al, 1981). Like natural science the removal of support for an object is seen to be the cause of its falling. Where social science differs is in its identification of the weight and experience of subjects as *different objects* in a relational field of forces.

Perhaps an alternative perspective would see this process as an emergence of a coming to full self awareness or as an end of a paradigm and the new opportunity for the invention of culture where there was none before. But this is the whole point. Having hit the rock with Wittgenstein's spade, explanation and indeed creation moves on from individual agency to history, sociology and back again. For example, and as has been seen (Chapter 4), in relation to 'violence' as a symbolic asset (symbolic in relation to material culture) Stanley Made is quite clear what the end of a paradigm means to him; it is both a recognition of bodily decline and the investments that violence demands, and at the same time a recognition of a new relationship to reality, one that *fuses* (as in blows) his interpretative horizon (Gadamer, 1975)

with the competing reality faced. I repeat the quote in the same way that violent assault can reduce communication to nothing but the repetition

*'... things huv changed since then, when a wis a young guy. In that age ye still hid yer self respect and pride, nowadays they don't even huv that... This guy gote a hoose ower there and he wis lit, 'Whit dae a dae Stanley, a went doon thinking a wis still the age when we went about an they wid still know us an aw that. A wis lit, 'right, fuckin rap it up', tryin tae stope them fightin an stope this, an dae that'. Broken ribs, broken leg, broken erm, battered tae fuck. Know whit a mean. In those days he wid huv went ahead, the cunts wid huv run away, huv respected him. Noo he's just like another wan, 'just get fuckin intae 'im'. He wis tryin tae get them tae rap up whit they wur dain an aw that'. For Stanley, the fusion of interpretative horizons is to do with the understanding of his own present vulnerability and the ambiguity that is present in facing what could be an earlier version of himself in changed times.*

As far as Hammy and his mates were concerned, no one thought they were any better than anyone else primarily because as Hammy was to explicate, *'we wur aw in the same boat'*. The same boat was the ocean that was the shared experience of manual work, lack of money, similar housing conditions and relations with authority and how each of these are encountered and inter related in their own fashion- their was a sense of fraternity and indeed a need for fraternity in face of the threat of 'poverty' (social and economic). To thus *affect* (embody) an indifference to these shared conditions was to attract the moniker 'snob' and to attract the moniker 'snob' is to recognise how 'difference' can be experienced as an embodied threat.



That is, how a relation of difference is 'felt' and how people can recognise and identify themselves in those others most like them.<sup>183</sup>

As has been seen, in talking of the character of work with Hammy he focused on the example of breaking his arm and the time when he returned to work too early after abdominal surgery. In the latter case he says he felt guilty about taking hand outs from his mates. Here there is a recognition of a social contract that while based in intimate relations is also based in the practicalities of economics and the pressure involved to resume and fill a space that is seen as empty.

Hammy's relationship to paid work *throughout* his life was a series of short term temporary contracts on building sites. If you didn't work you didn't get paid. There were no illusions as to any depth of meaning to work or to a worked self. What was transparent was that many involved 'knew their place' and were well aware of what work and the wage meant to both them and their employer. Hammy found meaning in the work as an experience he shared with his mates. This meaningless experience of manual work as work in relation to, for example, some nebulous idea of a career or of being part of a union, is engaged with *positively* and as a relation of privilege. Indeed, this was a feature of much of Hammy's relations with his neighbours many years after his move away from Blackhill; that is, being neighbourly and helping out seemed to be an aspect of *his* work of not being '*any better than emdae else*'.

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<sup>183</sup> This relationship between difference as inequalities and how people perceive and feel themselves perceived is a developing theme in the contemporary literature on the psycho social effects of status differentials (see Wilkinson and Marmot, 2001 for a concise summary of this argument with regards to mortality and morbidity rates and their relation to status).

When I chased after what he got from paid work I imagined that if Hammy was employed as a philosopher he would likely have shared something that was Bertrand Russell's (1932, p38) opinion about full time work. That is, in Hammy's words, '*that wisnae fur me*'.<sup>184</sup> I do not know to what extent this was Hammy's 'choice' or more of a revelation with regards to his sociological relation to the structure and organisation of work itself but I do know that his access to paid work was instrumental and consequential for his relations with his mates.

On the day of returning to work a week earlier than advised his stitches burst and he had to return for a protracted stay in hospital. The logic of the early return to work and the burst stitches allied to the practical and libidinal 'disbelief' in full time work is brought together in the way that Hammy knew that what is necessary and has to be or can be gone through is that which has a particular weight or sense of truth to it. He felt guilty about not working because his mates would be working for him: his health and his body came second to this reality and indeed the working with and through physical pain is something that comes to be expected.

It is not difficult to see how some writers can describe *this* working class reality as distinguished by '*hardness*' (Willis, 1978); '*stupidity*' (Horne and Hall, 1995) or for the observer to see a '*complex of toughness*' and a '*privileging of the corporeal*' (Gilfillan, 1999, p129). In these writers there is an explicit reference to the imperatives of 'hard labour' and how it weighs on both the 'rational' and the 'refined emotional'. This internalisation or naturalisation of social and economic conditions warns that the 'success' of a social actor on the scene cannot be validated by external measures/methods. To fully understand is to fully

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<sup>184</sup> As Russell intuits as only a philosopher seated in a philosopher's chair could, '*a great deal of harm is being done in the modern world by the belief in the virtuousness of work, and that the road to happiness and prosperity*



live the condition as closely as possible: it is to be *practically* at one with the social and economic relations lived and embodied. Only then will sayings like 'It ain't what you do it's the way that you do it' justify themselves. This is the naturalisation argument of Hall (1997) in relation to levels of contemporary forms of working class interpersonal physical violence: that is, that bodies and dispositions formed in labour remember and endure and will find expression. It is worth quoting in full.

*'The possibility exists that, in response to the immediacy of these conditions, durable cultural forms established themselves, developing internally coherent 'practical logics' founded upon physical 'hardness', mental sclerosis and egocentrism (which opposed all political variants of civilised practice) and producing subjects whose fierce devotion to these practices was held in place by the enforced development of a suite of brutalised sensibilities. There is no doubt that it was in the immediate interests of these groups, forced into competition at the bottom end of the labour hierarchy, to actively collude in the establishment and maintenance of both the myth and the reality of their 'hardness'. They staked a claim on this brutal engagement with the only available sectors of the industrial division of labour, and thus internally reproductive visceral cultures that were peculiar to industrial capitalism were born (Hall, 1995).*

*The naturalisation of these forms of being and the generation of dispositions necessary to compete in the intense struggle at the lower end of the labour market were to their immediate practical advantage. They were not initially the product of ideology or labelling (or any other cognitive or communicative process) but of the emergence of enforced logics which quickly established themselves as cultural practices internalised by a process of emotional structuring (Hall, 1995). There is strong evidence to suggest that cultures of 'hardness' are durable, visceral forms with notably strong powers of internal generation and reproduction, and that the physical energy and vigour of human beings caught up in this reproductive process embodies these practical logics and emotional structures in intensely dynamic forms (see Hobbs, 1994, 1995; Horne and Hall, 1995). This process sustains the sorts of dispositions*

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*lies in an organised diminution of work'.*



*towards unrestricted physical 'hardness' which manifest themselves as sporadic, unpredictable actions of intimidation and violence, erupting constantly - occasionally in spectacular but usually in mundane and quite unsensational ways - against a constant background static of undirected aggressivity' (Hall, 1997, p19- 20).*

As has been seen through the example of Gilfillan's concepts of Ad Sensum and Ad Hominem, the dynamics of visceral forms of being as violence is not a substantive something in itself. Its meaningful explanation is found through relations. For Hammy there was no meaning as such in the work (as work) he did itself and yet the experience of work and of work relations constituted a sense of what was real and what was right. The expression of violence is often the same: it is not something that is talked about in the fashion a boxing promoter tries to generate interest in an upcoming fight. In contrast, there is often no meaning as such in physical violence, it is not talked about as violence. It is done and it is often justified. In relation to work, for Hammy money was the priority. Money paid the bills, went to the bookies and bought cheese, cigarettes and alcohol. Money was the relation to culture in the first place. If Jean didn't get a hold of Hammy's wage packet on the Friday it was often the case that the bookies and the beer came before the bills and food for the 'weans': an event that meant Hammy would stay with his friend for the weekend and Jean would be armed and on the street looking for him.<sup>185</sup> The idea of a public male space and a private female space 'didnae wash'. The weight of the 'family' and the 'marriage' can from here seen to be held

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<sup>185</sup> Brian recounts his own experience of 'domestic budgets' from a period approximately 20 years after Hammy's time in Blackhill. Perhaps it was because of routines like Hammy's that the chancellor of the exchequer from Brian's perspective was female in that it '*wis matriarchal*' in that '*the maw gote every penny, or it wis the granny. They wur the matriarchs*'. Indeed, it is here that we can begin to see the structure that is marriage in working class life and the relationship men and women have had to this structure; what they got out of it and how it structured their relation to other structures (class, work, time, place etc).



together in not only emotional terms but quite often financial terms by the mother on the ground and by the state structures that are in place to support the family.<sup>186</sup>

It was also the case that Hammy was familiar with a few of the 'polis' to the extent that he gained the moniker 'the weekend man', a reference to his habit of ending up in Barlinnie on the Friday night 'drunk and disorderly'. The economic reality for many people living in Blackhill (and then onto the schemes) was that anything that could be got cheap or for nothing was taken to use yourself or for your family and friends. Informal work practices and making some extra money was the norm and often the necessity. It is an example of how socially excluded populations adapt and come to generate economic and social structures that are as absolute in their distinction from the mainstream in as much as they are related and constituted by that mainstream. This is the specific basis of relations with the police and the stigma associated with grassing that can be seen to generate what some commentators have inadvertently mixed up with their own criminological agendas as a 'culture of non-disclosure'. From his time in Blackhill Hammy was certainly familiar and intimate with 'the polis' and policing practice and the incongruence found between those same practices and an abstract notion of 'justice'.

In retrospect it is not difficult to see how much the place 'suffered' the racism of class and sectarianism (Damer, 1992). Indeed, in looking back with a worldly and educated eye, Henderson (1994, p41) equates the place with '*the South African townships, the ghettos for the black or Indian people in America and the Aborigines of Australia; places that are no*

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<sup>186</sup> This is why Connell can write with such conviction that '*Ascendancy of one group of men over another achieved at the point of a gun, or by the threat of unemployment, is not hegemony. Ascendancy which is embedded in religious doctrine and practice, mass media content, wage structures, the design of houses, welfare taxation policies and so forth is*' (Connell, 1995).

*more than reservations to keep them in one place and contain them for whatever the authorities may wish to inflict on them... It was our punishment for the crime of being poor'.*

Henderson can now look back and see the naturalization of social processes. Again, the question is why. As Laurie asks, '*Why does the 'system' take pains to create these enclaves of the poor- prison camps in all but name and fence*'? (1974, p47). Are places and people produced?<sup>187</sup> Do we possess a habitus or does a habitus possess us?

Hammy now lives in a local authority nursing home in an area less than a mile from Easterhouse yet it is a place he had previously never heard of or been too. He is warm all of the time now, has regular nutritionally balanced meals and the promise of this until he dies. For Hammy, utter boredom is lifted in some small fashion, amongst others, in that he has the ironic (dis)pleasure of sharing this end space and time with those figures of authority he often found himself in conflict with throughout the early and middle part of his life (especially living in Blackhill but also in Easterhouse), namely '*auld coppers*'.<sup>188</sup>

Hammy recounted numerous run-ins with the police. In his stories of Blackhill and moving to Easterhouse the police are encountered as antagonistic and often brutal in their honesty. Again, though, it is an honesty that is seen both ways from within a particular square of space, one that has a particular social logic and privilege relation to what is 'real'. One in particular stands out, his sense of justice and satisfaction after having punched a familiar CID officer in the face after he had been punched in the face by the same officer himself. Hammy had seen the 'police assault' as more as a fight than a breach of the peace (although the consequential

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<sup>187</sup> Malik (1998) suggests that racial categories and categories of difference emerge '*as a means of reconciling the conflict between the ideology of equality and the reality of the persistence of inequality*'.

<sup>188</sup> Hammy's words are '*its enough tae drive ye up the lumb*'.



reality of a 'breach of the peace' was never out of mind): he recognised the reality of 'justice' and how easily it could translate into his own 'criminal' language.

Moreover, there is again an account of a privileged relation to the real in Hammy's memories of fighting a policeman, one that comes through in more contemporary accounts, and that is that the reality of someone or something is hiding behind a uniform or a narrative.<sup>189</sup> Indeed, as a child I remember similar stories and I remember seeing and the accompanying heroic imagery that surrounded anyone who had fought with a police officer. He found it strange that after all this time and after his experiences with the police (especially in Blackhill) he should be sharing the same 'hoose' as an auld copper.

Age hasn't diminished any of the things that made life real for Hammy, or for many of the other residents of the home. He remained both critical of processes that undermined his independence- *av been told whit tae dae aw ma life and am no huvin it here-* and at the same time accepting of expert opinion- *some people ask whit it is thur takin, a just swally the lot.* I listened as he told me how he had been threatened and called a '*fenian bastard*' by a seventy year old woman who promised she would ask her grandsons to pay him a visit! The reason for the argument was a disagreement over what to watch on the television. Hammy knew the woman from Easterhouse and had responded in kind. He spelt out the imagined character of his own many grandsons.

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<sup>189</sup> In the back of a police van Tommy Vercetti described how the '*fat bastard*' police officer he had thrown to the ground and used as a shield against his colleagues in the aftermath of a sequence of events that involved much more than that suggested by the statistical points identified in an official account that would begin by a phone call and a narrative of 'domestic violence' vis a vis male to female violence and the officer accusing him from the front seat of the police van of being a '*domestic abuser*' and Tommy then pointing with a nod of the head to the same policeman and then his colleagues as '*you where bullied at school, you where bullied at school...*' etc.

In the nursing home Auld Hammy has a weekly allowance of eighteen pounds which goes on cigarettes. He is relieved that the electricity bill he had been paying off from his time in his own flat is finally cleared. This feeling of not owing anything, of having paid back and of having paid his dues is a recurring theme in his talk. At this point in his life he recognises an achievement worthy of talking about and that is in making it to here he has done it 'himself' and without even now owing anything to anyone who is encountered as having to owe to. Even in my advice to Hammy to '*whit can they dae anyway, don't think about it*' I can see his account as a privileging and authenticating of a particular existence and of a particular self. In part I think this relates back to his relationship to money, to his relationship to the home, work and to what Hammy and many of his friends spent their money on. Money in being scarce is recognized in what it can buy and in being scarce is known for its objectifying properties.<sup>190</sup>

The practices of lending and borrowing between family and neighbours is also to link a specific feeling (of not owing anything), to a sense of self that is engaged with a history of being in the same boat. These family and neighbourly practices existed because of shared scarcity and this shared scarcity developed relations of dependency on those intimate in space and experience.<sup>191</sup> These short pieces of testimony led me into a longer discussion with Hammy about what it was like to first move to the housing schemes in the early 1960's. For Hammy, '*things huv changed Pat, but am no sure they're fur the better*'.

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<sup>190</sup> Sociologically, scarceness and implications of value can thus themselves be seen to be dependant upon mutually existing yet, on the face of it, totally reversible properties.

<sup>191</sup> To what extent these practices of borrowing and lending still exist and their relation to the wider economy?



### **5.5 Wide Open Spaces and New Social Relations: The Move to the Scheme**

A key moment in the formation of the new schemes, and in Hammy's move away from Blackhill was *The Clyde Valley Regional Plan* of 1946. The plan was part of a more general need that was evident across all of Europe in the aftermath of the Second World War, that is, the desire to build homes and communities that (in accordance with the social knowledge and wisdoms of the time) were conducive to the 'flowering' of civilisation described by Scarry (1984). From the home, the house and its organisation would come the order, rationality and organisation of people in 'civil' and 'civilised' society.<sup>192</sup>

In essence, it advocated a massive increase in public spending directed towards the housing market and at the same time a decentralisation of industry (Saville, 1985). From within a paradigm of uneven development both of these phenomena can be seen to be connected.<sup>193</sup>

With regards to housing this 'comprehensive redevelopment' was to be realised through slum clearances and the building of new stock on Glasgow's periphery, alongside the development of the New Towns. This was to be the new distribution of population in relation to capitalist restructuring, the creation of new spaces and places and relations.

However, from the perspective of *later* town planners and critics the restructuring has been described as flawed and short sighted. The 1951 Housing Census indicates one aspect of the planning behind the reconstruction (Damer, 1999). It is also an explicit example of the assumptions and limitations inherent in using the survey method to generate data. In essence, a

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<sup>192</sup> Jean 'just' wanted more space to bring up her children.

<sup>193</sup> This, then, has consequences for our understanding and investigation of social forms and problems. It demands a sense of reflexivity and an awareness of the danger in reifying what is contingent, of making a living out of attacking issues that are political problems. For example, it is in this sense that uneven development can be seen to lie at the heart of capitalist societies in that '*the division of labour bears the tendency towards differentiation of human labour and its organization within social relations. These divisions are frequently*



questionnaire was given to existing slum tenants asking for details of current household amenities. Levels of overcrowding and sanitation were, understandably and traditionally, the key issues.<sup>194</sup> From this questionnaire, those people<sup>195</sup> who had the power to make decisions on behalf of large groups of people undertook a housing programme whose aim was to tackle those issues (housing and sanitation) as quickly as possible.<sup>196</sup> It was in this narrow context that the rebuilding programme was initiated.<sup>197</sup>

Stanley (Age 55) recalls the sheer sense of space and openness he felt as a child when he first moved into the scheme in the 1950's,

*'A loved it when we first moved here. It was aw fields an that... We wid go oot ower the fields wi the duggs an catch rabbits'* (Stanley, Conversation in his home, March 2002).

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*naturalized as 'natural' expressions of class, gender and race divisions'* (Helms, 2003, p40). This has fundamental consequences for the claims and solutions offered by social research.

<sup>194</sup> Perhaps a caution against reducing livelihood to housing or any other single issue.

<sup>195</sup> It remains the case that the 'power brokers' in Easterhouse are very much people who come from and live in very different circumstances to the majority of people who live there. The emphasis, despite the rhetoric of partnerships, is on a top-down approach as far as community empowerment and environmental improvement is concerned. Indeed, the whole rhetoric that is community is one that Crawford (1998) situates within a wider political and economic fragmentation. That is, the rhetoric is local empowerment but the reality is the withdrawal of state support. For Crawford the 'involvement' of local groups is one that generates questions with regard to the nature and extent of local corporativism. A similar situation is found with regards to social inclusion/exclusion organisations. That is, evaluation reveals that their membership '*excludes those who are excluded*' (Clark, Variant, 2001). To what extent the recent creation of a 'think tank' for Social Justice in London will follow this trend remains to be seen ([http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk\\_politics/3845475.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk_politics/3845475.stm)). There has been some superficial effort to address this level of representation in the recent introduction of 'people's panels' (<http://www.greatereasterhouse-pathfinder.com/peoplespanel/basic.html>) but there remains '*this unwillingness to leave moral responsibility to others*' (Laurie, 1974). Research into 'partnerships' in the West coast of Scotland reveals that they are both inefficient and undemocratic Collins (2001; 1999).

<sup>196</sup> The sheer rapidity of the house building is a central feature. The debate is that the economic constraints and pressure on the planners led to a compromise; that is, low cost materials meant more houses and more houses meant less slums. A more cynical point of view identifies a certain intimacy between those who made policy and those who won the building contracts. In both the cost of time is central.

<sup>197</sup> The move to the schemes was not a choice as such. There were a number of factors involved in what area a person could move to.



At a later age Stanley's views on the space that was Easterhouse would converge with Hammy's.

*'There wis fuck all tae dae. That's why a took up fleein the doos.<sup>198</sup> Ye gote respect through that'* (Stanley).

*'Whit ye've gote tae understand Pat is that in some places there wisnae even a road. A coudnae get a bus cos there wisnae a road up oor way. It wis aw fields right doon there (pointing out window)'* (Hammy).

The sheer sense of space was like 'living in the country' as one man put it. The scheme, like the other new housing estates were like urban areas in a rural district. From the beginning this was enjoyed. Stanley puts a different spin on this in recounting how in the late 1970's (*'wan thing a always remember'*) his friend (*'he wis intelligent'*) described the scheme as *'a big dormitory where they put us fur the night an then they let us go tae work in the mornin'*.<sup>199</sup>

Similarly, recent research by the Scottish Parliament reveals that while many aspects of the scheme have changed some feelings persist, *'... it's just like a concentration camp with nae*

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<sup>198</sup> Flying doos (pigeons) was a popular hobby in Easterhouse in the 1970's and 1980's; it is an adapted and so invented cultural pursuit, an invented authentic tradition. Dookits were one expression of this tradition as was the use of loft space above the tenements. Men competed with each other in attempts to catch each other's doos. The small amount of money to be made is outweighed by the pleasure of the hobby itself and the satisfaction in catching someone else's pigeon. The hobby also generated a lot of fights. There were and are a number of unwritten rules about 'fleein' the doos'. Stories of burnt out dookits, slaughtered pigeons, fights and murder are part and parcel of the venture. A return to the familiar theme of men and 'burds'.

<sup>199</sup> This notion of spatial and social segregation and the persistently high levels of interpersonal violence in Easterhouse puts a different spin on Elias' argument that violence in developed Western societies is now *'largely confined to barracks'*. The familiar sight of the army recruitment trailer parked outside Easterhouse shopping centre asks just who are those people confined to barracks. Of course, this is not to equate people who fight for their queen and country as located in a specific class. Some things do change.

*fences on it. Because once you're in here you cannae get out [on a Sunday]*' (1999, comments made to focus group [http://www.scotland.gov.uk/cru/kd01/blue/rtseuc\\_06.htm](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/cru/kd01/blue/rtseuc_06.htm)).<sup>200</sup>

This sense of *geographical* isolation (in contrast to the closeness of social relations within the area) and the sense that Easterhouse was akin to a big dormitory reflects a number of factors that people experienced in their everyday lives. It is also a comment on the complete lack of social and cultural facilities that characterised the early years of the scheme. Of course, these features mean nothing in themselves. For example, spatial location, proximity to 'others' is a selling point when it comes to the contemporary property market. What is asked here is if culture and place can be 'artificially' created and how people manage this meaning in their lives in relation to others.

It took nearly twenty years after the scheme was built before any kind of attempt was made to cater for the socio-economic and cultural 'needs' of the people who lived there. This is a phrase I have heard on numerous occasions from people who live in the area and from people who don't, '*Easterhouse is of equivalent size to a medium sized town like Perth but without the amenities*'. Schools, shopping facilities, leisure facilities, libraries, community resources, pubs and 'even' a police station were absent in an area with a population of 60, 000 people.

What happens when those facilities are provided en masse?

For Hammy, the idea of change was one he did not look forward too. Long term neighbours and friends were often decanted to areas far apart. Life in the new three storey tenements

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<sup>200</sup> This analogy is false in that it presents a picture that



asked people to 'start all over again'<sup>201</sup> (the distance was emphasised by the lack of public transport and even roads in the early years of the scheme). The move away from what he knew was a difficult one (his wife looked forward to it, '*Jean wis always just getting on wi it. She wis always sayin we 'll manage*') and one he did not look forward to.

In one sense, a '*population of strangers*' seems an apt description of the large volumes of people who initially began living next door, above, below and 'through the wall' from each other.<sup>202</sup> The lack of privacy, and space to be alone, although not new, were and remain a striking feature of life in the schemes. Indeed, it could be argued that this shared occupation of living and working space is a constituting feature of working class existence as a whole, one that in Hammy's day contributed (alongside similar levels of access to material wealth) to those celebrated notions of solidarity, friendliness and 'community' or the 'public life'.<sup>203</sup>

Hammy talked about how he eventually got to know some of his neighbours and his anxiety about the move to this new environment. It is a description that immediately complicates notions of homogeneity and again opens up the region of public space to be understood as a changing and conflicting space of appearances. The road from Blackhill to Easterhouse was seen as a road up and in the right direction but one that was not without problems. As Hammy

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<sup>201</sup> Recurring feature of working class habitats is their cyclical redevelopment. In other words, they are continually being demolished and remade: Housing; schools; clubs and so on. For some former residents a trip back can be confusing and bewildering (Clark, 2001). The physical transformation of the environment is often also an erasing of memory landmarks. Added to the almost complete lack of historical and cultural record it is possible that lived working class experience itself is remade generation by generation. How this tradition of no tradition relates to contemporary mobile networks and mobile fields is to again think relationally and how and why traditions and places come to mean more to a life lived as fixed.

<sup>202</sup> Of course, this was the situation that most people who moved to the schemes *shared*. In that sense, the word 'stranger' may under emphasise that which was shared by the new locals.

<sup>203</sup> Indeed, Bourdieu (1979, p115) has written that perceptions of honour are strongest in those who see themselves through the eyes of others. This is an important example of the interrelatedness of social life and the physical environment and of how '*space is permeated with social relations; it is not only supported by social relations but it is also producing and produced by social relations*' (Lefebvre 1991). As will be seen later, the visibility of violence in public space also has significance for 'social life'.

puts it, *'Fur a good while a didnae go oot... it wis aw new tae me. That wis the thing Pat, even then there were people who thote they wur better than ye... snobs... they didnae huv anymare than us but they thote they wur different'*.

For a while Hammy didn't go out. In contrast to Blackhill he no longer had his mother in law and the confines of one room and four children to 'push' him out nor the 'pull' factors of his mates, the social institution of the pub or the shared experience of paid manual labour. He managed his movements in this new public space because he consciously experienced himself in a new and qualitatively different way. In this new *'desert wi windaes'* Hammy was finding out that there were a number of different tribes and forms of differentiation, that *even then* and *even there* the 'boundlessness' of place was pulled in to a certain order and hierarchy. The road from Blackhill was from Jean's point of view in the 'up' direction but as Hammy was to discover, material survival and the routes to 'success' in these working class spaces reveals much about the relationship between the economy and culture and the emergence of public forms of violence.

Hammy's account predates fashionable debates on social exclusion and at the same time is a reminder that these issues have a long analytical and conceptual history.<sup>204</sup> Indeed, perhaps here we can see the extreme processes that led to the formation of place being mirrored in the social relations that characterized the place; people became known and knew how they were known, knew what was entailed in knowing and being known: being known through a public was how being was known. Being is encountered as fundamentally a 'social' experience. In this instance, it is almost to see space as agoraphobically constituted amongst social relations.

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<sup>204</sup> Adam Smith describes one of the necessities of freedom as the 'ability to appear in public without shame'.



Boundaries and difference making were both ways of making things intelligible and imposing intelligibility. Hammy was reasoning himself out of public space, he was negating himself. Rather than seeing 'people in geographical proximity to one another living in different 'social worlds' (Blumer, 1969, p11) Hammy's experience is illuminating in that it draws on a common stock of knowledge, the same stock that those who 'thought they were snobs' drew on: difference was generated from within the same social and economic logic, or to be more precise from the same relationship to the class structure as working class beings. Space itself and the value of human beings within that space is constructed in accordance.

### **5.6 *Making a Home and Keeping the Drafts Out***

The new housing stock of the 'big four' schemes were a marked improvement on the levels of sanitation and overcrowding that characterised the inner city (although population density was to resurface as an unenviable aspect of scheme life: redevelopment density for schemes was 330 persons per acre compared to 495 in slums).<sup>205</sup> True to the knowledge that furnished the original planner's inquiry into slum life, an inside toilet was now a norm and not a bonus. Similarly, taking a bath was no longer a logistical exercise involving the neighbours. However, the new housing itself brought its own problems. The new stock was characterised by poor building structure and poor building materials, issues which were to contribute to the repair boom that echoed the initial building boom (Munro, 1993). Gibb and MacLennan summarise the housing situation as one were '*Building designs... totally unsuited to the*

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<sup>205</sup> Population Density as significant. Luke (Conversation, Easterhouse Shopping Centre, June, 2001) thought that the sheer volume of people living in close vicinity made it more likely that conflict of some sort would occur. Also, mention living space within houses, family/household size etc. Indeed, Cooney (1998) has proposed that violence is more likely to occur in honour cultures that are isolated from law and have high population density. If anything, though, Easterhouse is saturated with law and order. Rosenberg makes a similar observation in

*Scottish Climate... totally symptomatic of the lack of architectural conception and commitment' (1985).*

The materials used to build the tenements worked well in a dry atmosphere. Under different weather conditions, that is rainy weather (known to happen now and again in Glasgow), the life expectancy of the materials dwindled and housing conditions changed accordingly. As early as the mid 1960's dampness was becoming a feature of many of the tenement flats in Easterhouse. A small survey completed by girls from Westwood Secondary School in 1966 revealed dampness was a growing concern of many residents.

Brian stressed the stupidity of using metal to build window frames (metal frames have little room for error as far as a good fit is concerned- painting them and general assault by the elements and everyday life make them more likely to be ill fitting and eventually draughty). In winter, ice on the inside of the windows was often a cause for childhood amazement.

Dampness was another issue. Stanley commented that the threat of dampness was something that was incorporated and adapted into his everyday economics. For example, in general it was better to leave at least one window open all day, while it was necessary to open windows when taking a bath and cooking. Keeping the house well heated was another strategy (financially impossible) to avoid the dreaded dampness, if not just to keep warm.

This cost money of course but Stanley talks about how some people devised ways of '*doin the electricity meter*' (that is, 'defrauding' the electricity company by either slowing down or stopping the meter registering units of electricity consumed- a practice that the electricity

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Columbia, that is, that in some societies, violence stems not from lack of control but from too much (1991, p9). This relationship between law, honour and violence is discussed in more detail in chapter six.



board were aware of and would turn up at the door when least expected; Stanley kept a book of his meter numbers and always used his 'box'- the box 'reversed the polarity' of the meter, stopping it and in some cases reversing the reading<sup>206</sup> - to give an average amount of expended units each period. What is incredible about this is not that Stanley '*played them at their own game*' but that his monthly bill for electricity was so low and so continually more or less the same that it is almost unbelievable that this amount of energy use could be expected in a scheme where the houses needed the equivalent of a bon fire in the living room to keep them warm.<sup>207</sup>

Keeping your house warm illegally was not always so successful. One man (Gavin) hammered a hole through his kitchen wall to reach the back of the meter, accidentally smashing his hammer through the very mechanism that turned the relentless spin of the accounting wheel. Brenda was caught by an unsuspected knock at the door and believes she was 'grassed' by a neighbour- '*that auld cow shouted Maggie... a opened the door cos a thote it wis her*'. The 'auld cow' was Mrs Mc Kechnie, a pensioner who lived across the landing with her alcoholic son.

Brian mentions that through hard work there was no need for people to '*bend the meter*'. Tommy Vercetti was electrocuted, face and hands black with the bang but still breathing (he vowed to never go near the thing again). Indeed, Hammy himself recalls how he stuck the stem of a large plastic flower into the meter's mechanism while drunk. The same day, whilst still inebriated, he opened the door to an employee of the electricity company who found the

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<sup>206</sup> Graham accidentally reversed his reading to the equivalent of a month before his last reading by the electricity company, a reading which was 3 months previous.

<sup>207</sup> A recent publication refers to the 'fuel poor' as having the best of both worlds, that is, as 'having the lowest mean income, but also the highest mean required fuel costs' (The Scottish Fuel Poverty Supplement, 2002).

same pink and purple flower sticking out at a right angle from the meter. He was charged with fraud, damage to the meter and ordered to pay a fine and costs of one thousand pounds. He was also advised that he could have killed himself.

Both of the bedrooms in Hammy's former house (he moved out two years ago) were riddled with damp. One room was quite uninhabitable (Hammy just kept the door closed), the walls darkly speckled with damp and large areas showing plaster where the wallpaper has just fallen off. The room that Hammy slept in had a hole in the wall where the wall met the ceiling. Light from outside shone through the hole<sup>208</sup>. Of course, Hammy wasn't unique. Two and a half years ago I interviewed another man in the flat he shared with Maggie, his partner. Tommy, the man who found himself half way down his lobby burned and blackened by his drunken fumbblings with the physics of his electricity meter.

### **5.7 *Violence as Lived Experience of Place***

As I walked down the hill to his flat I could see the dampness on the walls outside the building. There was a palpable sense and smell of dampness in the air throughout the home. The bathroom walls were bare and completely covered in web like damp. His youngest child's bed was against a wall that was equally moist. She suffers from chronic chest infections and looks severely underweight.<sup>209</sup>

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<sup>208</sup> As has been noted, Hammy left his flat to live in a local council run nursing home. Despite being well aware (and perhaps because of this) of the extent he now needs assistance with everyday activities and the state his house was in, Hammy yearns to go back to his old home. The reason he gives is that his new 'home' is more like a jail with its rules and regulations. There is room for a comparative study between council run homes and with private fee paying ones- that is, the correspondence between lived social forms and expectations.

<sup>209</sup> The flats were built with two coal fires, one in the living room and one in one of the two bedrooms. It was common to find ice *inside* the windows in cold weather. People adapted and improvised to what was available to them. T: '*A lived in that hoose fur 21 years and the corporation never so much as looked at it. Every room wis an ice box in the Winter. Absolute iceberg! Ye woke up wi yer nose nippin and yer ears nippin... Tryin tae keep ma*



I could mention that this was the condition of the house that they lived in for over two years or that in the six months before they got a move to the new housing their kitchen ceiling fell in 3 times because the flat two storeys above had a pipe that leaked. Tommy's partner was always cleaning the flat. I could also mention how Tommy kept a baseball bat behind his front door with the promise that if he was to catch any of '*thae junkie bastards upstairs*' leaving their needles in the close he fully intended to '*cave in their heids*'. As will be seen, this engagement with the convergence of housing conditions, neighbours and violent reputation is explored further in the next chapter.

As will be seen, for Hammy though, this was a fragmentation of what was his *total experience* of Blackhill, the now seemingly idealistic ideas of '*naebdae bein any better than emdae else*' were facing practical deconstruction without a common enemy. In particular, Hammy's 'Irishness' was facing an everyday ironic '*thick* description'. In effect, Hammy was experiencing himself through the full weight of others, others who did not share his use of his life. He had a sense of equality that was based on living in extreme conditions; in his case, situations of scarcity and differentiation from without, and so cultural intensity, of living one moment next to the next in relation to his mates. It is a sensuous and experiential understanding of the world. He understood power as a fact of life yet it remained something that had no place in his relations with those he saw as sharing his own experience. From here it then makes sense to see how it was later that I came to understand how it was the '*wee daft things*' that led him to threaten to turn his near neighbours into champion hurdle jockeys and how using,

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*weans warm. A always made sure they wur warm... A worked in the building trade an brote wid (wood) hame fur the fire in their room'*

experiencing and putting up with violence could become an important aspect of how a self could become a *competent* and integral public self.

This is similar to observations on the use of language in what is now called 'underclass' populations. That is, that behaviours or grammars *adapt* in and through time to the sense of self that is disclosed to a person in the very grounds of their existence with others. In this sense, the most 'ungrammatical' formulations are, on the contrary, evidence of the emergence of an alternative 'economy' of practices, one that has emerged primarily in relation to the construction of a market that has no buyers for its resources. Violence, as a relationship to life and as a disclosed sense in its symbolic and economic forms, can come to structure this structuring out of a mainstream that has no place for particular forms of being. Fundamentally, though, what is revealed in understanding this organisation of social space is not only how it becomes through '*the complex combinations of naked force, expropriation of resources, State regulation, seduction and the dissemination of legitimising ideology*' (Hall, 1997, p16) but rather the manner in which he and others adapted emotionally and psychically to these processes.

Indeed, Hammy went on to describe how he got to know or more specifically how he got to know a few of the local men who became his friends. This took him many visits to the local pub and the building of a reputation as someone who could handle himself both verbally and physically in relations with his peers. The local pub is a central theme come social institution in Hammy's talk. It was an environment that could be understood and where pretentiousness, difference and snobbery were immediately recognized as an amorphous and ambiguous threat and so barred. He found himself a place where he could 'face up to' his presence as a presence that at least initially couldn't 'go oot'. The local was a place Hammy could visit to share '*The*



*presence of others who see what we see and hear what we hear assures us of the reality of the world and of ourselves'* (Arendt, 1958). Here, at least for a while, Hammy could talk and not only be heard but understood. Understanding, acceptance and the 'gold standard of feeling' are united in alcohol and the camaraderie of simply being. As noted, a recurring theme in Hammy's talk (I repeat this again because I heard him say this many times) is a deep belief in equality and universality, one that is found in inequality and difference. Again, in his own words, *'am nae better than anybody else and naebdae's any better than me'*. Indeed, perhaps here in this *statement* of equality amidst feelings of shame and the desire to be part of something respected, we can find a relationship between the structuring openness of class, men, violence and honour.

This sense of 'equality' was not one that was based on a comparison of possessions (Hammy often made a joke about selling off his 'priceless antiques' and 'family heirlooms'- aimed at his sideboard and the few seaside ornaments and a novelty Irish mug that had the handle on the inside). Indeed, possession wise Hammy and his family arrived in Easterhouse light handed, *'A gote ma first jaickit when we broke intae the trains... We moved uptae Easterhoose oan the back of a coal lorry. Aw we hud wis a settee, a wardrobe an a double bed'* (Conversation in Tam's Home, Sept 2002).

For me, Hammy's sense of equality and sense of self is found in his living from a particular place amidst social relations and the compilation of moments of threatened existence. It is of routinely experiencing experiences that engaged him as lesser and others as better that Hammy *found* a privileged sense of self. Hammy refused this 'gaze' in his remembering of his years in Blackhill and in particular his remembering of the *'comradeship and mutual assistance (amongst men)'* (Taylor, 1999, p80). This is what he sought out against his feelings of

antagonism living in Easterhouse. Again, there is a return to the 'gendered' and classed character of particular social spaces and what it means to 'be' and act within these spaces, what it means to open the door and be opened to the space of appearances, to a space of expectations. As Hammy explains he didn't answer the door because

*'Hauns up Pat, I didnae go tae the door cos a wid lose the plot. Half the time it wis sumdae complainin about the weans... a didnae go tae their doors complainin about their's so a didnae see how they should be comin tae mine... It wis fur wee stupid things... If it wis a man a wid tell him tae 'fuck off or a'll throw ye over the hedge' ... Jean wisnae scared tae let them know whit she thote either'.*

Here we can see how Hammy was being known and how he was recognising how he was known through his children. It is almost as if Hammy's initial lack of presence in the public space is being made through his children. For another man to come to the door because of his children was to come to the door because of him. In a sense this is encountered as a double threat: firstly to his sense of being a man and how he had found value in being a particular man amongst other men, and second to his already threatened sense of self in a space of appearances. To open the door to this threat is akin to inviting in a threat. Hammy did not go to their door and they should not come to his. In coming to his door they are in effect imposing *their* will on an experience of the public realm Hammy has already rejected and constituted as different in the company of men he identifies as men.

Attempts to communicate are encountered as malignant and as having its own supporting history. Hammy's early experience of time in the scheme was one of being reduced to a living space where people *did effect* themselves as better and more worthy than others. The ad



humanum behaviours that characterised his relations with his 'mates' (this is not to romanticise or deny what could often be the harsh reality and violence of slum life) were subservient to the ad sensum in that to feel worthy and to feel human Hammy responded defensively in the way he knew best. This long formation of immediacy comes through in his descriptions of his intent and the impression I am left with is that this 'fuck off or a'll throw ye over the hedge' is the first thing that Hammy would say on opening the door in the first place.

### 5.8 *Homes for the Future: The Flowering of Civilisation*

The buildings, then, the homes that the people of Easterhouse were to make, were largely constructed in accordance to time scales and budgets as opposed to any sense of empathy (Not that empathy is what people looked for- '*Ye just want whit's due tae ye*' (Brian, commenting on the decision of the local council to reply to his request to have the communal close painted with '*do it yerself*'). It is highly unlikely that Thomas (1963, cited in Armstrong and Wilson, 1973, p84) would have found that socially aware architect in the planning team that contributed to the uniform grey sprawl that characterised the aesthetic appeal of the schemes.<sup>210</sup>

But, what is to be expected? In a theme visited time and time again we find a deliberation on the values inherent in a relation of understanding. How can someone 'warm' understand someone who is 'cold'? Indeed, is this the right way to even think? Is the gravity, breadth and creative meaning of this relation exhausted when we describe that '*the greater the social*

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<sup>210</sup> The initial plans for the building of the scheme did not include a pub (Munro, 1993). In this sense it is difficult to know where to find the '*one who admits his ignorance of the inner fabric of the lives of his prospective tenants: who respects their dignity and regards them as equals; and who then approaches the task with genuine humility...*' (Thomas, 1963). It should be noted that it was only when the buildings started falling apart and that a decline in social relations surfaced was the 'aesthetics' of the local architecture to become a problem for locals.

*distance between people, the less sensitivity either is likely to have to the other's problems*  
(Fruend and McGuire, 1999, p220)?

What are we talking about here? Is it possible to know an other experience?

Visually, *on the outside*, all the houses looked the same. As Billy Connolly joked many a time, (and so I take a license to repeat myself) the schemes '*wur like deserts wi windaes*'. To the untrained eye one sand dune was like any other. Castlemilk was identical in architecture to Easterhouse and Easterhouse was identical to Drumchapel (save an extra storey).<sup>211</sup> In the schemes, the bland grey three and four storey council tenements stood shoulder to shoulder for miles. For some visiting observers, the net result was and is visual and spatial boredom. Of course, initially, this was not how the scheme was seen by its new inhabitants.

To encounter something new was something new in itself and it was treated accordingly. A hall, a kitchen, a toilet, two bedrooms and a living room; it was a place to introduce a sense of self and show others that the chores of domesticity had been individually mastered. There was immense female interest in finding out what a neighbour's 'hoose is like' and to this extent children would often be invaluable sources of information on the homes of their friends from the number and types of ornaments, style of settee and 'niceness' of everything from toilet paper and linoleum to curtains and carpets. To this extent, the '*deserts wi windaes*' misses out on all the local adaptations to the environment and how for example the windaes in the desert were invariably decorated with subtly different steel Venetian blinds and living rooms held

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Andrew O'Hagan's book 'Our Fathers' makes an attempt at capturing the effect that the passing of time has on our understandings of the past.

<sup>211</sup> One reason the tenement flats in Easterhouse were limited to three storeys was because the houses were built upon disused mine shafts.



competing display cabinets full of ornaments that ate up much of the small space available in the designated 'living room'.

From a particular perspective, then, there are monumental images of homogeneity that stretch through representations of a place. However, even when this representation of place is taken on board retrospectively, it is clear that during the first decade of the schemes there existed a distinct *social* heterogeneity. Indeed, the idea of labelling entire schemes as '*respectable or otherwise*' was not an issue (Horsey, 1990, p36). Also, the idea of *social homogeneity* doesn't tell you anything about how people got on or didn't get on with each other or with the issues that faced them: as Durkhiem argued some time ago, people will always find ways to *distinguish* themselves from others. In effect, there will always be a pariah waiting to be made and used as evidence of a self's own self worth. It was not until much later that some writers noted how the scheme became largely homogenous with regard to its class base. As early as 1966 Tucker argued that through both explicit and implicit policy decisions the schemes became segregated according to class.

Indeed, it is here we begin to see the emergence of the reference '*sink estate*': the allusion being to those who are at or have sunk to the bottom, near the drain, what is left after everything else has been washed and put away or put to use. Mooney (1988) extends this point to argue that the schemes came to house a '*reserve army of labour*'. In effect, through local and central government policy they became 'dumping grounds'.

As will be seen, there remains a strong argument to the effect that recent Social Inclusion Policy, economic investment and local government Partnership schemes are themselves

dependant on the persistence and normality of a *'reserve army of labour'*.<sup>212</sup> From another perspective, however, there is the point that such ideas of dependency and of usability are redundant. Within this paradigm there are growing groups who are simply not needed, a reserve army of nothing; that is, in a *'one third-two thirds society'*, the one third as the underclass are increasingly being seen as outside society and ultimately resistant to *reintegration* (Wilson and Kelling, 1982).<sup>213</sup>

In retrospect, then, by the 1960's, the guidance granted by the 1930 Housing Act had diluted any affection towards *'growth'* that the local authorities might have once had.<sup>214</sup> There was literally no further planning or impetus for building modern housing in the peripheral schemes that was affordable and attractive for working class people and working class families. To this extent, the development of the New Towns to cater for Glasgow's *'overspill'* population allied to their role as engines of economic redevelopment contributed to the deskilling and homogenisation of the schemes.<sup>215</sup>

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<sup>212</sup> That there have been decades of unemployment for some men and women (or temporary jobs without career prospects) literally means that any new labour market is itself constituted on different conditions with regards to labour relations. This must have consequences for how that market is thus known and represented. This in itself (without reference to new draconian laws regarding benefit entitlement) reinforces the argument that labour in these regions do in fact hold a vulnerable reserve army of labour *most especially* when that market is identified as a target of social inclusion policies. A female ex-employee of the ethically acclaimed *'Soapworks'* factory described her job laughingly as *'eight hours of fucking boredom'*- the job is production line work and involves the repetition of a few basic operations. I met her in the local health centre as she picked up her prescription for anti-depressants. I was there in the capacity as an advocate for a friend who wanted her *'life sorted out'*. She left her previous job (sorting out potatoes for supermarkets based on how they looked- the best wans go tae Sainsbury's and the worst got tae Kwik Save) because she had to put up her hand for permission to go to the toilet. She finds her new job, pulling and cleaning out *'chicken guts'* from chickens destined for Marks and Spencer's, *'better'*. The meeting was marked by its masochistic humour and complicates the argument that social inclusion is not a market and that worklessness itself is the major cause of social exclusion in Western Societies (Sen, 2000, p24).

<sup>213</sup> As has been noted, this is the core of critical policy arguments regarding the use and creation of particular *'deviant spaces'*.

<sup>214</sup> This is the number of grants given for number of people housed rather than the number of houses built.

<sup>215</sup> It is this mix of original planning and later abandonment that marries local and central government's *'responsibility'* for the schemes (Keating, 1988).



By the late 1950's, early 1960's, many of those who had the skills to benefit from the economic opportunities provided by the New Towns were either leaving the schemes or being allocated housing in the New Towns in the first place.<sup>216</sup> For some, this was also a period that saw the beginning of the corporation letting flats in the schemes to largely 'unskilled' tenants. Auld Hammy would dispute this reference to skill and job position. He was well aware of the social construction of skill and how a trade or a profession could come to put its own price on the value to its work. As will be seen, like Craig two generations later, Hammy sees himself as 'multi- skilled' and worked accordingly, choosing when he would officially work and according to how much money he needed at that particular time. There was always the possibility and ability to make some extra cash on the side selling on 'scrap' metal and the like to the 24 hour scrap merchant.<sup>217</sup> Indeed, the whole idea of 'skilled' and 'unskilled' tenants is worthwhile unpacking to reveal the plethora of processes and relations hidden by the terms. Moreover, in discussing this issue it is to begin to move with Hammy and take his recollections forward to more recent times.

The following comments by Brian Igbutt illustrate how one person situated themselves within the scheme and within the wider system. The period in which Brian begins is a period when he claims he could have paid off his mortgage in five years based on his weekly wage: it is a time of relatively increasing affluence for both skilled and semi-skilled workers. Brian saw himself as both skilled and an *earner*. In talking and remembering about his move to Easterhouse in the 1970's Brian situated this past experience in coming to terms with his present financial

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<sup>216</sup> This was part of the impetus of the Abercrombie Programme  
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difficulties and in particular his experience of the tax man. He describes the experience as 'being out of hand' and of 'being shafted'.<sup>218</sup>

*Brian (T): A moved tae Easterhoose because a gote slapped in the face. A bought ma first house, so a thote a could go an buy another house bigger and better an a wis told am a, whit is it, because a wis in the building trade, am a iterant worker therefore they could not trust me to pay a mortgage because a worked in the building trade... a could huv paid that aff in five year back then wi the money a wis makin. So then, kids growing up, back into the scheme of things, back intae a scheme cos the bank widnae let me get a hoose. So, we moved intae Easterhoose cos it hud an inside toilet, it hud bedrooms... before a left Dennistoun, well about 32 years ago, 1970... A stayed in Easterhoose 21 years lovin it, well no lovin it, then suddenly homeless people came in livin beside us.<sup>219</sup>*

*PQ: Aye, youse had a good street didn't ye?*

*T: Aye, a brilliant street, when a moved in we had about 5 or 6 cops livin in the street. The guy next door tae me wis a cop... A didnae huv a car at the time, so the buses were absolutely brilliant. We could jump oan buses tae go anywhere. We lived a stone's throw from the*

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<sup>218</sup> Brian is talking about how once your name is in the computer you and your situation is defined out of hand. This defined out of hand as an aspect of general experience. The machinery itself can carry an idea, a tradition, when in the machine there is no appeal to a different reason, the pathways and the possible points of exit are defined by the interest of the machine. Order and control are subtly interlocked. Outcomes are measured according to the criteria that built the system in the first place. This 'out of hand' is a counterpoise to the Heideggerian notion of 'being at hand'. In this context, it is a reference to what people actually have to face- face as in both showing and having to be- what becomes of people, what reality is and is in them in and through a particular moment in time. The 'out of hand' is the being out of hand, out of reach, out of control, knowing, power, and so on and so on. What is at hand is not a sense or feeling of lack of control but is the singular relation to reality, what has to be done before anything else can be done.

<sup>219</sup> Facts and figures on homelessness in Easterhouse? In interview, Tommy mentions Charlie's situation. He basically drifts to wherever he can find a bed for the night. He is not alone. This is something a local voluntary worker mentioned, the effects of poverty have been multiplied within families because of changes to what 17-21



*shopping centre, so that wis even better. Then a gote a car and that opened ma horizons.<sup>220</sup> A could dae things wi ma kids that naebdae else could dae, take them away for the day on holiday (singing this bit). Apart from that we were all in the same boat, we aw hud the same, everybody wis paid the same'(!)*

*PQ: Obviously that coudnae huv been the case. Ye just said ye hud coppers livin up the street and that yours wis a good street. It wis a different street wis it no?*

*T: Aw aye, quiet. There wis a wee wummin ower the side of the road that worked in the rent office and a think she vetoed who gote a hoose in the street. As soon as she died that street just died way her. So we started to move on, well the neighbours started to move on, we wur stuck. In 1989 a homeless unit moved in next door, there wur kids doonstairs at 2 o'clock in the morning, oor dug wis yappin... they proceeded tae boot the front door in an the back door in (security doors) an play ball in the close. The close went fae where ye could eat yer dinner aff it tae where ye couldnae bring anybody up cos ye wur so embarrassed. We approached the corporation an they said 'there's the paint, paint the close yerself'. So, we hud tae paint the close ourselves. A went tae the homeless unit next door tae ask fur haunders, an the guy wis a growler ye know, 'whit the fuck ur ye dain at ma door, get tae fuck... (put-on voice)... A lived in that hoose fur 21 years and the corporation never so much as looked at it.'*

Brian's account is one of a decline in not only the physical environment but in both social relations and in his economic standing (the attachment of money to social being is encountered

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year olds can claim from the government. Some young people without dole money are now dependent upon parents who are also on the dole.

directly in Chapter 4). His description of living on the same street and up the same close as both a teacher and a police officer sounds unbelievable in the present climate.<sup>221</sup> The street and the sociality died with that *'wee wummin'* who had protected the street through what seems like an informal sub text of housing policy practices. It is an account of how place can come to mean more to those who are stuck there and how this 'being stuck' is a recognition of not only the flight of those who can escape to the suburbs or more attractive housing but also to the flight and subsequent invisibility of everyday social relations between close neighbours who come to experience each other as threat. It is a reference to being and coping and elements of working class structuration. The next door neighbour's *'get tae fuck'* is a refusal of sociality. It is as if the 'homeless unit next door' had been writ large over everyday social relations and like Bob Marjuper's description of his own under siege situation, *'its like yer hoose isnae yer ane'*.

The similarities with Hammy's situation seem clear and yet the political, social and economic context has changed dramatically. Indeed, as will be seen, at the same time that social relations become 'invisible' and retreat behind closed doors and curtains they become public and known or consciously made known in the body. Indeed, the habits of the body learned in context render social relations visible in their marks on comportment and in their managing of

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<sup>220</sup> Car ownership in Easterhouse has increased dramatically since Brian's first car. 60% of residents now own cars (Glasgow City Council Ward Fact Sheets, 2001). On a national scale the area still ranks 69<sup>th</sup> out of 72. Research on impact of increased traffic in communities for children's relationships and play?

<sup>221</sup> Again here we find aspects of the professionalisation of social relations between people employed in different jobs and in different positions of status/interests within if not the class structure, then the different spaces and fields. This comes down to the most basic aspects of human existence and the ability to even know how to talk to another person who is seen to be representative of a different field. In this case, the police from living amidst the conditions in which they work lose their ability to be 'informal' and to know; in sum, there has been a disappearance of professional's non-professional interests within the area. Hobbs discusses this aspect in relation to CID work and how they characterise the culture they profess to be intimate with. Paradoxically, in the name of intelligence, this characterisation is one that is exploited by those who are no longer even seen on their own terms. This parody of understanding and professional non interest is what Martin means in his statement that *'teachers just don't give a shit, they don't see themselves as being role models whereas a think teachers should. Its*



this refusal of sociality: The slightest 'wrong' look or word can become magnified with significance. It is as if looking for others looking communicates a refusal to communicate, to be invisible through looking. This is clear in George's recollections of this same period, a time when in his late teens he remembers *'Its like in Easterhooose, ye dress differently and ye can see them lookin at ye like a freak. Ye look at them and ye can see them lookin away... they are lookin at ye and wonderin what you are all about'*. Again, from here it becomes easier to understand the importance of the gaze and the constitution of the social within a *'space of appearances'* (Arendt, 1958).

Perhaps in an age of ontological insecurity (Giddens, 1990, p53) developments like the scale and intrusion of CCTV, increased forms of surveillance and punishment, concepts like the underclass and the emergence of fortress estates alongside the worst estates are typical of Issiah Berlin's suggestion that *'at moments of historical crisis, people trade their doubts and agonies for deterministic views, for psychological cravings after essences and certainties'* (cited in Cohen, 1985, p244).

To summarise, this chapter has looked at the concrete experience of place and how this concrete experience can be encountered and represented as disbelief. In this sense, I counter this culture of disbelief and those civilizing attempts as only partial representations which fail to capture the heart and soul of a place and people as they engage with and make their own history as part of history (see the limitations of slum clearances for limitations of this). What does this have to do with violence? Physical and symbolic violence is here framed as a background theme in everyday life even as it is transposed as a major chord in and across

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*shouldn't be seen just as a job or a chore'*. George's understanding is similar to Bourdieu's in that although spatial distance can be equated to some extent with social distance, the equation is more or less blurred.

generations. In this sense, this chapter provides a frame, in terms of social relations and material environments, in which physical interpersonal violence emerges as an expression of both everyday social and economic relations and the lived built environment. In the next chapter I want to pursue this theme and develop it in relation to how violence can become an energy and force in itself. I situate this discussion where I have parted company with my friend and informant Hammy: that is in the social and economic context that is 21<sup>st</sup> century Easterhouse and Glasgow. I will take up this discussion where Berlin's account (see above) ends: that is, that the moment of psychological cravings and intentions is where ethnography *begins* and can reveal what exactly is *being* traded and what a *being* can trade with. Indeed, it is to these essences and certainties I now turn.



## 6 Dead Normal Violence

*'Its like Mary's kids, they're teenagers an there they are sittin in front of computers aw this an that. Their whims, getting drove to the pictures, here tae there. Am lit whits wrang wi walkin tae the bus stop an getting a bus intae the toon? Its lit too much brains an no enough common sense, were we wur mare like too much common sense and nae brains. Might be, like how other people hud it easier don't feel a need tae justify themselves, just takin the wan line. The consequences aren't the same, the consequences for people lit us are mare grievous, if that's the right word for it. Its all extremes all the time, innit it?' (Richard Longley, age 33)*

*'See Bob, he used tae be dead normal, he used tae be able tae fight like fuck' (Craig Davro, age 30).*

### 6.1 Introduction

The general aim of this chapter is to build on the previous discussion of place and living place and to deepen our understanding of how violence can emerge as an expression of lived social relations. As has been seen a key theme in this analysis is that understanding is itself a social form and that it is possible to 'see' or explicate an embodied reasoning. In this sense, this chapter will focus in on this 'normalilty' and in particular focus in on an embodied understanding of what violence is and comes to mean. Violence is in a sense bracketed as a thing in itself in order that the particularity of violence as a form of action and communication can be then situated in an ethnographic and more intimate analysis of living place (next chapter). In doing this it will be shown how violence can become a structure of feeling in itself, one that borrows and lends itself to other structures of life and how people can come to know and not know each other through violence. Here, the concern is with *men's* attitudes towards the use, refusal and meaning of physical violence in an everyday life. This is

motivated by the belief that *'all human activity is an attempt to make a significant response to a particular objective situation'* (Williams, 1997, p23, my emphasis).

The objective situation is here understood from a particular position (as a funded research student) as the creative, meaningful and contingent adaptation of a working class male habitus to what could be referred to as the different demands and opportunities afforded by social positioning and movement within and through the fields of a de-industrialised society. In a way this is an encounter with habitus and culture and of a body making sense of its contemporary physical and social environment. At the centre of this explication is a meeting with a barber and his scissors. The barber's monologue is used with other gathered testimony to describe, and subsequently understand and interpret, a meeting with this structure of feeling or embodied meanings, one that is sensitive to the threats, rewards and ambiguity of dead normal violence

This general aim is qualified by specific questions. *First*, the chapter asks is it possible to identify those reasons and causes, those conditions that may make particular forms of violence *more or less* likely to be a feature of *some* men's lives in a particular place and time. To engage with and explicate meanings and (non)use of violence the chapter will work with and through testimony 'shared', 'extracted', 'interpreted', 'inflicted', 'enjoyed' and 'endured' from field research from what might be called a male point of view. That this perspective 'might' be referred to as coming from a male point of view is to problematise that there is indeed such a monolithic point of view to be taken in the first place. Of course, it is also to draw attention to the masculinist assumptions that can inhere in a project that is unreflexive in the focus paid to any proposed link between men and violence.



Indeed, it is important to again indicate that the thrust of the analysis is concerned with the notion that there is an association or link between specific forms of violence and men. In particular, is priority to be assigned to explanations that draw associations between violence and masculinity or from a different perspective, is violence to be understood as a normative component of men's habitus; that is, can shared social conditions and conditionings, a shared experience of experiencing powerlessness contribute in some way to, for example, a violent masculine habitus or a non violent masculine habitus?<sup>222</sup>

## 6.2 *Men, Masculinity and Violence*

*'Choose a form of violence and examine international statistics on the gender of its perpetrators. You will always find... 90% to 100% of the violence being perpetrated by men and less than 10% being perpetrated by women'* (Bowker, 1998, pxiv).

Is violence implicit in the construction of a masculine habitus, something that can be situated in the *'ordinary responses and actions of men in society'* (Srinivasan, 1990)? Is it a case of choose a card, any card and I bet I can tell you what your card is? Or on the other hand, does this lead us to think how a deck is stacked and how the cards are dealt from the pack? I want to argue in this chapter that men's relationship with violence is problematic but that this

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<sup>222</sup> It is important to stress that there is fundamental differences in perspectives that explain human behaviour and interaction through the construction of identity and those that use the concept of habitus. In the former, human being and its social structures and cultural forms are the products of culturally reproduced ideas and fantasies that are 'enacted' to support historical structures of material inequality- things are literally in and only in our head, they are styles and words; indeed, a matter of semantics which privileges the separation of body and mind. On the other hand, 'habitus' can be understood as sets of embodied knowledge, dispositions and strategies. Here human being and relations are encountered as practices that operate with and below the level of consciousness. What is said or what can be said are dependent on lived and shared social forms, relations and conditions. This has obvious consequences for how we approach social reality as researchers. As Bourdieu argues, *'... another effect of the scholastic illusion is seen when people describe resistance to domination in the language of consciousness--as does the whole Marxist tradition and also the feminist theorists who, giving way to habits of thought, expect political liberation to come from the 'raising of consciousness'--ignoring the extraordinary inertia which results from the inscription of social structures in bodies... While making things explicit can help, only a thoroughgoing process of counter training, involving repeated exercises, can, like an athlete's training, durably transform habitus'* (2000, page number).



relationship is one that also problematises the utility of masculinity and indeed its plural masculinities. In doing this i want to address the range and genesis of violent responses and actions and more significantly to what extent men's violence can be associated with an idea of power. That is, is violence as a desire to harm others an indication of power or a sign that power does not exist but is sought after and what is being seen here and now is a form of psychological panic? In this sense I make use of Willis (2000) in asking where do we lay the burden of explanation if we are to agree that, '*the surface waves of everyday life are also shaped by those long tides of social reproduction*'? Is it enough to focus on the everyday as the everyday, the ethnographic as the ethnographic?

As has been noted, a specific aim of the writing is to address and make contact with the emergence of particular violent forms in a particular place and time and how these behaviours are then politicized and subjected to policy. Indeed, at this moment in time men's violence in Glasgow, particularly among young working class men, is occurring on a scale and intensity that has seen the place gain the title of the murder capital of Western Europe.<sup>223</sup> The statistical statement of course begs the question, '*Why do men want to [if not kill, then damage] kill the bodies of other men?*' (Hattey, 2000, p120). Similarly, the spiral of logic leads the researcher to the task of identifying who, where and why are these men encountered in violence and how has violence come to know them in this way. Can we know someone by knowing their card and if so what does that reveal about the state of play?

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<sup>223</sup> This is a term that is used in the media. Although Scottish executive figures reveal Glasgow's familiarity with violence and especially 'knife culture' it is also important to realize how representations work on a particular level. For example, in the learned Observer, Glasgow's murder capital of Europe moniker can be checked in relation to web links that are crime statistics for England and Wales (Martin, 2004, April 11<sup>th</sup>).



Indeed, of what use is it to identify the social constitution of the cash economy, a relationship to the political system, the constitution of mental health and 'our' relationship with our doctor, a notion of what constitutes culture, a decision to go to war, the scope of relative and absolute poverty have to do with a man who decides on a Friday night in the pub that he can no longer accept the manner in which another man is looking at him from across the bar and so decides to hit him across the head with a pool cue with such force that the cue halves in two as it impacts upon the man's head?<sup>224</sup> Of what use are these questions to address a 'dead normality' that is itself defined and awarded status in the ability to 'fight like fuck'. Is it to recover these 'fragments' of a cultural field and to '*connect them to an historically determinate environment and society*' (Comaroff and Comaroff, 1992, p16)?<sup>225</sup>

One answer is that all of the above is somehow part of the same answer to what violence is and means. That is, as far as the category men are concerned, violence is always and everywhere a presence and an absence. To interrogate violence is to interrogate much of what it is to be a 'man'. The presence of violence is then not an absence of humanity or an absence of reason in itself: it is to recognise *how* violence is given a presence or an absence and *how* those who have experienced violence as a presence or an absence *can* or do respond. It is to ask how violence comes to be and what are the lived alternatives to living with violence.<sup>226</sup>

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<sup>224</sup> Reference is to Tommy Vercetti's 'fight' in Station Bar.

<sup>225</sup> Glasgow as a whole has a long history of bad press with regards to violence. For Damer much of this press is like the construction of official statistics in that it is institutional and political. He traces the political relationship to violent representations from the publication and subsequent banning from Glasgow Council libraries of No Mean City through the spectacle that was Frankie Vaughn's visit to Easterhouse and onto the positive imagery associated with Glasgow as the 1990 city of culture. My interest is in explicating violence I know about and have experienced in Glasgow. The majority of this experience does not make official statistics (even though this is one of the few places that working class 'reality' is known) and indeed it is the invisibility of this violence as much as the futility of policing in deterring this violence that interests me.

<sup>226</sup> This is to both situate and complicate Brittan's assertion that while '*masculinity may appear in different guises at different times does not entitle us to draw the conclusion that we are dealing with an ephemeral quality which is sometimes present and sometimes not. In the final analysis, how men behave will depend on the existing social relations of gender*' (1989, p2).



In constructing these 'connections' then attention is paid to the many contradictions and complexities that inhere in accounts of men and in men's accounts of the different social worlds in which they live. I do not want to enter into the increasingly complex arguments about the 'nature' of gender. My attention is on men in their everyday practices and my own participation and observation in these practices (Hearn, 1996, p214). This is as variable as the contexts in which that practice takes place. If essentialism is to be broached at all it is from the point of view that gender, in this case the category of men, is '*like all other social categories in that it 'masquerades as and is an essence'*' (Moi, 2000, p330; Morgan, 1990).<sup>227</sup> Like 'working class' I do not pre-suppose a unitary or unchanging gender identity or politics and like gender I do not negate the importance of class.

While the focus is on the oft encountered normative relationship between men and violence I also attend to those facts that do not fit many of the supermarket checklist hypotheses that emerge from the men and masculinity literature.<sup>228</sup> That is, I attend to the '*changeable, marginal, deviant aspects- anything not integrated which might suggest fermentation,*

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<sup>227</sup> Although we can note, like Marx, that there is now no nature out with human history, that there is indeed a mask of theory over the whole face of nature (Morris, 1997), this does not prevent us from knowing anything of our subject matter. Similarly, to note that there is a social and psychological *contingency* inherent in a masculine sense of self (Hattey, p206) is to ask researchers to pay greater attention to the formation of both that self and our conceptualisations of self in time and place. It asks us to be reflective upon what is contingent and what shapes 'us' and our understanding of 'us', to recognise that '*crucial point of intersection of different forms of power, stratification, desire and subjective identity formation*' (Fanon, 1967; Jefferson, 1994; Mac an Ghail, 1994).

<sup>228</sup> For example, in relation to the concept hegemonic masculinity there is often a sense that masculinity can be purchased when a certain amount of characteristics are found in one shopping basket. Perhaps a hegemonic expression of this is Kenway and Fitzclarence (1997) argument that it is useful to list that '*at this stage of Western History, hegemonic masculinity mobilises around physical strength, adventurousness, emotional neutrality, certainty, control, assertiveness, self reliance, individuality, competitiveness, instrumental skills, public knowledge, discipline, reason, objectivity and rationality. It distances itself from physical weakness, expressive skills, private knowledge, creativity, emotion, dependency, subjectivity, irrationality, cooperation and empathetic, compassionate, nurturant and certain affiliate behaviours*'. Indeed, this is one of the main critiques of masculinity as a concept: that is that it is never clearly defined or operationalised in its use.



*resistance, protest, alternative- all the facts unfit to fit*' (Arato and Gebhardt, 2000).<sup>229</sup> It is in this fermentation that the relations between different social postures towards violence can be revealed.

There are a number of reasons for this, each of them are aimed at fleshing out men's use, refusal and experience of violence as men and how this relates to other areas of their life. Indeed, perhaps, this is an essential point of departure in both an analysis of the hypothesised relationship between masculinity and violence, and the concept of masculinity itself.<sup>230</sup> As Segal (1990, p269) points out, masculinity and violence are not interchangeable; not all sexuality involves violence and not all violence involves sexuality. Indeed, it seems preposterous to have too even mention this. Many men abhor violence and actively oppose it. In academia the oft quoted example is bell hooks' account of those men that she knew '*who were not obsessed with being patriarchs*' and in particular, *her accounts of the difference between her violent father and her easygoing... affectionate, full of good humour, loving... brother*' (1992, p87-88). From here 'masculinity' as a concept can become an excuse for those reflexively inclined: that is, it wasn't me it was my masculinity your honour.<sup>231</sup>

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<sup>229</sup> As an aside, the critical theory of Adorno et al (1950), and despite his protestations with regard to the appropriation and commodification of thought and ideas, fermented its own more sophisticated yet similarly methodologically problematic 'Big Brother' typology in *The Authoritarian Personality*.

<sup>230</sup> For caution in using the concept of masculinity/masculinities see McMahon (1993); Hearn (1994); Collier, (1998); and Jefferson (2001). For a selection of different but outright critiques see Hood-Williams (1996), Hood-Williams and Cealey Harrison (1998) and Hall (2001). For its *traditional* use in a variety of theoretical applications see Brownmiller (1975) and Firestone (1972) for biological drives; Chodorow (1989) for the unconscious desires revealed by psychoanalysis; Oakley (1972) for housewife as labour; and Kate Millett (1971) for sexual relations. To what extent these references have practical use is of course dependant on how a person wishes to use history.

<sup>231</sup> This notion of masculinity as 'an excuse' was made by one man (Gerry Fletcher, conversation in his garden, June 11<sup>th</sup>, 2002) when I tried to explain what my thesis was about. In a sense he is intuitively aware of the tension that exists between explaining and understanding human behaviour and the tendency towards fatalism in explanatory accounts. On the other hand, though, I heard from this same man amongst others his own account of why early socialisation is a key area in demand of theorising in the reproduction of gendered and class psyches (West and Zimmerman, 1987).



Of particular interest is the use of concrete testimony/empirical research to illustrate that while a concept of power might be central to a theory of masculinity (Edley and Wetherall, 1996, p97; Kimmel, 1990), it is also a notion of power that has to be encountered in relation to specific individuals and their relations with others in a particular time and place. For Connell (1995) the 'dispersion of the subject' through the Heinz beans (Cealey-Harrison and Hood-Williams, 1998) proliferation of victimised subject hoods can be captured by multiplying masculinity exponentially in relation to the variety of categories that do not fit the original hegemonic hypothesis. In this framework, men are at all times masculine and at all times engaged in power. As Hall (2002) has argued, though, the concept of *'hegemonic masculinity' tends to downplay political economy and class power, which suggests that it is too far removed from historical processes and material contexts to either justify the use of the term hegemony itself or explain the striking social patterns of male violence'*.

In this sense, examining and describing specific men's use and refusal of violence is also to begin to deconstruct what we actually mean by the term gender and power when we refer to men via the concept of masculinity.<sup>232</sup> This is to clarify that power does *not* simply equal knowledge (or vice versa), and that violence and power are not the same thing.<sup>233</sup>

Indeed, there is often a contradiction, that is the presence of both a blunt homogenising edge and a spiralling degree of sophistication in perspectives that draw an unproblematic

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<sup>232</sup> If gender and gender categories are to be thought as thought then it is clear that like capital and its relation to human being anything is possible.

<sup>233</sup> Arendt is quite explicit in this when she states, *'Violence can destroy power, it is utterly incapable of creating it'*. However, Arendt's concept of violence is one that sees violence as deeply instrumental- it is used in the *'struggle for legitimacy and power'* (1970). My contention is that the distinction is artificial: violence is both instrumental and has 'expressive force' that attends to the social context in which it emerges. This attends in some small fashion to the pervasiveness and operation of power as a complex issue (Lukes, 1978, p633-4). In this context, I have found the expression of physical violence to be an indication of a subject's desire for power of self- a reflection of objective powerlessness.



relationship with masculinity, violence and power and perhaps this is because of the ambiguity, sensationalism and logic of violence in itself.<sup>234</sup> On the one hand, for example, we find accounts of male violence that stress its expression as a sign of weakness, crisis or lack, what Scarry describes as an attempt at an '*illusion of power*', a scene in a '*compensatory drama*' (1984, p28).<sup>235</sup>

This is not an uncommon understanding of particular men's violence or masculinity in the field. Indeed, it is shared common knowledge. The issue is of course how this is or can be understood as a weakness in relation to a strength. Although Stanley and Nancy would invariably 'misunderstand' each other Stanley would agree with Professor Chodorow that many of his generation who remain actively violent are the '*wans that wur the pricks when they wur young*', that is, from Stanley's position as having already proved himself as a man through violence he understands his peers continued violence as being related to their earlier failure to prove themselves to their male peers as men. And yet if we were to leave Stanley, and his understanding of proving a self worthy and as having matched up to the power of prescriptions, there we would have a one dimensional notion of *his* violence as being implicated in power and planning. As it is, it is only now when the reality and illusion of power has faded that Stanley is forced to recognise his own humanity and his relationship to the world.<sup>236</sup>

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<sup>234</sup> In relation to male dominated crime/violence Messerschmidt (1993) has critiqued theorising that subsumes 'men' and their actions under a one dimensional notion of what a man is or wants. Perhaps Messerschmidt does not take this caution far enough. This idea of co-joining masculinity with men needs explanation and indeed it '*cannot be assumed that gender is the most relevant factor in play in a given social situation*' (Moi, 2000, p330). Perhaps we need to attend to not only the '*fluctuating significance of gender in the ongoing scenes of social life*' (Thorne, 1993) but also its use in describing and explaining social life itself.

<sup>235</sup> This is the argument put forward by Caroline New (2001) in her journal article '*Oppressed and oppressors: the systematic mistreatment of men*' and is much of the argument made by Bourdieu in *Masculine Domination* (2001).

Of course, this does not mean that violent events are encountered without intelligence or without forms of reason. Neither is it mere reference to the habituated and taken for granted background of cues and rituals that often make violence sociologically lawful (if not legal). It is an attempt at getting at the body as the social body, at the invisible ties between other bodies, the shared (social) knowledge, the practice of doing without having to think, the boxer training his/her body to do as the formal metaphor (*'kin ye imagine Tony Blair punchin oot lit that'*),<sup>237</sup> the immediacy of culture and habitus as the engagement with the real. As Stanley goes on,

*'A canny think how a thought about it at the time... A wid be lit, 'aye, fuck', yer wid never bow yer heid tae yer mate, ye wid never try tae be intelligent about it. It wis just actin like a fuckin idiot'* (Stanley, Age 50).

This shared understanding of 'men' is the subject and object of the research and is part of what is engaged with from a class perspective, that is *'the widespread feelings of insecurity amongst men'* and; *'masculinity's often hidden connection with psychic vulnerability'* (Jefferson, 1994, p13). On the other, we find it as the always threatened there, a very real power, a force, a might. In the field of masculinity theory, this contradiction is found most clearly in explanations where violence is seen as both representing *male* hegemony and as a means to reproducing *masculinities*.

It is clear, then, that violence is neither a 'random' nor an 'abnormal' aspect of human behaviour or *human* culture (Best, 1999). Indeed, as has been noted, the human inventiveness

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<sup>236</sup> That is, that men and violence as a relationship to self esteem is one that tends to cement a self.



for violence may be one of those (less distinguished) 'attributes' (alongside language and reason) that make us human (Cohen, 1999). Unlike media depictions of murderers, serial killers or war atrocities, violent events are not 'isolated incidents' that can be atomised through reference to particular characteristics of individuals or situational triggers. It is both this and more. Perhaps, then, we can discuss the extent that *men* do have a 'special' relationship with physical interpersonal violence as long as this relationship is not reduced to monolithic and easily controllable categories or variables (Naffine, 1997, p85).<sup>238</sup>

To the extent that a positively identified relationship can be measured it appears that in practically every historical setting it *is* predominantly men who engage violence, especially violence in its more extreme forms (Spierenburg, 1998; Connell, 1996; Newburn and Stanko, 1994, Bowker, 1998, Radford and Stanko, 1991). Similarly, it is largely men who have come to theorise or 'know' this violence in text.<sup>239</sup>

Again, though, this violence is not constant. Male engagement with violence differs in its scale and expression within, across cultures and through time (Messerschmidt, 1993, Pandaya, 2000, p362; Spierenburg, 1998). Class, age, gender and location are key differentials when

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<sup>237</sup> Luke Wifally making reference to John Prescott's response to being hit with an egg by someone in disagreement with him.

<sup>238</sup> To what extent men have a valued interest in 'women's freedom' and emancipation is thus self serving in itself.

<sup>239</sup> It is important here to clarify that violence is not a male reserve. In the interviews, and from experience, fights between girls and women are not unexpected. In one case I watched as two women (both in their twenties) argued who was the better fighter before then attacking each other. In the interviews one woman spoke about an incident that happened two weeks previous.

Fiona: *Hauf the time ye don't even know whits goin through their minds. Look at me an Linda sittin oot there and wee Isobel attackin Linda fur nae reason at all.*

S: *Aye they wur blotto drunk though.*

PQ: *That's the bevy though, innit.*

Fiona: *Aye the next day Isobel came in wi a bottle of Bucky (Buckfast wine) fur Linda tryin tae make up. Isobel bit 'er an aw that. Linda's still gote the scar. Isobel bit hur. A wisnae getting in the middle of them tae break it up, a wid huv gote done in. Ye know Linda and Isobel, the two of them are big bears.*

accounting and understanding motivations, acts and *notions* of violence (Jimeno, 2001, Best, 1999). It is to these personal structuring realities I now turn.

### 6.3 Getting a Haircut

*'Kein saw his fists growing at the recapitulation of the heroic deeds which they had achieved. They were larger than the man to whom they belonged. Soon they filled the entire room'* (Canetti, *Auto Da Fe*, 1978, p102).

*'D gave me this big iron bar tae get ready tae huv a massive gang fight. Am lit that 'how did a get maself here', know whit a mean. Am just here tae shag wimmin, am no here tae batter fuck oot of anybody wi an iron bar. Whit happens if a murder somedae. Aw these thoughts are runnin through yer heid and yer thinkin 'a don't know whit am dain, a want tae go noo!' But ye don't want tae go cos everybody there will see ye as a complete shitebag. So ye've gote tae staun there an ye've gote tae be ready an ye've gote tae accept the consequences'... They wid huv battered fuck oot a me as well. If a hud walked away an been shown tae be a coward they wid probably huv done me in'* (Bob Marjuper, age 31, Talking about Door Stewarding).

There is a barber who, in the course of his work (he was cutting my hair) and after I told him what I did for a living<sup>240</sup>, told me, frankly and without any hint of irony, his attitude<sup>241</sup> (*'what av learned'*) towards violence, junkies, do-gooders, police, being a man, family, the death penalty, deportation and how to avoid being a victim by holding up your head at all times and in the last instance 'chibbin' the cunts before they 'chib' you'.

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<sup>240</sup> A *'leisured relation to necessity'* as one man described ethnographic research.

<sup>241</sup> The barber's views are statements about his own beliefs as well as an account of concrete practice. The 'barber' is my attempt to *'hold a reality in place long enough to discern something of its 'nature' before exploring its many consequences for other aspects of working class reality'* (Gilfillan, 2000, p128). As will be seen, in this ethnography *'events and structures of violence run like a bright thread through the fabric of life'* (Sykes, 1958, p102, cited in Winlow, 2000, p163).



The barber is about five foot ten, a strong and serious face, hard eyes, of heavy muscled build, thick neck, wide shoulders, and at the same time fluid in his movements: he runs in the evenings, doesn't drink alcohol and is a practising black belt in the grappling martial art that is ju-jitsu; his attitude mirrored his martial art, free form (yet formal), adaptable and street (whatever works goes). I watched him in the mirror explain a particular improvised move and what damage a simple key could do to *'any of those bastards'*.<sup>242</sup>

The barber's place of work is large enough to seat about six men (two chairs for cutting and four for waiting), who have decided after whatever length of deliberation and delay, that they need or should have a short, back and sides. This isn't the place to come to have highlights put in your hair or to have the latest Mohican shaped and fashioned. In this barber shop conditioning shampoo is a *theoretical* possibility. The scalp is for when you are bald or are familiar with prison, the moral advice from the senior barber (whose avoidance of alcohol is also free form in that anything that goes down goes) is a number two on the clippers at most.

The barber was friendly, open (in his body posture- hands open, arms wide when making a point) and his voice had a tone of utter intentionality (especially when talking about real and imagined situations of violence). For the barber, this is how 'it' is in all its immediacy, an 'it'

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<sup>242</sup> The key was grasped like a knife, the palm of the hand in a fist. Here we find the use of everyday objects as weapons or how everyday objects come to be seen as potential weapons. The 'Irn Bru' bottle held in the palm, the back of hand forward, the readiness and expectation of a cosh. Screwdrivers fit easily in an inside pocket or up a jacket sleeve. A Stanley blade made for cutting and working with materials becomes a measured method for slashing human skin. Steel toe capped work boots for protecting toes as a means to smash a face. A soft drink crate is harder than a head but a baseball bat is harder. When the everyday object becomes the potential weapon and *'the weapon as already referring to pain, making pain visible, external in its form'* (Scarry, 1984, p16), then pain as a something to be expected is never far away. *'Those bastards'* is a reference to 'neds', 'nutters' and 'junkies'.

that would not find him wanting.<sup>243</sup> Over and above everything the barber said I remembered most clearly his advice and utter conviction to 'never look down' and to 'never be a victim'. The barber had asked me what I do for a living. I had answered somewhere along the lines of 'doin' research on violence'. In a time that is symptomatic with 'fear of crime' (the donning of the 'fear goggles' as one critic put it)<sup>244</sup>, the deployment of city wide CCTV schemes, talk of the abandonment of public space (as *public* space, that is as political space) and a more general climate of impotent inducing scaremongering I could understand how I might have been misunderstood. The barber, though, did not have on fear goggles, did not look down and appeared anything but apathetic. He has a most practical and embodied understanding of his environment, a reflexive sense of his own physicality and its impressions in space, in sum, even as he states his separation and his distinction from others he evidences an awareness of his self through others.

Indeed, his monologue on violence and his imposing manner presented an image of complete congruence: violence, rather than a wholly alienating or fragmenting experience, is for him (it is also a feature of other men's violence talk) also a practical resource, something that can be called upon and used in an environment that is itself encountered as threatening- the body has already been prepared for combat, all the hatches are closed and sealed and any attempted breach will be met in kind. *This* body is one that has been 'built' in and with the immediate and projective horizons of violence. It is a 'building' that refers as much to the conscious activity of putting the body through strenuous exercise and training in fighting as it is to the

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<sup>243</sup> In a 1993 publication, Stanko and Hobdell conclude that when men talk about fighting they often assume they will have no problems handling themselves in physical contests. Similarly, in talking about violence I never felt the barber was 'not being himself' or that what he said was a fabrication. For sure, men's stories of violence are, almost without fault, the glossed incidents that they have been the victors (in whatever sense 'victory' is found). The barber, though, like most people I interviewed who had first hand experience of doing and receiving violence



long social incorporation of ways of walking, talking and looking that refer if not mirror a background discourse of potential violence. What Kaschuba explains as the '*habitualization of certain physical and symbolic modes of behaviour*' (1995, p. 185). Here the very idea of a victim is seen in the process of its separation from lived social forms.

It is a calm but dynamic tension that is animate in his repetition of intention: he is talking *here* but all his indicators threaten to go *there*. This 'there' is something that is sometimes explicit in language but even in its explicitness it remains a reference to something communicated non-verbally, often as a threat, '*don't take me there*' and the resulting silence or the affiliation with threatened violence in '*someone taking ye somewhere ye don't want tae go* (Luke Wifally, Age 32, Interview in his flat)'.

As will be seen, to talk of a threatening *environment* is not to displace or theorise the barber's actions or intentions as 'caused' by external forces- he is well aware of the consequences of violence, of its forms, its patterns and its non-violent possibilities. It is simply to note that such an environment can channel energies in particular directions and that those directions, although clearly signposted, are 'places' that 'ye don't want tae go'.<sup>245</sup> It is to note that '*men are more likely to attend to the opinion of those whose views can make a difference in their own lives; they are more likely to attend to those opinions which can be expressed in actions that are costly or rewarding to them*' (Gouldner, 1967, p88). *As a man* it is implicit that the barber is responsible for his own integrity and self esteem in the face of violence by other

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did not project themselves as 'characters' or as 'bullshitters'. In contrast, there was a very real sense that when it comes down to talking about violence to the barber, violence *is* the reality.

<sup>244</sup> Hume, M. (2003) The Times, August 25<sup>th</sup>.

<sup>245</sup> In a sense, the word environment shares many of the assumptions that inhere in the word that is 'context' (Dilley, 1999). That is, situating actions in context is often to depend on a whole background understanding of what that particular context already means in the understanding of those actions. From here context and

men, especially those perceived as lesser *males* or those, as in this case, encountered as in 'total need' (Burroughs, 1959). His 'choice' is not fatalism, nor even avoidance but outright violence.<sup>246</sup>

### 6.3.1 Being a Victim: Threats to Ontological Integrity

The barber took it that I was researching men who had been the *victim* of violence, '*one thing that will never happen tae me. If it does it will need tae be a crowd of them, and they will need to kill me 'cos I will fight like a bastard an will keep getting up. Don't be a victim mate, don't be a victim*'. This chance 'misunderstanding', the barber's focus on what it means to become and to be a victim (the clear relationship between a victim and forms of embodiment and gender, of never looking down, of maintaining posture, head up, show no weakness because that is exactly what a 'victim' is, that is, a signifier for weakness and the easy way out of facing not only oneself but everyone else who does not claim victim status).<sup>247</sup> It will form an important part of my discussion in the next chapter regarding the many spheres of influence (for example, friends, family, relatives, employers, the justice system and the welfare state) under which specific ethos are formed. As will be seen the 'unreality' of being a victim (the barber would, in theory, need to be killed) and the threat of violence is a concrete phenomenon that is negotiated and navigated in the life of young Glaswegian men and women. Here, the barber stands as a 'realist' in his approach to violence in that the only thing 'unreal' about his attitude is that he would have to be dead to be a victim. Like Richard Longley, the barber

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environment can be seen as concepts. Again, Bourdieu's concept of habitus (with its stress on individuation and socialisation) is useful for exploring situated action.

<sup>246</sup> As will be seen, this idea of choice is dependent on a number of factors: income is one of them.

<sup>247</sup> Researchers have shown how people's movement patterns vary in sickness and in health, and how it is possible to detect deception from the body and face (Ekman and Friesen, 1973; 1974; cited in Blacking, 1977, p17).



verbalises that he will never take a 'back seat' in any of it, *'five, six, ten of them, it disnae make any difference. It wis a pride aspect of no getting beat'* (Richard Longley, Age 34).

In some sense this 'realist' orientation is one that gravitates around those who are comfortable or have learned of their own violent capacity and skill through the experience of violence. Of course, this self learning and apprenticeship in violence is one that is also seen through the eyes of others. Indeed, here is where reputations are forged and worked with, where investments come to be made and people can enter into a distinctly violent banking system.

For example, there is an argument that there is an aspect in male Glaswegian psychology/intentionality is both a fear of violence and the fantasy of doing extreme violence: the 'ideal hegemonic type' being the popular representation of the 'hardman' and its corollary, the 'just man', the sheriff without law, the paraclete without religion, the third party protector; how discourses of morality and justice are implicated in each other and how the search for 'justice' or justification can become a form of domination in itself. George describes this sense of justification,

*'... the whole conversation, he spoke for 45 minutes an a wis trying tae tune intae the music, a wis stoned. He wis talking aboot this guy bein a bully, lit, 'he's a bully an a don't like bullies'. He's a bully himself, know whit a mean. He's talking aboot gaffers oan building sites bullyin aw the apprentices but here's Frank as the saviour, the fucking knight in shining armour. It always involves (unclear) an stuff lit that wi Frank threatenin them wi pickaxes an chisels. A think he uses the fact that he is a bit of a bear an has a bit of a reputation. He uses that tae dominate conversations an things lit that'.*

The concern for others as a concern for oneself, the experience of violence as also imbuing a belief in the use of violence against those who would take a liberty, '*violence as a form of justice, the pursuit of justice*' (Black, 1984, p1).<sup>248</sup> Indeed, as will be seen, in the case of 'grassing' and its allusions to a 'moral community', it is clear that violence can be a source of ethos. The barber understands how the threat of physical violence can be used to exploit those who are unfamiliar with violence as both an emerged form of communication and as a means of restoring a sense of a sovereign ego: it is something that cannot happen to him. This ideal type has at least some small association with a whimsical and luxurious notion of honour in that potential or expected violence is faced.

The whole arena of expectations in relation to violence and to the future is a topic of importance. This orientation to the future, or of what is to be expected or to be avoided, of what is to be and can be created is a relation to time that is taken as having fundamental value in understanding how people relate to each other in particular environs. Indeed, incorporating time as '*a structuring reality structuring every structuring relation*' (Gilfillan, 2000, p153) forces an analysis of agency and expectations to reappraise the very concept of agency employed.

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<sup>248</sup> For a macro and systematic understanding of this self serving view of violent morality through the lens of gender theory see Young's (2003) view that '*The dominative masculinity in this way constitutes protective masculinity as its other. The world out there is heartless and uncivilized, and the movements and motives of the men in it are unpredictable and difficult to discern. The protector must therefore take all precautions against these threats, remain watchful and suspicious, and be ready to fight and sacrifice for the sake of his loved ones* (Elshtain 1987, 1992). *Masculine protection is needed to make a home a haven... Central to the logic of masculinist protection is the subordinate relation of those in the protected position*' (Young, 2003). The difficulty with this position is that world politics and power are identified with a generalized notion of heterosexual men and a heterosexual masculinity and that the subordinated feminist position is equated with non-violence. Similarly, it identifies violence with power.



In one tradition this is an awareness that can be identified as highly rational in that it is instrumental, that is, it is an awareness of being in the process of time, one that projects itself in a conscious fashion into the future, anticipating its own participation in that future, aware of all its 'edges', of what it might need to 'get on'. It might even be argued that this is a masculine relation to the body. But is this how 'men' as a class, as a generalised 'gender' work? Do you have to be a man to know what violence might mean and do men actually think about violence in this way?<sup>249</sup>

It is also an awareness that is marked by its attendance to the immediate and to the self as experienced through others. There is an implicit denial that the man will not be pushed around, will not lose control. His sense of self is instrumentalised and prepared. The threat of violence will be met with violence and control will only be lost if they '*kill me cos I will fight like a bastard an will keep getting up. Don't be a victim mate, don't be a victim*'.

On the one hand, what is being said here can be understood as antipathy for victim status. A victim is literally that, it defines someone: he is someone who allows something to happen to him. It is accepting the imposition of the will of other men. You can accept this objectification, react against it or quite simply instantiate it. It is as much a form of bodily self-preservation as it is a defence of symbolic integrity. The possibility of violence is thus one aspect of the relation between being and consciousness, one aspect of social relations. In this case violence can be understood as permeable, it is quite literally an assault on all aspects of

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<sup>249</sup> This is most explicit in psychological models. For example, Daly and Wilson (1997) focus on the living with mortality rates as an explanation of mortality rates, that is, that '*life expectancy itself may be a psychologically salient determinant of risk taking and the timing of life transitions*'. From here, the number of casualties that come to be known are life expectancy cues, future time is compressed and actions are shifted accordingly. However, in their paper Daly and Wilson recognise the limits of their psychological model by ending the paper

being, *'it is the transgressing by another (or others) of the mental or symbolic barrier (i.e. via threats) surrounding the body'* (Van Bruschoot, 2003, p123).

This can be seen as a Nietzschean conceptualisation of power- that is, it is an understanding that power is immanent in all social relations. Victims, in this sense, collude in their victimisation. Thus, particular aspects of Glaswegian culture demand that men defend themselves physically against intimidation- if they do not it is likely they will bear responsibility for their victim status (Margold, 1999).<sup>250</sup>

Control is understood in terms that emphasise not only the management of fear by facing up to physical and psychological threats. It is facing up to control through the control of others and instilling fear in them.<sup>251</sup> When fear can be encountered as palpable:<sup>252</sup> indeed, for people who are intimate with violence it is often the case that fear can be sensed, felt and in some cases, acted upon. While style of comportment, body language and eye contact are integral to impression management in these situations (Goffman, 1967) it is also often the case that feeling is expressed simply as a feeling. That is, presence itself, how being is encountered in its totality, can be 'felt' and acted upon- *'A can feel you sweatin, your shit scared'* (laughs) (Tommy Vercetti).

A complex of factors (experiences in dealing with the police and the justice system, a concern with toughness and responsibility, penalties for 'grassing, cultural expectations, re-

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putting rationality in inverted commas. That is, the cognitive rationality that underpins their thesis is unable to account for itself and for the phenomenon identified as problematic in the first place.

<sup>250</sup> Thus, a focus on how we understand the 'victim' can reveal there is a cultural logic to violence that at the same time it makes itself invisible it reproduces itself. That is, the victim takes with him/her the community's responsibility for violence.



victimisation) combine to render the status of victim untenable *at the same time that those characteristics and behaviours that make someone the victim of choice are largely known*. In the aftermath of a violent assault it is more likely that the ‘victim’ will adopt a course of justice that is *sociologically* lawful (retribution, silence, avoidance, humour) rather than recourse to the abstract social relations of law.<sup>253</sup>

### 6.3.2 Structures of Feeling

What I want to do (through further examples and testimony) is to introduce the suggestion that perhaps this is an example of how the ‘scene of violence’, the moment, *can* transform, or heighten, and reveal an enduring ‘structure of feeling’ (Williams, 1989) that *can* be both amorphous and targeted; at self, at others, at a place or at a time. If a structure of feeling sounds somewhat static and non-descript, the aim is to attend to the emotive aspect of being-in-the-world, of being an embodied person in a particular world and what it often means, from the position of researcher, to attend to a world within a world. It is an attempt to understand the intensity and *quality* of human feeling, its *social* formation and relations, its substantive architectural temperament and the affectual commitment demanded by violence. As Merleau-Ponty outlines, it is an approach which understands that

*‘My body is not given to me as a sum of sensations but as a whole. A form, which is common to both visual and tactile perceptions, is the link between the other person’s body and my own.*

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<sup>251</sup> Control here is both a process of management and of force. Indeed, perhaps it is better to understand this relationship to control as of losing *any more* control.

<sup>252</sup> For example, see Topalli et al (2002).

<sup>253</sup> Here it is useful to refer ironically to Campbell’s (1993) Freudian interpretation of young working class men’s violence as a ‘death wish’. This is akin to the psychologising of social forms: the scales of desire have been tipped towards thanatos. the death instinct (already and always there) has nothing to send it back, the super ego, our conscience has no fear of losing what it ‘loves’ – there is no remorse because from a particular perspective on

*The two bodies are therefore communicate through the different perceptions. Everything transpires as if the other person's intuitions and motor realisations existed in a sort of relation of internal encroachment, as if my body and the body of the other person together formed a system'* (1983, p52).

The barber, a man in Glasgow, reveals something of this mystery<sup>254</sup> in his style and content of speech, in his comportment (as well as his conscious attention to comportment), in the target of his affections, the manner in which there is often a congruence between objective regularities and subjective dispositions, of feeling 'at home' in the conditions of the *public space* he inhabits, of what he *must* do if he is to live with himself in a manner that he feels he does not look down on himself and does not lose what in different circumstances one man referred to as '*aw that av built up*'; what is implicit is his status in relation to '*those bastards*' and his status lying on the pavement as they '*staun oan ma heid*'.<sup>255</sup>

These distinctions, subtleties and prophecies are social and cultural through and through: they infiltrate and shape the body; they occupy it in its motions and in its stature; they clarify the body and its techniques with a certain objective significance. Indeed, the barber clearly identifies himself in relation to those he shares space with, who he lives near, alongside and up the same tenement close. This small horizontal space is itself a site of contestation and public value; it is where personal and so public value can be realised with and at *the expense of others*. What is contained in this small and horizontal space? It is an attitude to self, space and

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ontology there is no social conscience (at least not in the reduction of the taken for granted social to psychology). Remorse, then, is a concept that presupposes what social life already is or should be.

<sup>254</sup> The word mystery is used because the term 'structure of feeling' is without direct empirical evidence other than the congruence and the sense of recognition that is felt through shared experience.



others that is not defined and contained by, for example, a particular relation to work but instead is suffused across the substrata of everyday life, a relation that can escape what others say it is or should be.<sup>256</sup> Is it a relation to others and to oneself that is often institutionalised and is often one dimensional?

This can be looked at from a different angle; for example, in linking criminology and social theory Garland's (1990, p12) attention to '*the cultural meanings of punishment and the emotional involvement of individuals*' in this process opens up the whole arena of public space and the meaning and meanings attached to 'institution' as public space. Here an institution is not only an abstract organisation representing rational values: instead, an institution is what comes to be valued and acted upon within a given public space of appearances. In asking about the cultural meanings of punishment and emotional involvement of individuals in this process Garland is using reason to engage with human relations and how the basis of human social relations in areas such as punishment have a core affectual component. This complication of rationality and the institutionalising of rationality is not to negate rationality. Rather it is to recognise how the institutional basis of rationality can become blind to its institutional basis and so in its drive to rationalise those without reason it brackets out desire.<sup>257</sup>

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<sup>255</sup> In referring to 'aw that av built up' Richard was describing his current everyday situation. He was referring to his job, his one bedroomed flat, his phone, his car and his bank account. He was also referring to his self-esteem and everyday routines in an environment where its extremes.

<sup>256</sup> The distinction between work and non-work selves is itself suffused throughout the sociological literature. For example, see Willis (1977) and his distinction that '*In the end it is recognised that it is specifically the cultural diversion that makes any job bearable*' (1977, p102). On appearance this makes sense. The point is that there is no distinction to be made between a working self and a not at work self if 'identity' is encountered as a 'livedness' or as a habitus. A door steward's late night/early morning party after work and the knuckle marks around the light switches, on the walls and the cracked door panels make it senseless, in this case, to make a distinction between a 'work identity' and a 'home identity'. In effect, there is a congruence between a work self and a cultured self, a sense of the training that has to be invested in a life to live a life or get away from a life.

<sup>257</sup> The question is of course, to what extent is this an institutional apology? That is, why should a recognition of emotion in institutional practices arise now? That is, a recognition of the actual violence carried out by state agencies *in the name of rationality* and, as Nietzsche notes, carried out '*in good conscience*' (1994, p59). One way



How this 'action' emerges is therefore inextricably bound up with emotional investments and with some sense of what rewards this investment will bring, of what institution is being invested in and with. Of course, these emotional investments and rational institutions are people and their relations with other people.<sup>258</sup> Attending to these emotions, then, can help the ethnographer try and capture and get to the reality of violence in the event and also violence as 'the whole motion': that is, how far off explicit and visible violence is from routine action, and just exactly what routine action entails and becomes in its fixing by the researcher. What are the structures that trigger violence and are those structures proximate or distal in their relation to the immediate violent event? Where does a theory of power fit in here? How far off is physical violence and is this emergence linked to other forms of violence? As Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992, p135) state, *'It is only in the relation to certain structures that habitus produces given discourses or practices... We must think of it as a sort of spring that needs a trigger'*. From here, emotions are the very real moment that 'culture' makes itself available to the person, a moment when the 'nature' and bones of the social is disclosed, and action is really encountered as a form of reason. Indeed, a form of reason that does not bracket itself off

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of looking at this is to understand 'rationality' through a logic of practice. That is, that institutional and progressive thought can hold within its terms of rationality a terms of endearment.

<sup>258</sup> Some writers have expressed this unstated 'emotional involvement' as a state of resentment. As Morelli (1998, p1) explains, 'Resentment is a state of repressed feeling and desire which becomes generative of values. The condition of resentment is complex both in its internal structure and in its relations to various dimensions of human existence. While it infects the heart of the individual, it is rooted in our relatedness with others. On the one hand, resentment is a dark, personal secret, which most of us would never reveal to others even if we could acknowledge it ourselves. On the other hand, resentment has an undeniably public face. It can be creative of social practices, mores, and fashions; of scholarly attitudes, academic policies, educational initiatives; of political ideologies, institutions, and revolutions; of forms of religiosity and ascetic practices' (my emphasis). Perhaps, this 'repressed desire that is generative of values' and 'dark and personal secret' (and the ability to recognize it) can be used to understand violence and to understand violence sociologically. That is, that it is in situations of objective weakness and so where relations of dependency and 'seeing yourself through the eyes of others' is most strongest that violence will emerge in particular forms. Thus, showing emotion or forms of understanding that are based in the social experience of 'living inferiority' can be exploited and can be a source of parasitical violence aimed at 'restoring' an imagined sense of a self who is sovereign or independent whenever the opportunity presents itself (that is, whenever someone who is encountered as a lesser or inferior makes an appearance-children, the novice or simply the weaker).



from the body but recognises the socialised body in constituting (un)reasonable and (ir)rational institutions. This is a perennial political and philosophical issue.<sup>259</sup> It has consequences for understandings of what it means to represent and to talk of ‘social’ or ‘unsociable’ behaviours, and of course, what is to be done about those that are deemed problematic.<sup>260</sup>

### 6.3.3 Violence as a Structure of Feeling

The whole motion of violence, then, is an account that in identifying particular situations and forms of violence, is an account that limits the usefulness of a typology to explain violence. Indeed, it denies that descriptions of violence according to its morphology or instrumentality have any real explanatory weight. It does this by continually referring to the generic and the wider context and to how these descriptions are themselves transcended both by the *‘interactive dynamics of which they are part and by the expressive force of violent acts’* (Jimeno, 2001, page). It is an oblique reference to what Bourdieu has referred to as the law of the conservation of violence (2000, p233). The embodied immediacy of perceived ‘internal encroachment’ can thus be understood socially, and with a certain fuzzy intuition. Here we can understand not only embodiment but what has been embodied and how it has been embodied. As Richard puts it, his intuit does indeed have its roots in ‘filling in’ an ‘interested’ emotion that has come to signify a concern, *‘Its just one of those things, don't take anybody at face value, always be alert, hit first, ask later. As soon as you get the first wee fear sign... that's*

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<sup>259</sup> For example, see the contrast between Platonic understanding and its refusal of a social science, and the Socratic belief that *‘knowledge can lead to the reduction of human suffering. Healing and knowing are brought together’* (Gouldner, 1967, p205).

<sup>260</sup> For example, when it is said that *‘it is not surprising that involvement in community life seems to decrease as income inequalities – and so social distances – increase’* (Wilkinson 2000; 2002) it seems that ‘community involvement’ is already pre-defined according to a universally recognised norm, one that is based on income equalisation. In other words, the social is subsumed under the economic and Indeed, from here, increases in

*your instinct, your first instinct, take your first instinct all the time, a canny get oot a here, hit 'im! That's it, get it over an done with. Make sure ye hit him and hit him right...*'<sup>261</sup>

The barber's affections are implicated throughout in his relations with *'those bastards'*. His potential violence is formalised/institutionalised in response to the expected unexpectedness, the 'mindless' violence of his perceived protagonists. In this case, though, the potential for mindless violence is not encountered as something mindless but is understood in its strategic and lived truth. He knows the meaning of the important moments he might encounter or share with those defined as risk: he will define them or they will define him. These moments are already incorporated and already projected as legitimate times to use violence. To go and do some 'evil', as Grant Mitchell put it, is to go *'looking for them before they find me... (am easily rememberable, aw they cunts look the same)'*, it is a mutual understanding of each other at the moment that each other is experienced as each other, the character of immediate social relations and of the local 'system'. This finding the violence of the other in one's self sustains violence as it sustains the life of the person preparing themselves for perceived violence.

For some, then, it is grounds for recognising and building upon an authentic self. For others, the *practice* of authenticity is a search for authenticity. Indeed, in a horizon of violence the distinction between acts and actions dissolve as *'feelings towards others are channelled into appropriate domains on the basis of prescribed statuses, roles and social situations'*

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violence are seen as detached from this norm at the same time that violence is experienced as a very public problem for the community.

<sup>261</sup> Richard is here talking about how his violent 'intuition' was honed and developed in his experience of work and the relations between fellow bouncers and their 'clients'. His readiness to be violent is thus a rejection of particular modes of communication: a rejection of even the thought of depending on others. In a sense, it is a way of keeping a grip or remaining in control that is based in a recognition of a weakness. These points indicate the possibility of a political economy of emotion. For example, it is argued that, *'Social relations, in short, can be understood in terms of their characteristic bodily relations and embodied agency can, in turn, as an emotional*



(Blacking, 1977, p10). As Appadurai (1998, cited in Verkaaik, 2003) argues, violence brings a sense of conviction in what kind of person one is and is not, it gives focus and a kind of 'dead certainty'.<sup>262</sup>

#### 6.3.4 Being and Becoming Violent: A Joe Moment

For the barber, looking/being/becoming a victim is one long continuum. It is a failure of both body technique, bodily capital and social standing: a failure that has its malignant and destructive consequences. This is something that came through in the disdained expressivity of his voice as he described the effects and consequences of violence on his friend. A friend stabbed to death, and the 'awakening' of violence in another friend who was slashed across the face; *'he dis the weights, steriods an aw that, he goes lookin for trouble noo'*.<sup>263</sup> Here we can sense what has been described as the 'permeability' of violence, of how it is both a physical and symbolic opening of the boundaries of the body, of how *someone else's* violence as rupture can get inside, *can* be alienating and enlightening in that process of opening and destroying, the *'undoing of the world'* as Scarry (1984) puts it.

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*mode of being in the world, be understood not merely in individual terms as 'meaning making', but also in social terms as institution making'* (Csordas, 1994, cited in Williams and Bendelow, 1998, p209).

<sup>262</sup> This brutal and one dimensional 'dead certainty' asks us to problematise the asocial and ahistorical assumptions inherent in statements such as *'... Different layers of identity interlock in particular socially meaningful combinations (Mennell, 1994) to shape social action in subtle and complex ways'* (Phillips, 2002).

<sup>263</sup> Monaghan (2001) discusses the practical, symbolic and economic aspects of steroid use amongst door stewards in the growth area that is the night time economy. In my own research I discovered that steroids (amongst other magical potions that include the 'ingestion' of bull's blood) also have an added benefit; they proffer upon the user the ability to shorten the time it takes to engage with rage. As one ex-head door steward put it *'Its back tae the basics again, the fight or flight, yer switchin that oan all the time, makin it sharper. Its lit you would huv tae stem up tae it, while that can gie ye it straight aff, right in there. But it can work in different ways, heart palpitations increase dramatically, that's why so many of them huv heart attacks. Then ye've gote aneurysms an all that sort of gear. Its lit ready tae burst, burstin that's whit it is'* (Richard Longley). Again the relationship to time is paramount as is the value attached to the immediacy of action in relation to violence. This congruence between violent threat (as habitus) and ability to enter fight mode (as habitus) is of course the very aspect of door stewarding that is challenged (and respected according to circumstance) by more experienced stewards and then by the disciplining of these practices in the formalising of the industry. In Richard's

But what was the world like for the barber's friend before this undoing? What was the transformation? *From what to what?* Can we theorise this 'what' as a 'working class' self or as a sui generis being? Can this 'what' be referred to as substance, as a thing in itself, as a structure of feeling? What are the different processes and relations that have brought these mental structures into being? What are the strengths and limitations of such a view? Is it an effect, a cause of violence or is it something more comprehensive, a way into exploring the constitution of social being itself, how our historically constituted (but specific) sense of self, our body 'in deep communion with its environment' understands the world and so seeks to change that world: can it help us understand the subject in action as *social* action, as an expression of a sociological reality? Is the barber's lucidity and utter frankness because his mental structures of perception are structured by the structure of history which are tied to reproducing the social structure?

The barber seems sure that something changed in his friend. Was his friend's life a relatively serene life beforehand, one unfamiliar with violence? The rapidness of the change makes this seem unlikely. Was he then perhaps a member of Connell's complicit corps and is now a graduated and fully fledged 21<sup>st</sup> century foot soldier?<sup>264</sup> Or was he already culturally well 'read', the experience of violent victim hood enabling a new 'vocabulary' and direction within him? Is this direction then like the choosing of a victim in that it is amorphous and fluid? Or is this choosing based on technicalities or recognised 'credentials'?

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description we sense the accuracy in his understanding of how potentialities are prepared for and how these men are almost 'pregnant' with violence and their preparations for violence.

<sup>264</sup> Connell (1995, p79) describes complicit masculinities as those '*masculinities constructed in ways that realise the patriarchal dividend, without the tensions or risks of being the front line troops of patriarchy*'.



The barber explains that his friend (Joe) was '*a nice guy, a quiet guy*' before he was slashed but that now he is a '*nutter*', someone who goes looking for violence, someone who from his description *is* angry.<sup>265</sup> Indeed, for the barber, Joe's anger is his defining feature in the context of our brief talk about violence. It is as if Joe's encounter with physical violence has left a physical and emotional scar, a vulnerability that he is adamant will not be experienced as such again: a sense of constant vigilance, revenge, redeeming and perhaps from a perspective of relative safety and comfort, outright paranoia. The metaphor of the healed broken bone being '*stronger*' than before it was broken is apt if a generalisation. There are now thoughts about what was taken for granted. Indeed, the lingering doubt about '*being up for it*' about '*sticking your leg in where it hurts*' when the moment presents itself is one that can become an opportunity to exorcise the ghosts of past weakness and to reinvigorate/fortify/anchor the newly discovered violent potential and ability to do. This taking from others is like a psychological phlebotomy, a reinvestment and reminder that a self is '*feared enough*', that the violent portfolio still gives a return on its investments. As will be seen later, this transformative and endlessly recuperative function of violence is a central theme in a number of men's talk and use of violence. Again, it is also a means by which some men distinguish themselves from other men.<sup>266</sup>

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<sup>265</sup> When talking about violent incidents the barber's voice, face, actions and language became more animated; sometimes angry and rhetorical, sometimes laughing. It is often the case that a strong '*positive*' emotional accompaniment is expected when talking about violence. What this means in relation to a weak negative response is perhaps somewhere for future research to be focused. In the barber's case, there is little formalised show of restraint and plenty of mimicked examples of violent moves. From a slightly different perspective, some studies have shown that people who have been a '*victim*' of violence reflect on their experience as one that could happen again in the future. These people are recorded as experience substantially increased levels of anger. The one thing that remained with me about Grant's talk of respect was also his unexplainable anger- he did not or could not say why he had turned into '*a right bad bastard somewhere along the line*'. There was a lot of angry talk about '*nothing*'. This encounter with anger and emotion as an aspect of not only physical violence but of everyday life is opened up for deeper and wider sociological explanation in the next chapter. A key aspect of this presence of anger is its relationship to social institutions and interpersonal relations and indeed to official attempts to reduce levels of recorded violence.

<sup>266</sup> Chodorow suggests that feelings of masculine inadequacy are often behind such acts of violence when she states that '*... the most dangerous men on earth are those who are afraid they are wimps*' (Chodorow, date, p424). This is clear in Stanley's belief that '*The wans dain aw the violence noo are the wans that wur pricks*



In the case of the barber's friend the enduring feeling is of a body and a sense of self that has been violated once but *will not be violated in such a way again*. There is an identification of an agency turned to physical violence by violence. But this is not enough. In referring to Joe as someone who goes '*looking for trouble noo*' a number of issues emerge. First, 'we' can recognise how, and to some extent why, violence changes people, how violence can '*transform a body into something other than what it was before*' (Pandaya, 2000, p362).<sup>267</sup> In this case, the man's body is physically enlarged to signify strength, power and status: it is a form of body labour. Is it a form of compensation to what was taken, or what one man referred to in relation to a public slight as literally '*eatin him away*'?<sup>268</sup> For others, the body is artificially altered and extended through the use of weapons.<sup>269</sup> In this sense, the body is also changed in how it perceives and is perceived by others.

The attention is on the world where being threatened/threatening, being attacked/attacking, being reduced to what the other person wants you to be, how you understand yourself, comes to be *expected* in a public form (as in a conscious and real form, a meaningful sense of what is

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*when they wur young*'. Thus, here we recognise that the use of violence itself has norms and limits and that those who transcend those limits can be seen to be 'marked' or having gone to far.

<sup>268</sup> This comment was made in relation to Tommy's description of his friend after he had backed down from a fight in which there was a fair chance that he would have been beaten up by onlookers. For Tommy, he became preoccupied with his lack of violence, he took it away with him and it resurfaced in his speech, would become explicit when he was drinking and became very real when he next met not only the man who had issued the challenge *but anyone else who presented themselves in the same manner*.

<sup>269</sup> An interesting hypothesis. Felson (1994, p57) argues that 'big people hit little people'- to what extent does Glaswegian knife culture have its roots in the psychological and physiological effects of poverty in working class areas at end of 19<sup>th</sup> Century, the 'wee hard man'. Similarly, to what extent will the enlarged and symbolic body of the bouncer become an object of retaliation with weapons. For example, the party on Easterhouse rd, Babsy's friend, 'huge guy but with a bit of an attitude'. He pulled up a man for staring at him. An argument developed and the man left to say he would be back to have it out with the bouncer. He came back with a gun and shot the bouncer killing him. In asking why the feud developed themes begin to emerge, 'Cos he's a big guy an he stands oot', 'Cos he wis starin at me'. In men's accounts of fights there is often a stress on what is said without words and the physique of the opponent if he is a 'big guy'. Indeed, this is a key theme in one popular account of violence in working class culture (Ferris and McKay, 2001).



to be done ). It is an intuitive and embodied reasoning that accumulates, deepens, manages and makes sense of the world from an early age. Indeed, it is here in this introduction to a gendered class psyche where the class structure is reproduced.<sup>270</sup>

This moment of violence is also when the physical and symbolic body and its edges can become known, sealed and protected- from the physical experience of working up to a rage, to transcending the body in that rage, the blind adrenalising rage of fear and aggression that forgets everything except that which is known intimately, *Aw a remember is trying tae get his hauns aff his face a wis that fuckin ragin'*. It has been said that violence can only aim at a face (Levinas, 1969). Here the face is an explicit target of violence, it is an attempt to blur the face, to mash identity, to dissolve features and lines and to reduce subtlety to bloody impressions. This is the eyes of violence; a continuum from utter clarity to fuzzed shapes, a continuum held together by a violent sameness of expectation and classification: *'don't take anybody at face value'* (Richard, Interview in his flat).

The target of the head and the face suggests that the human face is where the person is found most vulnerable. Again, this is to be seen 'materially' (damage inflicted) and 'symbolically'. An attempt to paint lived feeling onto the canvas of a face, to render that face knowable through its marks. Paradoxically, then, in making known the boundaries of the body and individual identity, violence has the capacity to destroy those boundaries. Like a mimetic dance it creates and dissolves the unity of the body in its very motion through space, flesh and consciousness. Like dance, violence can capture attention of those involved and those who watch. Indeed, perhaps this distinction between watching and participation is an illusory one

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<sup>270</sup> One consequence of identifying early socialisation as a key area of social reproduction is to paradoxically identify class being made anew with each generation.

in that like Gadamer's critique of Schiller's modernist understanding of play, the performance is a total and collective experience and the bloodier and more intense the more 'excellent' and real the encounter becomes for all involved.<sup>271</sup> It is both aesthetic and anaesthetic.

This transformation is clear even in the moment when a man may deny the impact of a threat or an actual attack on him. One informant explained that the experience of being attacked with a hammer '*didnae bother*' him yet the attack '*has just changed the rules... I shouted to them that they should huv finished the jobe cos the next time they are getting done in*'. John now carries a knife or some common-household-weapon-to-be with him when he leaves his house. The attack on John has escalated the level of violence he is prepared to *use* himself. In more detail, Stanley (50) explains his own 'Joe' moment (about 30 years ago),

*'A told ye when a really started bein a right bad cunt, we wur pally wi these guys fae Castlemilk. Rab Smith's deid noo, Wullie Graham's died noo. Both a them died of a heart attack. They wur sort of good guys, a always remember that. So, they left me wi a couple of these Castlemilk guys an we wur goin doon the road an a wis fightin wi wan of these guys, something tae dae wi wan of the lassies. A wis gein him a doin, y'know just fisty cuffs an that. Ma mates pulled me aff him, 'cmon tae fuck Stanley lets go an get the bus'.*

*So we wur walkin doon an a wis lit that 'let me aff am gonny kill that cunt'. Next thing, his big mate came runnin behind us wi a wine bottle in each haun. Who'd he hit first? A canny remember, Wullie Graham? They're fuckin haudin me a naw. He hit Wullie ower the heid wi this wine bottle. As Rab Smith turned roon he gote hit in the face an he hud a horrible big scar*

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<sup>271</sup> This is a common feature of many public and official displays of violence. That is, the crowd and its enjoyment of the spectacle is characterised by animation and encouragement. In other words, there is often a lot



right doon there (pointing from ear to neck) and Wullie hud wan doon the side of his face. So by this time they hud let me go an he sticks the bottle right in ma fuckin face. A big chunk oot ma face, right under ma cheekbone, a big v shape, right under ma eye. Its healed up well, it used tae be there fur years. A wis lit that, 'Ya bastard'. A gets him, an fae right ower tae the bus stop, whit a doin a gave him. Punchin fuck oot 'im, punchin fuck wi his hauns ower his face. Unbeknown tae me he still hud a wee bit a fuckin wine bottle in his haun. Aw a remember is trying tae get his hauns aff his face a wis that fuckin ragin. Thur wis blood everywhere oan me. Aw a felt wis 'chhkk', that wan up there (pointing too scar). Everybody wis screamin lit fuck, him getting up an runnin away. Me goin away tae the Royal (hospital) getting aw stitched up.

Efter that everytime a went doon the toon a never went doon without a fuckin knife, two knives, y'know. If a hud a knife there an then that widnae huv happened, a wid huv stabbed fuck oot a him, ye know. Wullie and Rab hud these big scars right doon there face, an this wis thame bein goody-goody haudin me. It wis just a fisty cuffs, nae fuckin chibs involved, ended up comin oot the fuckin worst. Wan cunt wi two wines bottles. Efter that a just went from fuckin bad tae worse. That's no the fuckin hauf of it.

PQ: Whit dae ye mean?

F: Whit a done. Sometimes it wis just fur nuthin a naw. If somebody wis in a gang a didnae like, then fuckin hard luck...

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of shouting, punching the air and the rushing of blood.

### 6.3.5 Facing Violence

The extent of violence between people and within communities can generate a particular structure of feeling. The stress is on *can* because in the course of this research what is recognised is the different and often opposing reactions/feelings that violent events ask of people.<sup>272</sup> Whereas one man may respond to assault or the threat of assault by preparing or being readied for future violence, by using and incorporating fear and anxiety as habitual to ready his own violence, for another the experience is one in which a sense of vulnerability is felt and violence is phobic. For another it is the wake up call and the beginning of the long move away from both place and the recognised binding to place and people that one dimensional existence can induce. For another it is the preparation. The general sense is of absorption into everyday life. Indeed, as Bob's example in chapter two testifies, it seems that particular 'structures of feeling' emerge without having to physically experience the *kind* of violence that the barber talked about his own friend experiencing.

People recognise how to put on a particular 'face' and how to 'face' potential moments of danger. That there is a discrepancy between looking and feeling is as much a reality as a lack of this discrepancy. For example, Bob and George are already sensitised to the '*chance that sumthins gonny happen*' (George, Interview in his flat).

For George and Bob the 'expectation' is an everyday experience,

*'A just think everyday in Easterhooose there is a potential threat of violence. A think so, a think so. (PQ: Yeah?). A widnae walk from wan end of Easterhooose tae the other at night. A widnae*

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<sup>272</sup> Indeed, this is a fundamental sociological issue. How to deal with the variety of expressions from a particular and common locale.



*dae it at all... A can see the signs, a can see when there might be trouble, but its difficult tae put that intae words (PQ: lit wan of those questions ye know where is this gonny go)... A think even before that, hangin about ye see groups a guys who ye know given the opportunity will prey on the weak. Ye can see it when yer walkin doon the street ye can see it fuckin happenin, the potential, they wee guys there, they wee guys there, man'?*<sup>273</sup>

*'its just your actual attitude towards people that's going to either see you through a situation without any worries or if you are worried it is going to show and people are going to sense that in you and they are going to do something about it'* (Bob, Conversation in Park, August 2003).

George senses that 'street' violence has its rationale in hierarchical relations of power that stretch beyond the immediate. That is, that it is the weak or those perceived as weaker than the attacker (s) who are vulnerable to violence. From here violence is a form of compensation and psychological panic, a behaviour that emerges as an attempt to disappear a self's real weakness, a self's real sense of nothing *in* a hierarchy and *in* a market society. This is the 'hyena' and pack mentality of violent expression, the '*dirty crawly bastards*' (Stanley Made, Interview in his flat) expression of violent fantasy expressed in one man's wish to be able to '*fight like fuck*' which was followed by a description of how he enjoyed kicking a man in the face as he lay on the ground who had continued to '*give him lip*' after his friends had already '*beaten him to a pulp*'.<sup>274</sup>

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<sup>273</sup> George's reply was to the stated intention of the author to walk from one end of the scheme to the other and to describe what was seen and felt. In accordance with a number of research accounting practices George first referred to the idea as 'like that Samuel Johnson' before moving onto 'your taking the pish'.

This point of view is echoed by the barber's impression that an awareness of the lived environment, as well as your own bodily posture, your body in space in relation to others (especially those seen as a threat: and this is the crux of the matter. That is, the point at which distinctions are made, from where in relation to whom), will reduce your risks of personal attack. This understanding of how bodily comportment can be interpreted as a sign of weakness runs through most conversations I have had in the field.<sup>275</sup>

As has been seen in much of my gathered testimony analogies with the animal kingdom and references to women and female body parts are a common attachment and run along the lines that a weakened animal and a non potent male is easily identified. The assumption is that the identification of a weakness or difference invites some form of exploitation: it is as if the experience of the social is *as* a place of natural laws. For example, 'running away' like a 'big wummin' or 'hiding behind the curtains' (Drew, age 45) is a sign of weakness. A man faces up to these challenges even if it might mean getting a 'right doin' in the process. In fact, it is often the case that respect is gained for facing up to a potential and actual 'kicking'. On the other hand, the barber is literally saying that death is preferable to 'defeat'. When reputations are heavily invested in honour and reputation there is a concomitant motivation to protect that investment. When that reputation is built on a capacity for violence, self-integrity and meaning is itself at stake. This is a way of being in the world that has no time for thought about consequences.<sup>276</sup> It is a response '*to the most pressing of pressing realities and the most necessary necessary reactions are too important to be ad hoc improvisations but are the*

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<sup>274</sup> The classification of forms of violence and how these are perceived across the generations is encountered in more detail in the next chapter.

<sup>275</sup> It is also a focus of analysis in that researchers have shown how people's movement patterns vary in sickness and in health, and how it is possible to detect deception from the body and face (Ekman and Friesen, 1973, 1974.).



*product of history and encodification*' (Gilfillan, 2000, p132). In other words, violence has a long history as a form of both competition and survival in Glaswegian life. It is something that is learned or shoved down your throat in the process of growing up.

For Bob a front is nuanced and is theoretically open to detection and test. His anxiety is about his anxiety being made known and how this could be exploited as a weakness. In this sense, his anxiety is as much to do with what is revealed as it is do with an expectation of violence. It is to mark him as different and to be different is to find someone much the same way a budgie finds itself amongst a group of sea gulls. It is to recognise the bluntness of Social Darwinism as a reality and to face racial and political intolerance as it is found: that is, it is the situating of *difference* itself in time and place rather than some universal action against a timeless political and natural citizen. In this sense the recognising of how difference is produced and relates to human practices is to recognise what it means to be a human being. George expands on this theme:

*'The guys I wis way wur racially abusing the Pakistani bus conductor. A wis never lit that. But its lit anything that stood oot ye gote a poundin fur it. A hud a big lip so a gote that, ma other mate wis fat so he gote it fur that, wan hud big ears and then Ian hud dark skin so he gote it fur that':*

On the one hand, it is to refer to violence as a reaction to the authenticity of the face that is perceived. On the other, it is to recognise that Bob's intense anxiety is forged in the recognition that the only thing authentic about this authenticity is the 'acceptance' and

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<sup>276</sup> The analogy with war fare is clear: as Clausewitz states *'He who uses force unsparingly, without reference to the quantity of bloodshed, must obtain a superiority if his adversary does not act likewise'* (Reference)

working with terms of the conditions faced. In another conversation Bob explains that he couldn't up and leave the place where these interpersonal relations flourished and he was to eventually present his own authentic relation to this interpersonal world of fronts and face.<sup>277</sup> That is, he shaved his head, bought a leather jacket and scowled a lot. In contrast, for Tommy Vercetti the whole idea of face, authenticity and violent expectation has collapsed in that he describes his 'attraction' to violence and its attraction to himself as relating to him '*having one of those faces*'.<sup>278</sup>

To become intimate with violence and to become intimate with using violence is thus contingent on a number of different personal structuring realities. It is again to reiterate the importance of addressing sociological reality through those personal and individualistic realities and to refuse to disappear real realities in catch all categories. In the case of the barber's friend knowing about violence was deepened through knowing violence as the victim of violence. Facing up to violence really did mean he came face to face with violence (scarred). Thus, the relationship between actual violence and what one man calls pseudo-violence is close: it is a different take on the 'unreality' of being a victim and once again it directs attention to the complexity of understanding violence and its uses. The body, reason and action are thus encountered as simultaneously physical, social and symbolic. As a consequence the use, experience and effects of violence can also be understood in this way.<sup>279</sup>

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<sup>277</sup> Bob described how his anxiety '*knocked me out of the game*', that is, he required help from people who are employed to understand and help those who suffer mental distress.

<sup>278</sup> This 'attraction' is not intended to be understood as aesthetic or as 'attractive' for Tommy. Tommy regularly shaves his head into the 'wick' (that is, to his scalp).

<sup>279</sup> For example, this complicates understandings of 'fear of crime'. As Elias notes, '*Fear is manifest in the boundaries of the symbolic body, incorporating a level of abstraction far removed from the potential or actual violation of physical (bodily) spaces. Fear is central to the placement of boundaries drawn about the body*' (Elias, 1978, cited in Gibbs Van Brunschot, 2003, p122).



### 6.3.6 Violence as Wave and Body as Water

Indeed, As Kanapathipillai (1990, p343) notes, this is a crucial difference between *'threats [from natural disasters], and violence coming from human agencies... the latter is experienced as continuous violence. It is not contained in time; like waves created by throwing a stone in the river, it has repercussions which far exceed the moment of its occurrence'*.

Again, this is the whole motion of violence, the background of expressive feeling and interpersonal dynamics that both constitute and transcend the violent events themselves. It attends to the learning to walk the walk and it attends to the very real dynamics of interpersonal conflict: of how a violent event can become generative of other violent events, of how *'this isnae over'*; and how being subjected to the experience of violence can become a most personal structuring experience itself.<sup>280</sup> In other words, the experience of violence as the meeting of one's own personal effort against a material force makes time.

The metaphorical 'waves' of feeling generated by a violent event or detonation occur and are given meaning in a particular structuring context- in this case, the argument is that working class Glaswegian 'culture' and lived experience provides a coherent set of meanings (or perhaps in arguing against a strict philosophy of consciousness 'somatic understandings/situations' would be a better description of meanings generated in and between bodies) that can be drawn upon to legitimate and define the use of violence in particular

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<sup>280</sup> In anthropology the 'cycles of revenge' thesis has been used to show how 'underdeveloped' or 'stateless' societies use violence or the fear of violence to construct *political order*. Perhaps this thesis has some application for peripheral housing schemes in developed societies.

circumstances and against particular people.<sup>281</sup> This culture is to be understood as warm and personal in its masochistic relations with capital and the hierarchical relations of the class structure. When this culture becomes a focus of meaning in itself, that is, when the historical and cultural habitus finds itself free floating and without social and economic support, the violent habitus can come to 'structure' social and interpersonal relations in a way that a natural scientist can only dream.

Indeed, the metaphor of water and waves is useful for grasping the immersion in a livelihood, of going beyond the violent moment to account for the moment (Rowbotham and Linkogle, 2001). It attends to the implicitness of being at home in your surroundings, or of being out of your depth, of drowning and feeling as if a body is '*breathing through a straw*' (Jim Morrison, Email Correspondence). It also reminds us of ourselves as embodied, our own bodies arriving and moving in space, fluid and also with resistance, discovering ourselves through others, the whole body as an intelligence bearing organism (Carey, 2000, p38) shifting its weight according to the circumstances we find ourselves in. In some sense it is again to clarify what it means to detach an understanding of ourselves from our environment in the space and time of that environment.

Violence is here an intense wave of feeling, a heavy intention, an imploding and exploding emotion. It is a particular form of life, a particular wave through life. Indeed, we hear how 'this wave arises within me' and here this wave is encountered as a violent *tide*: it is a recurring feature of personal relations. Personal markers and barriers can be shifted and

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<sup>281</sup> This concern with somatic understandings and the body is again to reiterate an understanding of the embodied subject as always and everywhere the social and political subject. That is, in the words of Bourdieu embodiment



rearranged or simply washed away. Temporary equilibrium can be found and indeed is all that is to be found in this structure of feeling.

As Richard states in relation to the blood vessels of steroid users, *'Its lit ready tae burst, burstin that's whit it is'*: *'am gonny burst you'* has biological and symbolic consequences. Perhaps, then, the metaphor and movement of water and waves helps us see violence as a recurring social practice, as an event that has meaning in time but also one that has been shaped through time. The waves engendered by violence, then, also have their own energy. With extreme or habitual violence it is possible to experience life as constituted in violence. Violence, in this sense, has its own logic and its own constituting force. It spreads out, it remembers its energy. From here, social relations, norms, values, gestures, comportment and so on can be seen to be (in)formed *in* violence.

As such, perhaps understandings of extreme violence have to attend to the immediate demands of violence (in all its forms) itself. That is, the demands it places on an embodied individual in a particular relationship with others. Of importance here is the character of social relations, and the resonance this relationship itself has with forms of violence. How people talk and communicate with each other. How people move through social space. How long people 'spend' in particular spaces. How people look in social space. How social space is produced. Indeed, from this perspective perhaps the heuristic of 'culture' is (violently) misleading in that it presumes a universal self, a reflexive subject taking part in a benign cultural project. For example, there is an assumption that there is a universal relation to time itself, a self already

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is to be understood as bodily hexis, that *'political mythology realized, em-bodied, turned into a permanent disposition, a durable way of standing, speaking, walking, and thereby feeling or thinking'* (1977, p93).

*projected* into the future, a grasp of the *long duree* as if time and meaning existed outside social and economic relations, as if sociology itself was not sociological.

### **6.3.7 Violence, Language and Communication**

In this sense, a sociological account cannot be exhausted by attending to conscious representations. Unless the embodied and constituted perspective of the knower is included in the process that comes to be known as knowing embodied accounts will not get beyond the level of the cold and cheap positivist representations. It must also attend to the language of and from the body. It is from here that language can then be seen to have '*become capable of providing an external image of interior events... [we] have not discovered new words but have instead uncovered a structure residing in the narrow, already existing vocabulary, the vocabulary originated by the patients themselves*'.

Scarry's description of a narrow and already existing vocabulary is in reference to the experience of pain and efforts made to describe pain by people who had been the victims of torture. She asks us to think about what is originally a fundamentally '*interior and unshareable experience*' (1984, p16). Scarry, in effect, is asking questions of being and of knowing. How can we know what it is to live a particular and unshareable experience.<sup>282</sup> How can we know violence rather than about violence? Is it possible to know such a 'thing' without experiencing it? Or is Scarry wrong in that identifying an experience as unknowable she has actually identified something *real*: the body of the person dominated by power as the political subject in reality.

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<sup>282</sup> A structure of feeling, then, is not only known in a positivist sense, that is a thing in itself, something that can be registered by simply looking. It is also defined by absence. That is, a thing can appear, be known and display itself, only because of absence.



The narrow and already existing vocabulary is not taken as an absence or as a failure to communicate but is taken as an example of meaningful communication considering the 'force of circumstances'.<sup>283</sup> This communication is recognised as providing an external image of interior events primarily because the words uttered by the person who has experienced/is experiencing pain are reduced to the either the guttural or the most immediate to hand, of what can be said not only when knowing has been completely reduced to the body but what can be said within a social relation of domination and subordination. Thus, Scarry identifies a misrecognition of agency (as power to do) in the words of the tortured when that agency is taken from the description given by the torturer. Agency is there, in that narrow structure, it is there because it is experiencing the experience, it knows the depth of its positionality through its 'turn to the body'.

From here then, the narrow vocabulary informs us by its very stress on the reduction of the human being to a level of coping and getting on, to the use of fear and anxiety in face of real and potential pain: pain as both physical and psychological. It informs us by its very isomorphism to what is immediately at hand.<sup>284</sup> This immediately at hand is a departure point from philosophy and an access point for social science. In the case of an ethnography of particular structurations of working class reality it would ask for the description and mapping of people in their everyday/night activities in social space and for an account of embodiment and what is being embodied. It is to ask what is at hand, what are the structures that run through being.

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<sup>283</sup> That is, the constraints on communicating.

For Tommy Vercetti, sometimes what is at hand is exactly his hands. The diffuse concern with 'being violated' means that the *'first thing is offence not defence. You can't talk, you don't know how to defuse anything'*. Paradoxically, then, Tommy reveals something of the logic of violent expectation, something of the real life *prisoner's dilemma*. It is a dilemma that brings together the fantasy of 'doing some evil' and the 'justice work' that some men envisage in violent acts. At the same time there is an understanding of the benefits of violence there is an understanding of the risks. Similarly, the 'trap' is that psychic energy is orientated towards managing this presence. For Tommy the expectation of violence is so overwhelming and the libidinous returns so great, that most of what he says can be seen as a grounding of his being in preparation for being violated. Tommy's 'productive' energies are committed to a *defence* and a construction of a sovereign ego. In other words, his violent *offensive* is indicative of a lack of power and that this relationship to power and a sense of a sovereign self is indicative of how he finds himself in his immediate social relations. Of course, the grounding of these immediate social relations in the wider social and political economy that funds a sociological insight into the psyche.

As Goffman (1959, p241) argues, like Scarry's description of language and pain, violence can also be understood in such a fashion; it can be seen *'as a means of communication, not merely of action'*. Doing violence reveals something of the reality of social relations, of particular structurations, of a particular psyche and its reproduction. It is both something in itself and is something formed in and from everyday life.

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<sup>284</sup> In reminiscing about school days and legal corporal punishment, the belt (leather strap) against the hand, I was struck by how many people preferred physical punishment rather than being told off or having to explain why



Indeed, in Scarry's account it is an abuse and a misidentification of power to assign the concept of action or agency to the language of pain. She identifies a concern with two different levels of reality. Perhaps this is because the concept of action is largely presumed to be understood or encountered as a narrow band of conscious rationality. It is also, of course, because the concept of action or agency is seen as being found in social relations (the tortured and the torturer in Scarry's account). When such a split is found, that is between a concept of agency and power (structure?), where the dominant defines the reality of the reality and in this case throws the 'responsibility' of that reality back onto the subordinate, it is here that the body can be found to speak and that history does not listen. I have no doubt that much of the physical interpersonal violence often described as meaningless or mindless can be explained in this way. There are alternative understandings of reason and of the logic of action, of the '*socially informed body*' (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 124).

When this is done violence can be seen as more '*a process as well as a practice, a product and a subject as well as an object*' (Pandya, 2000, p382). And, in the words of a *convicted* murderer cum novelist, it is then that violence can be seen as '*action, it can't be categorised as acceptable or unacceptable, it is one singular motion*' (Collins, 2000, p9). It is in this singular motion that the lines between victim and perpetrator become blurred, honour becomes both real and phantasm and the body both weapon and liability.<sup>285</sup> How can someone come to see the death of another human being with a sense of justice? How can justice come to be associated in its ultimate as death? Can we then understand what it means to say that culture (and its relationship to the social and the economic) distributes pain unequally in populations (Vas, 1989, cited in Wikan, 1999, p57; Lea and Young, 1993) and how culture can thus be

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they were being punished.

seen as a space for the emergence of sociological realities (the making of something from nothing, the invention of tradition, the post modern stress on self reflexive mix and match that has to mix and match something).

### 6.3.8 Killing Time, Dead Moments and Limits

The barber told me that the guy who stabbed his friend was someone looking to get the name of a 'killer'. If someone with that reputation (which sounds like his friend) made it likely that he would attack him in a pub, he would grab a glass and stab him in the throat. *'Its kill or be killed mate, especially with cunts like that'*. This type of pre-rehearsed action is quite compatible with notions of self as non-violent, and indeed in this case the imagined murder of another man is used in conjunction with an idea of the family man. For the barber, a 'hardman' isn't someone who goes around looking for trouble, or someone involved (as he says) in drugs or organised crime. A 'hardman' is someone who looks after his family, who works day in and day out, and who (ironically) doesn't talk about violence.<sup>286</sup> In this realm a hardman is a researcher's fantasy figure. He is someone who has the capacity for violence and who will use violence often *without recourse to rhetoric*. The barber encounters his

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<sup>285</sup> This is not to argue that the distinction between victim and victimiser is illusory in the sense that there is no victim. Rather it is that it becomes difficult to understand a victim as a victim

<sup>286</sup> This is well captured in Des Dillon's book of short stories *The Big Empty*. In 'Note not Included' Dillon explains *'He's hard... not cos he could fight- he was hard cos he got himself out all that shite... he straightened out his life'* (1997, p139). The image of the family man is one that implicitly fits in with a gendered discourse of natural aggression and instinctual behaviours. In the Hobbesian war of 'all against all' the family, community, state and so on are civilising influences and buffers on man's natural aggression, the state of nature. The family man is a pivotal representation of order, cohesion and stability. Moreover, he is the symbolic protector against violence (reference for Iris Young paper would be good here). As Cohen and Vandello (1998) point out, though, even if this was the case (in contrast to research into violence and abuse within families) a well socialised and organised community of people make the participation in shared values and norms more likely. When honour, insult and violence are important aspects of shared social meaning then it is likely that 'the more violence one will see' (Cohen and Vandello, 1981, p581). Norms can produce violence as much as constrain it. This argument is similar to Durkhiem's in that it identifies specific actions (suicide) as being explicable with reference to the intensity of collective activities.



responsibilities as father, husband and as man in a way that he has come to understand as working best.<sup>287</sup>

Indeed, a significant aspect of his negative feelings towards his friend's behaviour is not only the amount of violence his friend perpetrates but that he goes looking for it: he in effect relishes and finds gratification in violence itself. For the barber, there is some contingent level of violent participation that is seen as going too far, as leaving behind a normative relation to violence (that is, against neds, nutters and junkies). In this sense there is a justification and legitimation of what comes to be deemed appropriate levels of violence. Again, as will be seen, in this case, both issues are closely bound: the experience of being a victim of violence (being slashed across the face) and the perceived transgression of violent norms (he is a nutter).<sup>288</sup>

The barber's own feeling towards his friend's behaviour is negative. His friend goes looking for violence while he doesn't, *'if you were to stand up and ask me for a fight I would say go away mate'*. The 'degree of play' that characterises this non-violent stance is inherently contextual and dependant on both explicit and implicit information and motivations. For example, Julie Owen observes that violence *'can be made safe, or at least less threatening,*

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<sup>287</sup> Young generalises the role of family man as protector to nation states and armies on the international stage. She argues, in what she describes as 'the authoritarian security paradigm', *'takes a form analogous to that of the masculine protector toward his wife and the other members of his patriarchal household. In this structure, I have suggested, masculine superiority flows not from acts of repressive domination but from the willingness to risk and sacrifice for the sake of the others (Elshtain 1987, 1992). For her part, the subordinate female in this structure neither resents nor resists the man's dominance, but rather she admires it and is grateful for its promise of protection.* (Young, 2003, p7). Rather differently, if we take the family as an institution that to exist depends on a particular relationship to resources and a particular amount of work being put into that institution, then the barber acting as a 'family man' can be seen to be protecting his 'property'.

<sup>288</sup> In popular Glaswegian culture the word 'nutter' has some positive connotations, exemplified in the television Philosophy of Rab C Nesbitt and his celebration at gaining the reputation of a nutter. Indeed, in one criminal/author's view this is a world in which the 'totally mental' (Ferris and McKay, 2001, p. 47) is, if not a virtue, then a sought after moniker.

*if it is bounded within a particular context*'. I can only think that Owen came to this conclusion by observing situations where the violence that occurred appeared 'safe' or was worked out in places by people who recognised the limits each other was prepared to go (or could go) to at that particular moment in time and space.

But how can this be known to those who participate in it unless there is some unwritten constitution of norms- an unchanging social prescription of what it is to be social? For example, in another context, the word 'nutter' and 'psycho' in the discourse of bouncers (a paid job) seems to indicate that there is collective recognition of limits to the amount of violence that can be used by fellow bouncers in particular public situations- even if in the back stage these limits are privatised (Monaghan, 2002, p347). Indeed, from here, it seems as if it is the shared norms of the 'collective body' and its relation to higher authorities that determine the place, range and intensity of violence.

This is a structured notion of violence that depends on a certain intimacy with acting social agents, if not a controlled concept of violence and its effects upon the body (much like an officiated boxing match or a notion of reason and agency as unbound by the influence of class, race and gender). Similarly, though, how is one to know if violence can be bounded within a 'particular context' or workplace? Isn't there slippage and relations between working life and non working life? Is violence a reified thing in itself? (For example, the historical Marquis of Queensberry rules and Mike Tyson's flexibility of 'interpretation' vis a vis Evander Holyfield's ear).

This permeability of violence is why the work experience and the intentional horizon it generates is often explanatory of non-work behaviours *'as it establishes the nature of any*



*subsequent species of immediacy because ordinarily there is nothing more immediate than working, sweating and labouring*' (Gilfillan, 1999, p133). For example, while Paul Willis' men leave work in the workplace there is an argument to be made that work is embodied and integral. Leaving your work in the work place is like going home without your body, your being. It depends on a presupposed modernist duality (a separation of work from culture) for the idea to work. Can violence be encountered in the same fashion?

For example, Luke and Bob are two brothers who would 'square up' to each other regularly (well into their late twenties). They did fight within a particular context, one that had the limits and rules of a bar room brawl, fist fights that saw them punch each other about the arms and body (significantly not the head), an interaction that was a test of their respective strength and power- rewarding in that it provided a safe test of potential (*'in a way its quite comfortin... a could come up against another Bob wur ma whole mind could go that way'*). On one particular occasion, though, this 'friendly fire' led to a ceiling sprayed with the blood from a head wound and a broken knuckle for the respective parties. Lucky stressed he felt he was fighting for his life because Bob *was* trying to strangle him.

The level of violence during the incident was totally out of character. In determining the motivations and context for the fight I was to discover that there had been growing bitterness throughout the evening from the older brother being made to feel like 'shit' because his father compared him unfavourably to the achievements of his younger brother, *'Ye've gote a fuckin wean, ye've gote Maggie. Look at him, he's just finished University, he's gote a degree, he can go an dae this, your life is finished'*. The moment of violent release was Bob slandering his (and Luke's) mother on return from the pub. Both

of them had been drinking all all evening and were 'blitzed'. There is a resonance found here in how Levinas' describes intoxication as intensifying the '*subject's interiority*', that is, not excusing it or releasing it from cultural constraints but intensifying what is there, what is already at hand. Bob, egged on by his father's taunts, became preoccupied with what he saw himself *as* in relation to his brother. The focus on his own identity as an objective and negative identity was a reduction that Bob would attempt to obliterate (but paradoxically validate) by fighting with his father (the source of the objective statements) and then with his brother (the representation of the objective hierarchy identified by his father- that is, the world out there). Levinas' '*murder of the brother*', the loss of fraternity, is both a symbolic and concrete description of what happened in this particular ethnographic moment. As Lucky recalls, '*Aw Bob seen wis a wis the fuckin deadie as far as he wis concerned*'. Thus, perhaps this dead moment and its relationship with objective understanding of self is a window into a sociological account of being and consciousness and the use of 'mindless' violence.

### **6.3.9 Denying Violence through Violence**

Denying that you are at all violent is a common thread in men's stories about their own relationship to violence. There is no contradiction here. There is no working out of a Logos, a contradiction between 'what is' and 'what is not'. Like the habitus, violence is a fixing in place (however temporary). To *be* a violent man is an objectification, a symbolic legitimation of an essential aspect of their individual identity to an extent that makes all other roles and moments of their lives secondary. But this is the whole point about violence, it gathers much of itself from other structures of life. To point this out to the barber *as* a contradiction would be to invite ridicule, perhaps accompanied by a: 'where *exactly are you comin fae mate?*' or



*'whit would you dae then'* (Grant, Interview in his home, 2001)? It is as much an pseudo-ethical statement as it is a reference to positionality. It is a reference to the practically reflective character of *an* everyday life in concert with the culture it draws its cues from and projects itself into. In this case it is an expression of *what* has to be dealt with. This is and is not a determination, if that is the language we have to use. It is a feel for the game and what is to be done in a given situation (Bourdieu, 1998, p25).

The barber followed up his own 'denial'<sup>289</sup> with a number of stories that detailed actual occurrences of his violence, as well as accounts detailing what he would do if certain situations arose: scenting a cup of water with petrol and throwing it over a *'junkie bastard'* and asking him if he *'wants a light'*; smashing the windows of junkies who live in the same street with bricks in order to either frighten them off or as an excuse for the council to throw them out; carrying around a legal but deadly martial arts weapon and a practical example of how to use it if the situation should arise; showing me the stick he kept beside the till that he would use to *'do in any junkies who came at me. They can have the money but if they come at me I will cave in their heads'*.

Violence is recognised as an everyday ecological threat that must be met with violence. To turn the other cheek is to expose a self to more violence and to recognise what can be seen as the collusion between charity and violence.<sup>290</sup> Indeed, it is a point of view that is often extrapolated from and to the institutional level. The death penalty for murderers, rapists and paedophiles the preferred option, if not that then deportation, *'prison disnae work, but we need*

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<sup>289</sup> The 'denial' justifies and distinguishes forms of violence.

*tae put them away somewhere*. As for 'junkies', *'naebdae will miss them anyway'*. The barber's unrelentless focus on 'junkies' stemmed in part from living in close vicinity to people he identified as such.<sup>291</sup> His attitude towards 'junkies' is pro-active; *'take no shite'* and seek them out before they do you. For the barber, social relations with 'junkies' (and 'neds') are purely a matter of face. They are identified as untrustworthy and undeserving of recognition never mind respect.

This is the structure of feeling, the habitus: the substance, the something that becomes. The barber differentiates himself from *'those bastards'*. Those bastards are those without value: the neds, the junkies, the beggars. These are not internal 'others', they are people who the barber identifies in the intention of everyday action: this is not some ethical imperative gone wrong, it is how he has come to distinguish certain people as dangerous and as 'enemies' through particular concrete circumstances. Not being rebellious, not 'resisting' but being. Anger, disgust, laughter and emotion as socially constitutive. The finely differentiated and heirarchised social space that he inhabits is an organiser of his thoughts, the black and white regiment of feeling that is always waiting and needing the colour of expression, the expression that itself is waiting to be judged as 'extreme', 'over the top' as 'angry' and as 'emotional' and as fundamentalist. The barber feels threatened and yet takes enjoyment in being pro-active, in using those he understands as lesser.

There is often no space, expense or distance for understanding difference or commonalities. Indeed, if anything there is no need or such a luxury. At the same time, though, it is exactly

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<sup>290</sup> That is, that the 'possibility of infinite pardon tempts us to infinite evil' (Reference is to Levinas, from Simone Weil Against the Bible)



because there is no space or distance that the barber can have these utterly single minded views on what he understands as a threat to both him and his children. Life in this mode of narrative is one where threatening events are harmonised and overlaid with an emotional tonality that intensifies the praxis of everyday life. Bearing witness and experiencing threats (however perceived), bodily harm, the marking of people in time and the immediacy of premature death are not just positivist moments for collection: they are cumulative experience. For the barber, theory and practice are entwined in his experience of a particular environment. He says he is not a violent man but at the same time he is unequivocal in his embodiment, capacity and will to respond to a perceived threat *with* violence. He touches his environment and his environment touches him.

My initial talk with the barber lasted no more than half an hour.<sup>292</sup> Yet, when I wrote up our pretty much one-sided conversation immediately afterwards I recognised that the finished text was an intense account of violence and embodied masculinities in a particular socio-economic and cultural environment. The barber told his story as he saw it and lived it: this is his authorisation. In the account I saw a very public and embodied form of masculinity (and relations between 'subordinate' masculinities; the 'junkies' and 'neds' of the barber's account are all male), notions of male honour and shame, the impact of addictive drugs, as well as attitudes to authority and punishment. In the same breath I also 'saw' a convergence between redundant masculinity and redundant notions of class. It is a contemporary example of a succinct and sensitising account of *'the extent and strictness of the social rituals which bind the behaviour of people in their dealings with each other- even down to surrendering one's*

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<sup>291</sup> The visibility of junkies is the visible appearance, empirical emergence of drug use in an area over a long period of time, about ten years as far as Carnwath and Smith (2002) are concerned. What was actually happening is only known through the testimony and participation of locals.

<sup>292</sup> I was to meet him again a number of times over the course of the research.

*own life*' (Elias, 1996, p70). The barber had to remain in control and this is especially the case with people he understands as beneath him.

To listen to what the barber had to say was like listening to a body that had learned in its details how to live with what to outsiders might be interpreted as ruthless or simply single minded.<sup>293</sup> The barber's account, though, is not unusual. His comments are not for interpretation in themselves. Their meaning is played out in his practical relations with other people: it is not a philosophy, it is a reality. His account resonates with a particular response to the threats/danger/disorder of his immediate environment. For the barber a victim 'is'.

In this chapter violence has been both isolated as a thing in itself and as something that can be seen to emerge as part of situated everyday activities. As has been seen, in using my encounter with a barber as a way to write not only the barber's words but the words and actions of my informants I have shown how it is possible to understand violence as an intention or as a behaviour that can emerge and can come to account for itself: that is, that simply put, violence breeds violence.

Paradoxically, what I have also tried to show in this chapter is how responses to violence and violent responses *are not* things in themselves but can be thought of as total facts of life. In other words, physical interpersonal violence emerges as a relationship to an individual self and to an individual's relationship to their class and to the opportunities afforded to that positioning and movement within class and gender relations. Part of this relationship to self is a relationship to the immediate environment and how this link between environment and self

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<sup>293</sup>For an account of isomorphism the recent literature on door stewarding is exemplar.



can be destructive and constraining. It is too recognise the work involved in not only moving from a place to find a new environment but to recognise that environment gets inside us. Thus, as will be seen in the next chapter, to feel trapped in an area is to also feel trapped in a self. It is in this sense that habitus and the body are important in explicating a relationship to violence and 'knowing' violence in that the body does not forget its past and its history is always working itself out in relation to other histories and to other imagined futures. A structure of feeling is one way of explicating a core shared relation to a lived environment.

As will be seen, there are particular threads of Glaswegian culture that cannot be disentangled from the social fabric of the city without disfiguring the material conditions and embodied meanings of those threads. Violence as a method of communication, conflict resolution and maintaining order (of self, peers and the culture that it pays its respect to) are intimate aspects of growing up and living in the city for many men and boys. It is an embedded element in family life, in schooling, in leisure, in work and in everyday life (Meidzian, 1991).

## 7 An Ethnographic Day

*'Well a think Easterhouse is whit ye make of it, if yer a bad person then ye won't like the place, if yer a snide person then ye won't like the place. If yer an aw right person, a person that kin get oan wi everybody then ye'll like the place, know where am comin fae... see roon here av met a lot of people, 'a canny wait tae get oot a here', av never... Its aw different but its aw the same people, its aw the same attitudes in the people. In fact a think its worse noo. At least years ago the young team hud respect fur adults... A went lit that tae the wee man, ma mate's boy, 'hey baldy!. He had just got the haircut he had wanted. He shouted back 'fuck you ya prick'. Can you imagine dain that when you wur a wean? If ye did ye wid be right up the stairs tae get yer cunt kicked in wi yer ma an da. Then ye wur made tae go uptae the door an apologise...' (Craig)*

*'A don't know, ma attitude changed a lot man. When a wis younger a wisnae very fearful of Easterhouse at aw. A just thote it wis ma oyster a suppose at the time... Noo, am fearful walkin through Easterhouse... For the most part I did want tae escape from it, a did, I hung aboot up the West End and tried tae disassociate maself fae Easterhouse. A hated Easterhouse, a still fuckin hate Easterhouse. A don't think ye can like it' (George).*

### 7.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to expand on the relationship between habitus, place and violence by attending to the everyday experience of a human existence. To do this, I will present a reflexive account of an ethnographic day in Easterhouse. The primary focus is again on the emergence, constitution and transformations of particular structures of feeling and the connections with actual physical violence. This ethnographic chapter is one day out of many I spent in the field and as such contains references and data that go beyond the day but are used to illuminate strong and recurring themes in everyday life. My ethnographic account begins



and ends with the experience of a bus journey and the notion of travelling to, in, away and back to the scheme.

Before getting on the bus, though, I will set the mood for understanding the complexities of people, place, violence and change by introducing the quotes used to open the chapter. This will provide an awareness of how I situate a 'structure of feeling' as shared individual understandings and of moments of imagined possibility and how these imaginations are recognized and so worked with in relation to personal experience. It is important to again *refocus* on this area because again it is important to note that a 'structure of feeling' is not a visible given or a substance that can be picked up, taken away, manipulated and analysed as a thing in itself. Rather it is an embodied and shared sense of common experiences and of what it means to 'speak' or 'be' from a particular position.

'Visibility' is here an understanding of the presence or absence of a quality and intention and is much a reference to the different generational experiences as it is to the mediators of perception that are class, gender and race. This will become clearer in my later discussion of Craig's questioning of the force of events in his formative years (*Can you imagine dain that when you wur a wean? If ye did ye wid be right up the stairs tae get yer cunt klicked in wi yer ma an da. Then ye wur made tae go uptae the door an apologise*) and his 'stereotypical' relationship with his father; in particular his understanding that his experience of violence through his father was in some sense a preparation for an imagined possibility (*wls he try'n tae talk me intae something?*) and one that from where he was standing was *without* feeling.

As can be seen, George and Craig have very different attitudes towards the place they live in. They do not know each other and yet as will be seen, they both have a shared understanding of

what it means to know a place and what it means to both *'associate'* and *'dissasociate'* a self from a place or what is involved in getting away from a self as a place and indeed what this motivation might mean in the first place. By shared understanding I do not imply agreement. Rather I recognize the necessity of theorizing how there will always be disagreements when people who have shared similar experiences disagree on 'principles of production'. That is, the process involves a relationship to resources of knowledge, money, work and time and is a recognition of an embodied and situated relationship to knowledge, money, work and time. From a particular perspective, this could be objectified as an indication of who they are as individuals. George, though, is not uncommon in that being over thirty years of age he still stays with his parents in their two bed roomed flat. Similarly, Craig could enter statistics and be known as a single parent.

This reference to different experiences, to representations and to different structural properties and people's engagement with them was a distinct feature in the conversations and observations I had and made in and of the field of Easterhouse itself. These social properties are marked when people talked about their experience of 'travelling' through and into different social spaces. When I asked people to reflect on 'growing up' and what the place is like the themes are most often identification of difference and movement, what Richard called in relation to his long term relationship with a teacher (symbolic status) as a *'step up tae get maself in a different frame of mind fur lookin at things... Its lit too much brains an no enough common sense, were we wur mare like too much common sense and nae brains'*. It is in a similar identification of absence or the need for change that George refers to his belief that teaching should be a vocation in that it goes beyond the classroom and becomes a whole experience.



*'An see that teacher Lenny, he wis probably wan of the most positive influences in ma life. He let me see that there wis a world outside. Ye didnae huv tae be part of a mob, ye could be an individual an still feel good about yerself. An am quite thankful that he did, lit he took us up the West End, meeting a different culture, meeting gay folk fur the first time. It opened yer mind up. A never hud any prejudices built intae me, ma ma and da never gave me any prejudices. A never grew up thinking this wis bad or that wis bad. A thote this wis great (bein up the West End), ma mind is bein opened up wi aw this stuff. An a wis glad tae get away from aw that shit [violence] an aw that'*

Indeed, getting away from 'aw that shit' and the explicit focus on particular acts and memories of violence seemed to offer a way into my own anxiety: it was as if 'violence' (however it was judged and defined) was an *'important line of communication, one of the many complicitous and invisible bonds that linked people and communities'* (Seltzer, 1998). Here, even an absence of violence, is like a waiting, like the latent period between violence.

In the field itself this relation to space and time is often *'right in yer face'* and it is indeed difficult to verbalise just what is going on primarily because what has been going on has been going on for so long and still going on and expected to be going on. The character of time and the relationship to time itself seems to be a fundamental aspect of particular situated existence. Again, it thus asks questions of history itself, of a 'self's' relationship to history, meaning and indeed to itself as a situated self. For Richard his relation to place was both at times *'in yer face'* and importantly softened by time spent staying at his teacher partner's (*she's a bit middle class*) flat and the time spent at work (*am hardly ever here*, that is, in his own flat).<sup>294</sup> It

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<sup>294</sup> Richard spends six days a week at work from 12 noon to 12 midnight.

is worth quoting him in full to get across his recognition of different social relations in different social spaces, the awareness of social forms and structures (what he sees as having socio-economic value and what he sees as having *real* value) the influence of housing conditions and his own genuflexion to the triggers of habitus.

*'The thing av found, av been wi her (partner) for aboot 3 year, a wis a bit like yerself, fisty cuffs wi ma da an all that. A went tae stay wi ma sister at one point. It wis just like wan thing efter another. A fun oot it wis just the way a wis dealing with things, it just wisnae really the way tae dae things but ye don't really know anything different. Its like the way ye deal wi it tae ease yer conscious, tae gie ye peace a mind. Its like that's no ma way of dealing with things, this is ma way of dealing wi things. I found that at work, especially work, lit you've gote a factory atmosphere, lit it might be a big factory but it will have a close knit atmosphere. Ye find guys fae hard areas as well. Then ye find a business side aspect of things, lit that last job I was dealing wi'; a wis dealin wi middle class managers an aw that business type. So ye find yer havin tae adopt different ways of dealing with things and havin tae deal wi things different cos yer dealing with the public. Its like yer short temperedness, no, not short temperedness, more like ye huv tae change yer abrupt attitude wi dealin wi things cos that woudnae wash anymare... Ye hud tae go and swally yer pride or whatever, lit being apologetic when really ye wurnae wantin tae be apologetic. If ye did ye gote repercussions that ye wurnae dain yer jobe...*

*Av always went fur the aulder wummin anyway, but this time it wis like a step up. A think a wis searchin fur that anyway, tae get maself in a different frame of mind fur lookin at things, fur getting a hoose an aw that. Certain aspects in ma life won't change, a won't get merried. I want that independent aspect if I was going to get merried it would be oan ma terms, which*



*isnae the way tae look at things. But it's the case that am no gonny loss what I have built up tae hiv and see it faw away or lose it in a relationship. It wont happen that way. Its lit everything is mapped oot from when yer younger anyway'.*

Richard's reflections on how he saw himself change are indicative of him reflecting on this embodied relation to knowledge, to the world of expressive force that lies beneath words. He can look back to a previous state and now give that state a *total mental presence*, a peace of mind and an eased consciousness: he can look at a self reflecting on a self, being qua being. This is not, however, a 'split self' or a subconscious self opening to consciousness, it is Richard and my evidence of his consciousness; there is only a split if consciousness is recognized as a statement of self-consciousness. His 'dealings' had been characterized by abruptness and an attitude. He had to swallow his pride to get on. He could not be himself and be economical. He could not be with the public. His 'attitude' would not wash clean in a different environment.<sup>295</sup> From a perspective of looking back at what he has now 'built up' Richard could be thoughtfully reasonable.<sup>296</sup> He has a keen sense of his own habitus and the

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<sup>295</sup> As an aside, 'coming out in the wash' is actual terminology that is used when evaluating job applicants in relation to the batteries of psychometric tests and other human resource management filters that a job applicant has to face when looking for employment. This 'washing' process begins at the lower end of the employment market and if encountered as a substantive engagement with employees could be understood as an efficient and rational way of matching up job position with applicant suitability. When the scope is widened, however, and the job market is understood relationally and as stressed on all sides, then the wash can become a subject of sociological analysis in its own right. For example, 'many of the changes that have taken place to the economic order have increased working class people's exposure to situations in which they find themselves evaluated, judged and graded against formalized criteria. For example, as employers no longer needed young working class people in such numbers after 1979, the route into employment changed radically. Until sometime in the 1970s a majority of school leavers went into employment in *relatively* well paid jobs with no qualifications (Byrne, 1995). That has now virtually ceased and entrance to work is now mediated by a host of post-sixteen training and educational programmes so that even many manual workers go through some 'post-compulsory' education.' This 'post-compulsory' education period is of course how people adapt themselves for the job market and become responsible to themselves in that market..

<sup>296</sup> Richard's 'built up' is a reference to him having built a space of his own, in owning a car, having a job, a bank account, a phone and a flat. Indeed, the importance of housing conditions and access to affordable housing is a perennial issue in my research. Richard waited five years for a council flat and in the process stayed with his parents and then his sister. In each of these situations he describes how the lack of space and privacy affected his relations with those he lived with. This notion of time as a structuring aspect of working class reality and of



*'... post-traditional order that is by definition hostile to modes of authority based upon the eternal recurrence of male hegemony'* (Hobbs, 1994, p120) an order that places high value on *'... precisely the opposite sorts of dispositions'* (Hall, 1997, p468, original italics).

If the exploration of action was to be left here, however, much of what is the act of action in relation to local conditions and shared understandings would be missed as would its relationship to the changing shape, order and relations to the class structure. Indeed, as Richard went on he told me of a number of recent and not so recent occasions in which his reasonableness was of a different kind. In this case it was close to home.

*'The other week there a wis lit, this isnae oot of me. Mibbe livin here isnae a great thing fur me wi aw these bams fuckin fightin an aw that aw the time. Its like ye hear a bang in the middle of the night an ye don't know if its yer motor or the gate slammin. Its like a brote Mary's ma's motor hame wi me aboot six months ago. A heard this noise through the night. Ye know whit, it wis the gate opening. A wis up that quick he wis just at the motor when a gote oot... Davie next door heard me... A wis lit 'ya fuckin dick, a'll fuckin chop your fuckin heid aff ya bastard, you know who am ur!' The next day Davie wis sayin he wisnae fae aroon here*

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'spending time' waiting for a house is thus again another indication of an individual's relationship to the class structure. Marriage itself seems to be increasingly an engagement with emerging social structures and an issue related to social, cultural and economic resources. In effect marriage is from one perspective an 'ideological' representation. How it affected a local's range of options, or what could be afforded thus making an escape from specific conditions less likely and so indicative of a particular relationship to reality in itself. Marriage meant that those personal 'moments of danger' could not be encountered alone or faced in their truth. Richard recognises the 'risk' that marriage poses for him as a bodily entrepreneur. It is something that at *this moment in time* has 'costs' and 'benefits'. In a moment of utter frankness and clarity one thirty six year old man explained to me that if he had his 'time again' he would not have married and had his three children with his wife but would have a *'hoose filled wi aw the latest gadgets'*. On a different level, though, what Richard has built up has been financed from the marketing of his self as a violent self. He ties this sense of building up to what *he has had to do to get here*. His 'built up' is a way of understanding how his material reality and his cultural reality are closely related to his class, how the habitus is *creative* and how culture as violence is built upon. His physical body and capacity for violence have been built amidst local cultural conditions. He used this local knowledge to develop a ten year career in door stewarding.



*but how did ye get up that quick! He thote a wis already up but a wis sleepin. A just heard the noise. It wis lit this isnae ma motor here, a need tae keep an eye oan this.*

Richard had brought something home that wasn't his to his own ground floor flat. The one bedroomed flat has a drive way immediately in front of his one bedroom flat's slide door windows. His bedroom is adjacent to the living room that looks out onto his drive way (about twenty feet all in). The car belonged to his partner's mother and he was conscious of a responsibility that held him responsible: one that he sees as a desire within himself to be 'bettered'. What he has 'built up' is not only a position of relative affluence in relation to those 'bams' he lives beside: he has built up a reputation for *doing violence*. That is, Richard has encountered the 'structure of feeling' as a contingency and that the expectation of violence is engaged with on its own terms and so the debilitating effects of this expectation are minimized in that they are faced through violence. In this case can they be differentiated? As Richard makes clear

*'That's it, its easy fast money. Big money a naw fur dain daft things. Yer getting 100-200 pound an yer lit that. That's a back hander that someone has just gave ye. He wis lit how u gote this money aw the time, a wis lit you don't want tae know Bob! A just had tae bash some guys head in wi a Schweppes crate. Bob wis lit, 'when wis that?' When a turned up at your hoose later oan that night. Chillin out, whits up wi u Richard, yer lookin a bit speckled. That's just whit it wis aw about. Its whether yer conscience sways with it. A think its aw doon tae yer upbringing. If a wis brote up somewhere else then that wid be it. A thote ma ma down a good jobe, ma da wis always workin an bevyving. Aw a seen wis his wrath. If a wisnae in when he came In he wid shout me up and then a wid spend most of ma time in ma room hopin there*

*wisnae gonny be any shoutin in the livin room that night an we wid huv tae pile oan the cunt.*

*See that's just it, its yer upbringing an ye don't realize that.'*

Richard evidences here an acute understanding of his self or perhaps more accurately understands how he has come to understand his actions in relation to his conscience as a relation to his early socialisation. The 'ability' to sway with physical violence is encountered as a matter of ethos rather than ethics, as a matter of how it *affects* a person. For Richard this ability can be contextualised in that to be 'brought up somewhere else' would be 'it': that is, one of *the* most general factors is how people occupy place and space and how they occupy this in relation to others. Moreover, Richard recognises the benefits, perils and *responsibility* of having a reputation: that is, that violent men often feel responsible to both themselves (the hard work that goes into gaining a reputation) and to others for their violence. What was going on in the moment, the one thing after the other, is where we find culture and the notion of regressing, going back the way to nothing but the short, abrupt, one thing after another, the body as having a feel for the game, the extremes and the internalization of social relations of social presence, a *kind* of reduction. This is a body and a language that is both reflexive and effective. Unlike natural science, here the moment is opened up to reveal its physics and movement in space and in time.

In telling me this story Richard jumped up from a seated position and performed the actions he was speaking about. The veins on his neck bulged and his face went red as he recalled how he shouted out to the-would-be car thief his own intentions of chopping off his head.<sup>297</sup> He was reliving and remembering the moment bodily. I was enjoying listening to him and I am sure

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<sup>297</sup> The head and face as a target.



that he knew it. Perhaps this is an allusion to the body as a substance that holds onto experience like an oil that is infused with the experience of a petal, the body remembers an essence. In this case, what is absorbed and held as an essence, as a structure of feeling, is repeated moments of confrontation, actual violence and expected violence. Time becomes an aspect of essence itself. The oil remembers both what was infused and the manner in which the infusion took place. The body remembers not only what is embodied but how things are embodied. In some situations this 'remembering' is completely and explicitly lost to consciousness.<sup>298</sup>

For George his journey away from place was one that brought him back to the very place he consciously tried to if not get out of him then adapt a self to the market of opportunities: in his attempts to associate himself away from Easterhouse he was to come up against himself (in the contemporary expression of working class philosophy, that is, official crime statistics) in that *'a went an hung oot the toon fur aboot a year or mare, fuckin drinkin an takin drugs an dain all sorts. A gote arrested an then a decided that just wisnae fur me. Aw ma mates wur still there, didnae think a hud changed. Deep doon a hudnae changed, deep doon a knew a*

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<sup>298</sup> This is to say that the body does not forget. How, why and in what way the body remembers is the issue. In this case, violence and this remembering has been conceptualised as a structure of feeling. Within this 'concept' of structure and feeling violence is encountered as an expectation. This expectation is theorised as being not reducible to consciousness or to representations of consciousness. Violence has a way of obliterating other concerns. It has a structure of thought to itself, its own particular locus, one that doesn't go away with the event itself. When people talk about violent experiences they often talk about moments of 'blacking out', the euphoric adrenalising effect, of the narrowing of vision, the clenching of the gut, the slowing of time, the biological and biochemical intensity of the experience, the moment extended and deposited as blood knowledge. Paradoxically, it is also in the physiology of violence that other concerns are made visible. While the physiological experience of violence attends to elements of basic survival (fight or flight responses), violence and its forms of expression also find its social meaning in the world that constitutes it. Thus, the embodied worlds that people inhabit are implicated in how violence is understood and so embodied in them. Indeed, perhaps how violence is 'understood' and 'achieved' is integral to the perspective a person takes on it, how it is enacted and seen, if it is *seen* at all. Perhaps this is the practical rationality that is found in situations of mimetic rivalry, the interpersonal account that is extended by Girard to the structure of feeling that is the embodied sensitivity to the sacrifice. That is, that *'somedae's gonnae get it.'* Jim recognises this pregnancy as does Richard. It is also to 'refuse' to stop at the level of discourse or psychology in accounting for local action and intentionality: perhaps a comment on representations of 'what could they be thinking' of mindless violence and a foregrounding of the *'good reason'*



*wisnae that kinda person. So that wis a good thing. Am glad am still friends wi thame cos they know who you ur'.*

For George the coming back is akin to the return of the prodigal son in that while history goes on his perception is that knowing and understanding found through the shared experience of sharing experience is where 'real' knowing is found. This focus on *what* is deep down and of a sense of being an authentic person is again this coming back to a self in the process of becoming a self yet all the while history goes on. It is again a coming back to a sense of what is already and 'really' known and felt and making sense of this as a part of recognising a self. It is like recognition of community as loving, persecutory and so sacrificial. George expresses a desire to leave the place and at the same time evidences a comfort in being known through a living in the place. This being at home in a particular space of appearances is one fragment of George's experience. He wants to leave this space of appearances but feels the need of an advocate.

Brian describes a similar experience in different terms when he recounts the time (about four years ago, 2000) he was flagged down by a worried looking man in a suit (and carrying a briefcase) while stopped in his car at traffic lights. It turned out the man was visiting the area on a business trip and had got lost. For Brian, his 'spatial (in)competence' was empirically verifiable. In broad daylight, and in the vicinity of the busy township centre (shopping centre),<sup>299</sup> he expressed his gratitude to Brian for giving him a lift (500 metres or so) to the

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of 'poor young men with dismal prospects' who 'escalate their tactics of social competition and become violent' (Daly and Wilson, 1988, p287).

<sup>299</sup> The township centre was built in 1972, nearly twenty years after the scheme was built. It is a shopping centre with a few high percentage credit shops, a supermarket, a café, a chip shop, a bank and a bookies facing each other, a library, a housing office, a job centre, a citizen's advice bureau, a lawyers office and the broo, The



local college. He had been in fear of his personal safety citing the reputation the area holds for some (or held). Brian's reply to this man's own sense of powerlessness was 'yer joking'? Brian did not share the man's unease or awareness that he could have been a practicing, perhaps even professional Psycho-Geographer. It could have been that he had encountered, to borrow Debord's Phraseology, a '*zone of distinct psychic atmosphere*', a drift that was particularly heavy and mental in its emotional response.

On the other hand, it seems quite feasible to take this man as Brian found him, as adrift and as *out of place*, the very objects that represent him as afloat as those he feels add to the weight of his presence in an already imagined and dominated public space. Albeit that a suit and a suitcase do not alone determine whether someone sticks out like a sore thumb. Or perhaps being in the public space that he is more accustomed to talking about and planning about he is aware of the limitations of his linguistic and embodied vocabulary? When Brian told me his story I again realized the possible importance that emotions may have as sociological data in their own right. Was the man in the suit *really* scared, was he *actually* scared? Brian seemed to sense that he was out of sorts. Perhaps on a fundamental level, a level before discourse, emotions reveal something about people and how we differentiate, define and distinguish each other (the ambiguity is deliberate). That is, identifying the social and relational aspects of emotional resources, of language use itself and how they reflect social being and constitute a socially differentiating force in themselves. This ability to even communicate on a level that is commensurate with real understanding was something revealed in an insightful description of an interaction by Luke Wyfally; his conversation refers to what one academic referred to as

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shopping centre is straddled on all sides by a fire station, a health centre, a primary school, a church, the local police station, two pubs and the swimming pool.

not knowing how to *really* speak to 'schemies'.<sup>300</sup> It is another trigger of the habitus, in this case, linguistic habitus,<sup>301</sup>

*'... when I was goin doon tae Manchester wi Raymond an aw that, an that wis aw Celtic supporters. We wur outside the service station playin a wee game a fitba wi rolled up burger king papers rolled up intae a baw. The next thing ye know this guy comes up, av seen 'im wance mare at the Celtic games, he's gote aw the mars bars (scars) an aw that ower his face. A wee guy, a wis maybe aboot 23, 24 at the time an he wis aboot 28-29 an 'e came ower an wis lit 'heh lads anybody gote a pound note fur a coin'. So right away a seen this guy goin ower tae Brian an Brian lit that 'Naw, naw', an the guy's lit that 'ye must huv, ye must huv'. An a could see right away in the guy's haun it wis like a tope fae a can, lit the silver bit fae a can. So a wis lit that, 'Fuckin hell'. So the next thing ye know a wis the wan goin ower cos a knew they aw kinna shat themselves an jumped back.*

*A went 'look mate he's no gote it, fuckin hell, wur tryin tae huv a game here'. An the guy wis lit that 'aye whit ur ye's dain then'. An a wis lit 'c'mon tae fuck, wur huvin a game here, wur tryin tae play fitba mate, fucking hell'. The next thing ye know the guy wis lit that 'were ye fae mate?', a wis lit that 'am fae Easterhoose pal'. He wis lit that, 'awright, am huvin a laugh mate, ye's goin doon tae the game, am only huvin a laugh, a buzz'. A wis lit that 'nae problem mate' an he wis away.*

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<sup>300</sup> Schemies is a description used when referring to someone who lives in a council house scheme.

<sup>301</sup> What Thompson in introducing Bourdieu's work calls '*That subset of dispositions acquired in the course of learning to speak in particular contexts (the family, the peer group, the school, etc)*' (Thompson, 1991, p17).



*A no fur a fact if a wisnae there the first thing that guy would 'uv done wis he would huv tried tae con them, he seen every way, wance he walked ower tae Brian, which a noticed, the wan thing that happened when he walked ower tae Brian, was Niall, everywan, even Brian's brother, they aw dispersed. Brian wis left staunin hiself an they aw dispersed!*

*An a wis staunin lit that even seein it in ma eyes gawn, aw thame heard the guy's accent goin ower tae Brian an as far as they wur concerned wis deal wi it yerself Brian an see how ye get oot a this. An it wisnae through, fuckin hell man let him deal wi it, it wis through, fuckin hell man a don't even know how tae approach this guy. An a walk in wi an accent that wisnae the same as Brian's 'naw av no gote any change sorry'. But the guy hud caught fae me, even sayin 'where are you fae', y'know whit a mean... The guy wis totally different wi me. Whit a could take fae that wis that they wur totally and completely utterly different in their mannerisms an their actions wur somebody could come fae an area an say that tae them. Wur a could come an change ma accent fae a posh wan tae a East end wan an the guy clicks straight away.*

The 'where are ye fae' is something this man did not need to ask the group of men who Luke saw as leaving his friend Brian to face alone. It was a something that 'even his brother' left him to face in their shared individuality. What Luke recognises is that this is the stuff horror films are made of and the reason why imagined monsters can tap into the social consciousness. Luke recognised the homogenised perception that was the homogenised bodily mass of face and ugly that was the place that a pound coin could become the silver 'bit fae a can'. Like Marx (Groucho), Luke was to ask himself 'Are you going to believe me or your own eyes'? The contrast between his own experiential library and his non-scheme friendly acquaintances was one of those occasions that brings a person 'to their senses'. In this sense, this journey back to the senses is never one way and like the routes to and from a place created by

emigration, always mobile. The man was different for Luke in his posture and his recognition that 'y'know whit a mean' was now a signifier. This unspoken meaning is what Craig Davro refers to in saying '*know where am comin fae?*'

Craig's '*know where am comin fae*' is like the '*know whit a mean*': it is a recurring theme in my informants speech and is semantic evidence of the constituting relations of class and the expertise of habitus in relation to a *real* class structure.<sup>302</sup> It is my argument that the clarification sought by '*know whit a mean*' is this shared understanding and realm of possibles that structure a structure of feeling in and through time. This '*know whit a mean*' is the coming back to oneself in that it evidences a realistic self awareness of a self and what is shared or recognized in others at a particular moment in time and space. This is why some authors can write with confidence that contemporary working class existence is a metaphysical condition (or from a different perspective, a post-structuralist humorous condition- that is, the new serious is not serious) in that '*its bearers are defined as lacking what others have and what society values: are left to themselves in fending off the symbolic violence that says they are nothing because society has not developed the categories to render what they are. They experience themselves therefore 'in themselves' and are fated to keep coming up against this defining lack of definition in themselves*' (Gilfillan, 1999, p104).

Perhaps this is why a conceptual device like a 'structural of feeling' has particular applicability to people who have the sensitivity of verbalizing a shared experience of being '*looked at the wrang way... for some reason*' (Craig) and finding a close association between humour, justice, violence and authority in that throws light upon the logic and reason of the

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<sup>302</sup> This attention to the real is not to be confused with what is possible.



gaze and a state of a forced existentialism and the working with this relation. As Richard Longley notes

*'oan ma day aff ma mates come over... Harry comes over an he wis brote up in a place surrounded wi fields, wi aboot two dozen hooses! Its aboot fifteen miles tae the nearest place! They think this is a war zone... Wan day they came up there wis three incidents goin oan at the same time. Am lit makin jokes aboot it, sit back, it's panoramic wide screen viewing (view from his window). Everybody goes by, how ye doin, this an that. Ye can see them who don't know this havin a differnt look at ye'.*

In a sense then, 'know what I mean' evidences an embodied relationship to understanding and that the experience and use of violence can be explained with reference to the constitution of habitus amidst the experience of class relations and class work at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Here face to face interaction and forms of recognition ('how ye doin') between neighbours and other locals is a marked feature of everyday life: for Richard there are some who 'don't know this'. Indeed, as will be seen, perhaps it is here on the level of face to face interactions and the management of reputations that expressions and levels of interpersonal violence can be linked to the wider political and economic context. In other words, is violence a practical and reasonable response: an indication to the extent 'local politics' evidence the nature of a relationship to the state and state institutions. It is in this sense that a local's understanding of what *matters* will always contain real historical sense and practical relevance and it is to this expertise I now turn.

## 7.2 *On the Bus*

On the bus up to see a couple of friends something out of the ordinary happens. I see an oriental looking girl with a rucksack get on at Wellhouse (sub-district of Easterhouse) on the Edinburgh Road and asks for directions to Denmilne Path. The bus driver opens his clear plastic protective door, turns to the few passengers on the bus and shouts out asking if anyone knows where it is. I could have mentioned I knew where it was; I nearly did but was beaten to it. A man about twenty years old at the back of the bus straight off shouts back *'Its up Drummy, no wait a minute, its up Den Toi!'* Den-Toi was then more precisely located by the roads that run through it. The chances are the bus driver did not come from Easterhouse. If he had he would know that the scheme is not unusual in that it has like other places a local unofficial geography, one that runs alongside the official break down of Easterhouse into sub-districts. The unofficial sub-districts are the 'gang' territories of youth and Den-Toi is one of them- the wall near Rogerfield school an example of the singular importance of place to youth and relations to images of what is taken to be authority, *'Den Toi Land, fuck the polis'*.

Den Toi is where Craig lives and as far as I was aware he was expecting me. Arrangements and engagements and the manner they are met are themselves associated with a socially structured relation to time and how time is itself structured in. That is, I would not be surprised to find Craig not there. Craig is someone I knew from growing up together and know from the occasional get together. He is a friend of a friend. Indeed, everyone that is mentioned hereafter knows everyone else in some form or another however nebulous that relation is (for example, *'ah, aye a remember his face'*).

I was early so I decided to get off the bus before his stop, to take in the somatic delights of the local shopping centre and walk the remaining distance (about ten minutes walk up to his flat).



Just before the shopping centre I met Lenny, he is someone I knew superficially and really from a few years back. It was the first time I had seen him since he had been released from jail for selling heroin, or 'kit' as he calls it. Back then I had the opportunity to talk to him in his flat before his trial and he had explained to me how the police had found the drugs in his house, how they were about to leave after having searched throughout the flat without success before noticing the small upturned lip of a bedroom carpet. They pulled back the carpet, ripped up the floorboards and discovered his fresh market produce.<sup>303</sup>

Looking at Lenny then (two years ago), I saw a 28 year old, approximately six foot tall, short brushed forward hair, thin build, thin eyes and a gaunt face. He was wearing 'Kappa' bottoms, a hooded tracksuit top and expensive looking Nike training shoes (something I was to later reflect upon while sitting on the toilet on the sixth floor of the University of Glasgow main library- near the Economics section and on the same level as Sociology- and perusing the student graffiti found. '*Kappa is the main sponsor of Easterhouse*').<sup>304</sup>

In true positivist and singular fashion, he had the marked visibility and comportment of a deteriorated user of heroin looking for the next fix; the rapid steps and rapid eyes; looking to see others before they see you; the creating of invisibility and then the recognition that every

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<sup>303</sup> Lenny's organics soaked up sunshine before he placed them in storage under his carpet.

<sup>304</sup> To what extent could this graffiti have been written by a social scientist? For example, when McDowell (2003) expresses her caution about her caution in criticising Anthony Giddens and his understanding of contemporary 'individualisation' as something that can be spread across the social board (that is, not everyone has access to the same resources) like butter on a piece of bread she fails to really grapple with who or what these 'others' are or what the nature of this relation might be. She mentions consumerism and Baumann and then says that working class youth are either failed consumers or are not invited to the party. Is there a relation between what is seen as a 'failed consumer' and an invitation to the party? That is, failed according to what. Is there a recognition of failure amongst those who pay (or get) a hundred pounds for a pair of Nike trainers? When does the sense of failure kick in if ever? Is there a relationship between the catalogue and the academic typology? Is the fashionable 'minging' look dependant on a successful fashionable 'failure'?

movement within public space is one that is engaged with as a total fact of life.<sup>305</sup> This is the business of addiction as encountered from the lower end of the market, the long road to junkie-hood in other words.<sup>306</sup> Before his prison sentence, and like a number of dealers, Lenny was also a user without a long term plan, without an alternative that is ironically provided by this minimalist relation to time; he is dominated by time and his relation to time as an aspect of his life and his projection into and through life. Drug use and drug dealing was his creative engagement with both the wider economy and his own situated lived-ness.

He had not looked like this, though. Lenny had gone through four years of the prison system and prison drugs without the safety net of his own place, freedom and money. He had the look of prison on him. Junk is for him a using of the moment to control the moment. Having a supply of heroin through dealing meant that Lenny could postpone both the economics of addiction and the stigmatising effect of this economy. Of course, Lenny's entrepreneurial relation to the system was markedly illegal and expected. However, unlike 'junkies' whose 'cheap' social presence is available for all to see and to name, Lenny had had an income from a form of labour that enabled him to feed his habit, make enough money to live what was for him an *ordinary* and functional life. But as Tommy mentions it seems that *'its only when the money runs out that the shit hits the fan'*.

Indeed, seeing dealing as a form of self employment makes it easier to see those activities not only in terms of income but also in terms of a management of a person's relation to daily 'structures', rituals and routines. Like branches of the official economy, the drug economy has

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<sup>305</sup> This is to recognise both the power and weakness of the gaze: that is, how eye contact itself can reveal relations of knowing and relations of power and how these can be subverted. What seems to be of importance is the context in which this relation to visibility and invisibility is rendered.



its own status markers and indeed its own market principles. As Bourgois (1997, p71) argues within the context of an American city, there is status, meaning and money to be found in the level and form of habitual drug use and drug dealing.<sup>307</sup> As Carnwath and Smith (2002, p103) perceive, drug use and its effects are not uniform or generalisable to a particular social group, the '*potential for constructive and functioning self-tuning is huge, as it is for chaotic lack of control*'.<sup>308</sup>

Other factors are implicated in the *visibility* and presence of addicted drug users within specific communities.<sup>309</sup>

Again, Carnwath and Smith are to be noted for their combination of clarity and different personal experiences of drug use in noting that '*Patterns of heroin use depend for the most*

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<sup>306</sup> It is suggested that it takes approximately ten years before the signs of addictive and pathological heroin use become visible within a given community.

<sup>307</sup> This is the importance of placing not only addiction in context but of placing consumption and the how and what is consumed in context. For Peele and Brodsky (1992, p42) this contextualisation is fundamental in relation to drugs and addiction in that, 'it is important to place addictive habits in their proper context, as part of people's lives, their personalities, their relationships, their environments, their perspectives'. In the course of this ethnography this 'placing in context' is itself a matter of contingency and negotiation, a matter that indicates the importance of recognising what we mean by context and consumption in the first place.

<sup>308</sup> Of course, with some drugs one person's constructive functioning is another's lack of control. I listened and felt the embarrassment of one man as his holiday experience of 'downing four eccies' (swallowing four ecstasy pills) was crowned by his sudden realisation (that is, after twenty minutes) that the dance music he was moving so energetically on the dance floor too was for a children's disco. He was described as 'lookin really smart' with greased back hair, wearing a suit and gyrating like a spinning top as he waved his hands about in the air oblivious to the large crowd of children jumping up and down around about him in awe. Stanley described the scene '*lit a big lanky tree wi aw these weans dancing roon about 'im. He wisnae seen oan the flair fur the rest of the week*'.

<sup>309</sup> When I listened to one eighty year old man mention in humorous disbelief that his doctor described him as an alcoholic I felt incongruence. It wasn't that I didn't agree with his doctor's description of his drinking habits as alcoholic, neither was it that I didn't know of the different ruses people could go to hide the truth from themselves. It was that I could see how much the diagnosis and the refusal operated on the same plane. Similarly, in arguing against viewing drug use as pathology or as purely pharmacology Carnwath and Smith cite research on addicted rats! When the environment was changed (that is, a cage 200 times larger and strewn with objects rats seemed to like as opposed to small isolated cages) the addictive behaviours of the rats held together in the large cage lessened dramatically in comparison with those rats held in small isolated cages. The experimenters concluded '*in the social group, the reinforcement value of morphine may have been diminished y its interference with the rat's natural activity patterns. A rat with an active social life finds there are many activities it prefers to drinking morphine, even if it had already developed a physical dependence. Even more so than rats, one would expect humans to make use of social networks and occupational involvement to overcome the drive of pharmacology*' (Alexander et al, 1978).



*part on four factors: the availability of the drug; the degree of structure in user's life; the pressure of competing interests and activities; and informal rules and local sanctions'* (2002, p90). Again, what we mean by context and structures needs to be attended to in more detail here. The point, though, is that the danger for researchers and policy makers is in missing this meaning, and in encountering substance use as only pathological rather than, say, functional or integrative.<sup>310</sup>

Lenny had just left the drug user support group in Provanhall and was walking the 2-3 miles to his mother's flat in Parkhead (where he now stayed). He spontaneously began telling me how things were for him just now, *'Am determined tae get aff it Pat, a canny go oan lit this... they offer tae take ye oan trips up north in the centre but ye've gote tae be clean... it must be better than this.'* This struggle was another one of those very real yet personal 'existential' moments that spoke of this particular and contemporary reality of *his* working class life.

Lenny went on to tell me how he had disassociated himself from some of his emotional and local acquaintances, *'Huv you seen how much they drink up the road? A need tae get away fae that... its litres a vodka a day'*. For Lenny, it is as if *here* is the problem, these very conditions of existence, this place and the people he knows in this place as a totality, as something he needs to get away from if he is to *'go oan'*. Our meeting on the street lasted about five minutes and we were away on our same different days.

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<sup>310</sup> Drug use and its uses are profound and widespread. They are as creative as they are destructive. Moreover, the type of drug used and the context of its use seems to have profound implications for how the drug affects those who use it. For example, see MacAndrew and Edgerton (1969).'



As an aside, I was to meet Lenny again in the Forge shopping centre seven months later shadowed by a drug worker, he filled more space, looked heavier, healthier and *intensely* happy, having been off the 'kit' for six months and working as a volunteer, adamant that this abstinence was him for good. The irony of that meeting was that I had just been visiting Linda, his ex-partner, in the drab and depressing inner city psychiatric institution that is Parkhead hospital. I had met Linda a few weeks previous in her own flat and she had described to me her feelings of utter mystification about what to do with the time she had: '*a just stare at the wa's hauf the time*'.

There seems to be congruence between a belief in the determinations of particular brain chemistry and the lack of attention to the lived environment, something that is evident in the daily grind that is the peeling wallpaper of psychiatric ward life. This lack of aesthetics and order is the complete reverse of the order and minimalism sought and indeed evidenced by the *objects* in Linda's own flat.<sup>311</sup> The mirrored 'ultra logic' of both places in face of subjectively lived reality borders on the psychotic. Indeed, I felt that spending two weeks in the hospital would go somewhat to inducing depression never mind providing a 'therapeutic environment' for recovery. What is missing in the therapeutic wallpaper is an understanding that psychiatry, by itself, can become an extension of politics.

Linda had received a visit from Lenny but had asked him to leave. She was conscious that Lenny looked well and was embarrassed by her own officially exposed physical and mental state. Both of them should look like this or like that. The last I heard Lenny went absent without leave from his 'treatment programme' and had resumed dealing and using heroin. The

intense feeling of happiness or of being alive to the facts of life that I had felt in Lenny on meeting him in the forge that day were feelings I could relate too as part of a total fact of life that was reduced to the moment in addiction. He was *too* happy, *too* alive, *too* extreme and *too* absolute that he had found something. He had still to find his middle ground or that place he could feel was his: that imagined place where a self can be built.

I had sensed as much when I entered into conversation with a male volunteer at a local community group. I had discovered that Lenny's volunteer placement had been at the same group and had enquired as to how he was getting on. The conversation stopped at an abrupt '*he's left*' and I didn't pursue it any farther. He has now gone abroad in his continued effort to get on with his life. His partner has been told she will be dead before her 35th birthday if she does not change her own drinking habits. I saw this as another perverse take on place and on my own sense of what middle ground might mean. At one point Linda shared the same heroin as Lenny. Indeed, from a perspective that is based solely in gender relations, it could be argued that he was fulfilling his role as male provider in dealing as a way of making a living. She moved from heroin to vodka and cheap cider with the belief that in getting off heroin through alcohol she would save herself from how she was using heroin.<sup>312</sup>

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<sup>311</sup> This representation of being as what is seen is a form of self control and is something I recognised in relation to how some men 'presented' themselves- that is, the desire to know oneself cannot be untangled from the desire to control oneself and that this 'mangle' is in fact the long awaited meeting and explication of social being.

<sup>312</sup> What is found is that the scale and intensity of drug use is displaced from one drug to another. In conversation with a local man in the pub he remarked that in his career he had moved from heroin to hash and then onto alcohol. His most recent specialism was forced in accordance with his overall rehabilitation plan.

M: A canny touch it the noo masel but aw the boys are intae it. Its ment tae be good smoke. Am up fur a drug test wi ma work an a need tae keep clean.

PQ: Whit, is it yer blood they test?

M: Na, its yer piss.

PQ: Could ye no take in somedae else's?



I had contacted Craig while his phone line was still working, it is since 'cut off'. *Being* cut off is not an unusual happening. Indeed, as far as I am aware being 'cut off' and then reconnected, and being cut off again is a routine cycle for a phone company. But a person's *being* 'cut off'? How can a being be 'cut off' from a meaningful relationship to themselves and to others as a normal fact of life?

Craig's 4 year old daughter was at her grannies for the weekend and I expected him to be either recovering from the night before or already 'half cut'. I had a few cans of Double Dutch lager and I knew Craig would have plenty of hash. He *always* had hash, was always stoned to the point of not being stoned, being normal and more importantly what can come across as nonsensical, in *control*. I always had beer. Indeed, perhaps in recognition of the limits and artificiality of the interview situation or as a reference to the natural setting, every interview in the field has been lined with some level of either dope or alcohol.<sup>313</sup>

This was the second interview Craig had given me and I imagined it would probably be much like the first, lasting three hours and beyond the length of the tape or tapes. He had had three hours to give me and as a funded ESRC student I had the luxury of three hours to both take and give. Indeed, as I came to the end of my funding I began to realize to what extent that a

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M: Na, they've gote somedae staunin there. A missed the last couple a tests so av gote tae make this wan or a'l lose ma jobe. A canny take any chances wi it Pat, it means to much tae mae. A missed the last wan cos a did hiv a smoke. Av been bevyin lit fuck cos av no been smokin, look at ma gut!

<sup>313</sup> This isn't to imply the interviews were drunken rambles. One interview that did become a drunken ramble was a one to one interview that developed into an impromptu focus group. That is, one interview with Brian Igbutt was interrupted by the arrival of his son and a few of his friends. I stopped recording the interview and never got to hear our interactions on tape (see Gough and Edwards (1998) for an account of how four male students drunken talk was interpreted by one of the student's supervisors as reproducing masculinities). From my experience I have found that one to one interviews or conversations are less likely to evidence 'guff' or 'bravado' or 'carnival' and indeed are often places that much that wouldn't be said in a group is said.



‘leisured relation to necessity’ a PhD entailed; it is a luxurious and privileged relation to reality, a fact that makes coming to the end of this relationship a point of clarification akin to a road ending at a precipice.<sup>314</sup>

**Figure 2: The Old Housing Stock**



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<sup>314</sup> This precipice looks onto everyday life.



**Figure 3: The New Housing Stock**



Before going into Craig's I popped into Velma (and Gordon's) to say hullo in passing (Velma and Gordon were people I had become friendly with in the course of the research). They live across the road from Craig in one of the new housing association houses. The contrast between the buildings is almost a contrast between different times. That is, as the physical landscape, the ecology of housing and the appearance of Easterhouse (like many council housing areas across Glasgow) has changed dramatically over the last 15 years, the intensity of the change increasing over the last five years as the old housing stock continues to be demolished (See Photo. 1 and 2). Although the scheme has always had its own open sky, it is as if there is new light in the streets now that most of the three storey six-flats-in-a-block tenements and gable ends have been demolished. The old open closes without the now obligatory security door would look as senseless as those council tenement flats that do have security entry (they are now invariably broken or on the latch).



In demolishing the majority of the 1950/60's tenements there is simply less people and fewer buildings in the space that was previously occupied.<sup>315</sup> At the same time, though, there is a sense that the changing physical environment and the people who occupy it are not continuous with the architectural regeneration. Tiger's point that *'you could go up and go through every close in this street, try an dae it noo'* is less a reference to security doors than it is to his sense of knowing and not knowing other people. As Richard puts it, *'its aw the same bams in different hooses.'* The contradiction between the idea of progress seems to be found in the new relationship between place, space and people.

Distances do not seem as far as before largely because you can see further, as a consequence there seems to be more room. There are now small cul de sacs, brightly painted houses and flats with front and back door gardens, 'defensible spaces' and a city wide CCTV scheme.<sup>316</sup>

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<sup>315</sup> This sense of space has rapidly receded (August 2003). For example, the cleared land that is at the back of Velma's flat, behind her 7 foot wooden garden fence, is now being built on. The newly built houses are within 10 feet of her back fence and look directly into her living room. As René Dubos has said, the need for 'quiet, privacy, independence, initiative, and some open space' are not 'frills or luxuries but constitute real biological necessities.' Their lack injures the instinctual structure itself. Freud has emphasized the 'asocial' character of Eros – in that the mass society achieves an 'oversocialization' to which the individual reacts *'with all sorts of frustrations, repressions, aggressions, and fears which soon develop into genuine neuroses'*.

<sup>316</sup> It is important to note that these developments emerged primarily within the context of 'economic regeneration' and a link up with crime and safety: that is, that the environment itself is seen as criminogenic. Stuart Waiton (2001, p36) argues that this focus is one dimensional and that the *'result, especially in areas targeted for 'social inclusion', is that time, energy and resources are increasingly directed at initiatives that aim to tackle crime and promote safety in an area'*. More fundamentally, though, what does it mean to actually live there, to be disposed, to absorb an environment that has at its core a concern with regeneration and crime and safety? Similarly, what are the consequence of addressing the lived environment as inherently criminogenic? In enquiring about people's attitudes towards CCTV I listened as one man stressed the benefits of CCTV cameras in school toilets (*'that's a good thing, that way u can see who done it straight aff and there's nae hassle wi' blame'*). Immediately after he then complained vociferously that his son, alongside other pupils, have to be escorted to the school toilet for fear that those pupils might vandalise those toilets. The majority of the funding that brought the new community schools into existence is a fixed term payment and the schools are then expected to generate a percentage of their own running costs. This means that in this small example, parents are told that school toilets will be painted every ten years whether they need it or not- hence toileted supervision. On investigating the level of preparation for the job market that economic regeneration might entail I discovered that many of the jobs being offered to locals were the 'shit jobs'. As has been seen in chapter four, one woman described how she left her job picking out potatoes from a production line after she was told she would have to hold up her hand if she wanted to go to the toilet. This woman threatened to 'batter' the line supervisor: she felt humiliated and responded to this belittling with the resources that were available to her. It is here that what are really political commentaries on a 'dependency culture' can come to be known as exactly that- in contrast the rationale is a retreat from a job market that offers nothing but low wages and subservience (for a debate on the



In most places your front door is the first door you open and enter. There is no need to walk up one, two or three landings before you reach your flat. Generally speaking, space and people's relationship to each other in space has become largely re-defined, that is, there has been a move towards a clearer differentiation between public and private areas, gardens, own front doors. Of course, how this redefinition is to be explained is quite different from describing this new situation.

I was to discover that Craig probably *would* be recovering from the night before as he had to be dragged from their house after refusing to leave, being '*absolutely bloated*' as Velma described him. '*He's getting a fuckin kickin the next time a see 'im*' was Gordon's understanding of the situation. Craig had bad-mouthed Gordon on leaving, never mind that his leaving had to be forced. He had to be pushed, physically handled, moved, lifted, touched with a certain level of force that indicated that boundaries are about to be breached, and told '*tae get tae fuck!*' before he would go home.

A next morning recovery from a heavy night of cheap wine and lager often signaled a breakfast of beer, more likely if it was a day to 'oneself'. These days to and with a self obsessed and troubled me. They troubled me because I had begun to feel what it is like to 'privatize social relations' and to see everything as 'unique'.

Gordon, like a number of men in this area, does not officially live with Velma. His father did not officially live with his mother. If he did this would primarily affect Velma's housing benefit and the amount of money they would have to live on. Indeed, Velma has recently

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merits of low paid work in an American context and how this is contextualized see the vociferous exchange between Wacquant and Newman/Duneier/Anderson, 2002).

found herself under attack from a number of official and non-official sides. The power differentials, forms of language and interactive dynamics of disability allowance appeal meetings up and down the country demand a research proposal.<sup>317</sup> Closer to home, Velma recently received a visit from the local housing association officer who was enquiring about that important issue, the homogeneity of colour schemes in the local's toilets, that is, is the colour of your toilet the same as everybody else's in the street?

I was to find out from another local tenant that this was a less than subtle ruse. Not only had this important matter of toilet paint been decided in a previous meeting between housing staff and the new housing association tenants (that is, the colour of the toilet is up to the taste of individual tenants. As far as I am aware there is a ban on the heavy texturing with paint, that is, artexing, but there were no specific discussions over the type or quality of paint used) but that the reason for a housing officer having a '*look in yer bog*' was for exactly the kind of incriminating evidence that could be used to build a case for someone 'defrauding' the system.

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<sup>317</sup> Velma went on to explain that she is receiving aid from the Citizen's Advice Bureau (CAB) as she appeals against decisions that have went against her with regards to disability allowance and housing benefit. She describes how her previous silences in these meetings will be filled in by the CAB representative who will do her speaking for her. In her last meeting, the only words she spoke were after she had broke down in tears and was communicated with empathetically by her questioners who said they 'didn't realise'. Power relations, in a sense, *never* realize the subordinate as an equal and do not even have to be stated to be present. Presence itself is enough and indeed 'the relation between two people may be such that one of them has only to appear in order to impose on the other, without even having to want to, let alone formulate any command, a definition of the situation and of himself (as intimidated, for example), which is all the more absolute and undisputed for not having to be stated (Bourdieu 1992, p52)

Perhaps this is a practical example of how 'imputations of inferiority are highly aversive; and, even when it does not lead to violence, the sense of being put down or ignored generates strong feelings of angst in most of us...To some extent we have become aware of these issues in the context of race and sex, but 'classism' remains rampant (Wilkinson 2000: 28). Velma believed that a 'friend', '*that junkie cow*', grassed her up to the council. In recollecting our shared times growing up on Duntarvie Road in the late 1970's/early 1980's Bobby referred to one woman who was believed to be a 'council grass' as '*her who stuck everybody in the street in fur wurkin casual... she still works casual herself. Ye don't take the bread oot a someone else's mooth tae eat it yerself man. If yer a decent person at all ye wid gie sumdae yer last piece a bread.*' The reward for information of this kind was another giro, another market inducement that contributed to and reaffirmed an apathy in politics.



Despite Velma's protestations to us that all the bedroom doors were closed (and so, '*he couldnae see his claes*') it did not enter her mind that the reason Gordon did not have a beard could be found on their toilet sink. A case is being prepared against Gordon and Velma as I write; a razor and shaving foam as indictment of their crimes against the state and their close neighbours. There are a number of interweaved ironies here. I should mention one of them before crossing the road to Craig's.

Last year Gordon worked both part time and full time, always on temporary contract, for a variety of security companies on various building sites. The going hourly rate for such a job is variable but can range from under £2.50 up to the minimum wage an hour. In the massive demolition and rebuilding of the Easterhouse housing stock there are a number of such jobs. They involve keeping the 'weans aff the site'<sup>318</sup> and minimising the amount of building materials that are stolen or vandalised. Logically, because of the poor pay those most likely to illegally take or too not see the building materials move are often those who work on the building sites as 'security'. The contradiction is it is often those most insecure and most liable for temporary and casual work who find themselves in a security position. Perhaps, it is here, in those jobs of security that the *universal* lack of irony is found in that 'security' is found through a person's insecurity.

It is a job that can seem utterly boring and unsociable yet provides long hours for quiet joints and reflective moments that are not forgotten although they often can't be remembered.

Moreover, it is a job that has a 'market': the presence of a local with 'local knowledge' makes

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<sup>318</sup> Weans is slang for children and Gordon was a wean who found himself stuck in a pit of concrete aged eight on a building site a hundred metres from where he now does not live.



the job understandable and the work with one's own sense of time , of the children and youths 'natural'.

Less than 100 metres from the Easterhouse Phoenix (fig 5) a local man died working on such a site. James had been complaining to his employers of headaches for '*a couple a days*' (Velma).<sup>319</sup> He was found one morning his blood poisoned and stopped by the carbon monoxide fumes from the gas fire that had meant to keep him warm. His dog survived. I had

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<sup>319</sup> On the busy corner (in relation to vehicle traffic) where Easterhouse Road meets Aberdalgie Road there stands a relatively new work of public art. The work is a metallic skeleton sculpture of a phoenix rising from the ashes and it is called *The Easterhouse Phoenix*. It is one of a number of public art projects that have been commissioned and completed throughout Glasgow (Horse on M8, Water Towers in Bobbyend, Mosaic in Easterhouse, Royston Road Park, Castlemilk). These artworks are writing something into and onto the visual and creative landscape. Indeed, representations and symbols are important aspects of a post-industrial economy. Public art, in this sense, is understood as having an influence on economic redevelopment. Malcolm Miles (1992, p8) suggests public art can actually work in four main ways. That is, they can give a sense of place; they can engage the people who live or work in the area; they are examples of imaginative work; and they can assist in the regeneration of a place. Of course, this idea of regeneration through style is not unproblematic. I make reference to the Phoenix because I see much of the social and social relations in the aims of artistic statements such as this. Part of the 'truth' of the Phoenix is that its engagement is revealing of what art is or can be *used* for or seen to be used for in relation to particular people or places. The Phoenix in Easterhouse cost approximately forty thousand pounds and the commission was won by a design company called Scott Associates. Scott is an artist who recognises the importance of bringing 'art to the artless'. It is in this sense that their web site stresses the project was designed and implemented in consultation with relevant community members.

The Phoenix sculpture stands on a mound of grey white rocks which are themselves surrounded by smaller cream coloured stones. Multi-coloured lights come to life at night, shining up from the rock like flames to illuminate the Phoenix. The sculpture itself is very visible and striking. Its rocky base and its dull metallic skeleton gives it a sense of strength and imperviousness, while its widespread wings signal an openness and mobility. On the base of the sculpture it reads 'The Phoenix will Bring Easterhouse back to Life'. The Phoenix stands wings open and its head held high in the confidence that is gained by repeatedly coming back from the dead. The metallic bird looks East towards the M8 motorway inviting people to come and take a look at what has been happening in Easterhouse. When I kneel down to take a photo of the sculpture I suddenly feel out of place engaging, as it were, with a piece of public art in public (albeit is only taking a photo). I almost feel embarrassed by taking an interest in the sculpture so I make an effort to appear more interested than I really am in its shape and form. I sense my own relationship to the space occupied by the Phoenix as alien and 'out of place'. For public art works to function as intended its target population must have a knowledge of what is actually intended in the first place (hence the educational/information programme in local schools that accompanied the building of the phoenix). People already have a relationship to place, they are already engaged, they are already imaginative. How else could they get on?

For one man who has not been 'sensitized' to this function the Phoenix looks '*aw right... it lights up at night*'. Margaret says it is '*a waste of fucking money*', while Joe mentions that it has been vandalized already (I couldn't see any evidence of this). For another man, the Phoenix has already become something he associates with place. When he sees it he feels a sense of familiarity and 'coming home'. What is significant about this man, though, is that he does not live in the area anymore. He has no intention of ever returning to the place.



asked what had happened because of this man dying. It is as if the casual and temporary relationship to paid employment is reflected in the lack of value placed on issues of both health and safety. The man was about 30 years old and someone Velma and Gordon knew in a way that they would talk with him when they met him in the street, and understand when they didn't talk.

**Figure 4: The Easterhouse Phoenix**



Less than 100 metres from a symbol of regeneration and rebirth a 30 year old man, an employee of one of the many security firms that have matched the growth in tanning salons across Glasgow (a growth that has matched the hysteria of the judiciary, exemplified in the recourse to the *civil* courts of all places to seize the assets of people who have been found not guilty in the criminal court of having lots of money they cannot account for)<sup>320</sup> had died sitting in a porta-cabin heated by a portable gas fire looking out over the building of the new housing stock. It was another death of a known face, not a statistic to be remembered through a

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<sup>320</sup> See Scottish Executive (3) (2004). This is clearly one area where the boundary between criminal and legal commodity circulation is blurred (Hobbs, 1995; Ruggerio, 1996, cited in Hall, 2002).



document or to be highlighted as indication of this or that. Here the recording 'apparatus' is not a method or an artefact but other people. These 'statistics' and experiences are felt and stored for creative future reference. What is past is being alive to the facts.

For my response, I had a feeling that I had recognised how I was or had become someone who passively accepts because I did not know, how moments and events pile up to squash time and our responses in time until something just happens to people, how things just happen, that's the way it is, what can we do about it, what is there to say that isn't already known and really can't be said 'all at once' anyway. Rather than an absence of feeling there is something akin to a process of welcome anonymity stuffed with familiar sensations. I hated the feeling and hated myself for having it. I wanted something to be done and yet I moved onto the next thing.

Even though I had come to recognise that the 'I' of my thesis was fundamental to what it had to say, the 'I' of my thesis was something I had somehow managed to avoid. I really did think that I was writing for someone else and what that meant was that I talked about what should really have been written down. I was glad to hear that this was not a general feeling and James' family are still pursuing a case against the firm in the courts.

I went over the road to Craig's; he rents and lives in a two bed roomed bottom floor flat in a block of six, one of the near extinct old type tenements that used to characterize the scheme but is paradoxically now the property of a private landlord. The private landlord is an ex-resident of the area, her interest secured by the money paid into her account on behalf of Craig by the state. The flats are what could be described as hard to let, or 'social accommodation'. I say 'could be described' because in talking to one man I was to learn the costs of not knowing



if there is a council policy for the allocation of tenants or for knowing if particular closes have been the subject of a series of complaints.<sup>321</sup>

For example, Mark (31) is, amongst a whole range of other things, a recovered addict and now a group worker. I met him in one of the local pubs. He metaphorically described some of the young men and women he worked with as being barely able to *'pick their nose without instructions'*. He took the massive step of deciding to buy a flat after discovering how difficult it could be to find a council property in the area close to both his family and his work. It was within a week that he got to know his neighbours, their noise and what could be called their ignorance towards his requests for some peace at midnight and beyond. He now sees the only way he can sell his property is by waiting for an offer from the council before they demolish the lot. His decision to enter the property 'market' and to get a 'foot on the ladder' is more like tying a weight around the neck of someone swimming against the tide than any notion of 'upward mobility'. It should be added that Mark is about six foot one and sixteen stone and grew up in the area. In his past he was not unfamiliar with violence (spent time in Young Offenders), neither are his close friends and family.

A friend of Mark mentions that he could 'sort it out' but Mark's insistence on finding a new way to deal with things has shaped his interactions with his neighbours. He recognises how a person's relationship to their nose can be overcome. He wants to talk but is finding it difficult to make dialogue.<sup>322</sup>

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<sup>321</sup> Prospective buyers can ask if there have been complaints to the council.

<sup>322</sup> As Gilfillan's (1999) ethnography in Cardenen shows, the most basic and mundane aspects of communal living, that is housing conditions and adequate sound proofing, can come to affect everyday local and immediate

Craig's flat is three closes away from Mark's and looks out onto the new twelve foot high *security fence* that surrounds the rebuilt local 'community' school's playing field.<sup>323</sup>

It is as if playing is bordered by a fence, that the lines to acceptable and unacceptable forms of play are as thick as the paint that lines the football field and so like all good lines are either shifted, crossed, erased or ignored.

For me, that twelve foot high fence represents a number of aspects of modern sociological life; it is straight off a matter of how people and institutions relate or can relate to each other: it is indicative of the fragmented and changing character of shared local space and experience as it is indicative of the fragmented character of political direction. Of course, the sheer scale of the fence is pragmatic in that it is built to *protect* the school from those who live near by it and those who attend it. It is there to both provide and protect those it sees as in need of provision and protection. It is in this sense, that it is also symbolic of the compartmentalization of everyday life into different spheres each with their own experts and expert knowledge waiting to provide answers to everyday life from on high.<sup>324</sup> Indeed, in a sense, this interpretation parallels my own experience with higher education, that is, that it somehow needed to be referenced in a book before I could write it, before it could be 'real'. It is what Bourdieu might refer to as the *schoolification* of social life.<sup>325</sup>

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social relations. Mark, in effect, is *already* in dialogue with his neighbours in that he can hear them and their noise most nights of the week.

<sup>323</sup> Lochend Secondary is built to the same blue print as all the new community school across Glasgow

<sup>324</sup> As will be seen, perhaps this view from on high (or middling) is what enables the 'disintegration' of lived experience into separate and self contained categories that are then able to exist under their own dynamic to find and become reproduced as 'problems' and as 'crises' when it is discovered that local experience does not fit so neatly into disciplinary aims or targets. Can we understand the emergence of high rates of violence in this way? That is, can we discover that emerging rates of extreme violence *at this moment* and *at this time* have a *long wave of reproduction* that has escaped and will always escape understandings that appropriate human experience and intentionality in representational forms.

<sup>325</sup> For Bourdieu, this entails the imposition of school language and school relations into everyday life. This is what Bourdieu called the crisis of reproduction; a process that perhaps also has its place in examining projects aimed at regeneration or modernisation. Those who are not regenerated phoenix like *virtually* disappear and the culture that is left is assessed by the mode of the school and of the state, the 'aggrandisement of the school'. This



A narrow path runs up between that fence and the uniform metal black painted waist height fence that contains the small plot of grass that is his garden. A few empty beer cans, roaches, fag ends, crisp bags and cigarette packets lay amongst the grass. Just down this path is a main road leading to the motorway and across that road is a real mix of council and private housing: semi detached houses, one bed roomed flats and a private housing estate. The two and three bed roomed houses on the private housing estate are less than half a mile from Mark's flat. Indeed, it would take about 5-10 minutes to walk down past the Phoenix sculpture (fig.1) and across the bridge that straddles the motorway before arriving at working class affluence.

The *security door* to the close was open and the latch looked as if it had been kicked off along with the plastic window that should have covered the hole in the bottom half of the door. I knew from experience that on alternate Fridays or Saturdays close neighbours would sometimes take turns at listening, sighing or kicking in the bottom panel of the security door—sometimes a lack of keys, other times a reaction to the person on the other side of the door who in knowing what might be coming refuses to answer the buzzer, sometimes just the catharsis of the kicking. There are so many ways to express and *challenge* your self these days that it is difficult to know where to start. A wall, a door, a car, a face, *who* cares as long as it makes me feel *better* and *something* at this moment in time.

A small but important digression. Raymond, a 32 year old council worker from Easterhouse, someone who works in the housing repair teams and travels across Glasgow '*fixin windaes*'

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is most explicit in the increased role of state agencies and experts in basic aspects of working class life (most recently epitomised by the move to teach children how to sit at a table and use a knife and fork when eating). More generally, it is a way of thinking the linkages between early forms of socialisation and adult experience (non/adaptability to prison; menial labour; etc).

such as this describes how people explain to him how their windows got smashed by someone else when they live eighteen floors up. *'Must have been Steve Austin'* or *'A rabid seagull'*.

Raymond travels across the council housing stock of Glasgow and notes corresponding patterns of tenant allocation and repairs and is of the opinion that *'the council puts them aw together'*. Those that are put together are if not from the same scheme then from a similar background. The new council housing being built in Easterhouse is being encountered as out with their 'price' range and so those on low incomes are being transferred to flats that mirror their public value. The people he mentioned are in their thirties yet are in social reality still teenagers. That is, those socially prescribed markers of adult hood and identity (worker, husband, son, daughter etc). The people they know and now live beside are people who grew up in the same areas as them and have experienced each other in relation to their own relationships to the system. They do a lot of the same things now as they did then.

Raymond sees inside a lot of people's houses and in a way sees inside a lot of people, or perhaps more accurately, he sees what other people do to their 'own' homes, what these places mean to them, what they 'mean' to themselves and the loud whispers of those who would bring them to an kind of order and a kind of sensibility. This 'what people mean to themselves' is to be taken as an encounter with self as relational and as a social and embodied self, as an encounter with the means of knowing one self, of expressing a social self as a self. It is to encounter housing provision and housing conditions as a fundamental aspect of working class structuration (Gilfillan, 1999).

Raymond describes how he comes across people he grew up with and how they are living just now, how they are *'just living'*. Men (and less often women) the same age as him, living with other men in what might be described from one perspective as situations of utter squalid



depraved invisibility, the silent riots of every day life as Bourdieu would put it. But this is not how it is encountered from the perspective on the ground. The absurdity of the situation is not engaged with through pathos or through irony it is often through the catharsis of the blackest humour. The days racked up with the orientating signposts of drugs, alcohol and court meetings to attend (a bit like a couple of lawyers I used to know) shot through with the determinations of structure and culture— that most secure relationship to insecurity and being. He recalls the vague recognition of old nicknames and the fleeting '*how you doin*' of a childhood friend ('Wee Man') whose flat he had to visit for repairs, completing the job in accordance with an unwritten code of conduct.<sup>326</sup> The flat was in total disarray, doors hanging off hinges, windows smashed, empty beer cans everywhere, the rooms strangers to any sort of order, indeed like strangers to each other. Like a student accommodation there is a refusal of order except in this case there is no sense of irony or of moving onto to something beyond this: this is the irony and absurdity of a social cul de sac shared in one man's description of being decanted to the high rise block as at least making a saving on rope. This hyperrealism of humour is like an engagement with '*absurdity but that gradually the absurd becomes imaginable*' (Verkaaik, 2003). Concepts like a risk society suddenly seem like the description of a particular social position by a person describing that social position in retreat with their insurance bonds and mortgages bracketed off from their engagement with reality.

'Similarly', encountering two well known brothers (mid thirties) locked together in their two bed roomed flat, their chronic alcoholism (with its roots in their early teens) and their constant

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<sup>326</sup>This vague understanding operates on two levels. First, an understanding of what flats will actually be entered and the level of danger held in entering them. This is based on both observations from the outside and any formal communication with the central repair office: does the flat have curtains? How many windows are smashed? What does the close look like? How do the tenants look? On one occasion the repair team was advised that a police escort would be needed for one particular flat. 'Fuck that' is an unwritten category on such worksheets.

everyday antagonism towards each the only thing that kept them aware that perhaps there must be something else other than this, this '*mutilated beyond repair*' was all they needed or all they could think of needing.<sup>327</sup>

On this occasion, the youngest brother had moved '*the whole hoose*' into his bedroom, '*the telly, the cooker, his fridge, everythin... nuthin's plugged in, the water aff the fridge oan the flair...*', and would only shout out from underneath his bed covers: '*That bastard's no putting his food in ma fridge, that stagnant bastard is no watchin ma telly... that stagnant bastard... a'll fuckin murder 'im, a'll fuckin murder 'im*'. The younger brother had gone to the extent of removing the curtains from the window because he didn't want the older brother '*lookin through ma curtains*'. His older brother sat there with his iconic purple can of Tennent's heroically tainted superlager, winding the crank, shouting back, '*yer only a boy, yer only a boy*'. It was the kind of '*hoose ye wiped yer feet when ye came oot it*' (Craig), another perverse take on the public/private distinction. As a place of 'security' and 'embeddedness' these homes are more of a childhood den built from spare doors and nails than a house or a base from which any mythical bohemian or otherwise civilization could even imagine to flower.

Indeed, from one perspective it is as if 'civilization' is *unwinding* (retreating, turning back, loosening) in some people at the same time that *what is heard*, what is taken as public opinion refers to an opening up of opportunities for responsible and *civilized* people, those who will be recognized as civilians, as worth value, as having contributed something to a 'society'.

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Then, there is pragmatics and economics. If the window is on the ground floor and is a 'regular customer' it will be secured with the minimal materials that will stop it from falling in.

<sup>327</sup> Both of these men's parents died in their fifties from alcohol related illness.



Of course, without these cautions, this perspective assumes that the movement of history has been that of the long upward trajectory from launch pad enlightenment and indeed, that everyone has been on board for the ride from *day one*. The recurring themes of speculation and disbelief that emerge in the long historical themes of regeneration and progress in Glasgow are part of this trajectory, and indeed perhaps a focus on time as time experienced and embodied would reveal how power *occupies* our modern concepts of time by rendering individual and methodical relations to time invisible. To what extent does this universalisation of time dominates 'our' conceptions of agency?

It is as if unless one was on board this 'flight' then reality simply did not exist until that point of disbelief was verbalized and verbalized well. In this sense, 'civilization' or its contemporary alter egos, 'modernity' and enlightenment is *not* unfolding, or at least 'I' do not want to think on those terms or with that particular movement of history. Rather, civilization is not unfolding because for many groups of people modernity is, as Latour (1993) puts it, in this frame at least, '*the great non-event*'. It did not happen, at least not on those terms. There was no great realization of a unique self amidst a great universal historical project, no reflection on self as a self, no cultured identity escaping the gravity of everyday economics. What flight there has been is a flight from the reality of reality itself.<sup>328</sup>

These were and are representations that silenced the operations of power by claiming representations were universal means of expression. It is simply wrong to then conceive of self and notions of identity and a relation to (what then is) some mythical social in these terms.

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<sup>328</sup> Perhaps this is evidenced most clearly (ideally) by the example of the 'in flight' entertainment of those social science journals that have no need to contact reality. One academic's attempt to have an ethnographic article published in the European Journal of Social Theory received this reply 'This is a theory oriented journal and it is

This has implications for finding the 'right' interpretation or for unfolding meaning in context. How is meaning to be 'given' when there is none (at least on the terms offered)? Who and what, for example, are the 'liberal sixties'?

That no meaning is to be given does not mean that there is none to be found or that because there is apparent silence then nothing has been said. Silence like noise has to be explained by its relation to time and time has to be explained by relation to class relations. Whose silence, whose noise, whose audition? The task is then to note *how* those who walk through these spaces do not leave written traces, while others do, how when one mouth opens others close, how silence and noise can be one and the same thing. What are we looking for here? Impressions, facts, insights, empathy, judgement?

Scarry's philosophical point that the room is 'the smallest unit of civilization' echoes sociologically through the pages of this thesis. There is perhaps a mirroring here of what *the body* is and means and what we find in our own intimate physical environment, our relation to being as a relation to others and as a relation to our environment. We encounter the social in these conditions and in the unfolding and outward movement of these conditions in us and in our meetings with others. What is the nature of this unfolding, of this relationship and this interpretation? How do or can people 'know' each other? How does the body speak?

Taussig's (1998, p1) suggests that when '*the human body; a nation's flag, money, or a public statue is defaced, a strange surplus of negative energy is likely to be aroused from within the defaced thing itself.*' There is energy and energy has to go somewhere, it cannot disappear into

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not usual to have case studies with primary data. Quotes from published material is of course different.' Here reality is reconstituted texts.



'nothing', it has to be expressed in one form or another, it has to find a 'face'. In a sense this 'defacement' or being refused positive identification is a condition that is the polar and dialectical opposite of that which finds the present *as* that what can be represented, what is to be faced as reality. On the one hand, then, what is to be faced is a projection, it is a planning of and for the future. In contrast, the defaced object has a sense of historicity, of its weight, of its lived ness of its very agency in relation to anonymity. The defaced object is alive to the '*wee daft things*' and indeed the small things in life are thus those most real. Everyday public recognitions are vital: how one is recognised, how a person shows these recognitions.

This is what you see is what you get. This is agency, the relations of power, the public sphere is where the private being is found, the place where the public is privatised- there is no clear separation between private and public, the distinction is as pointed out many years before illusory. There are no resources within that are valued without.. It is as Hall points out a place that is pregnant for the birth of '*totally irredeemably negative form of violence: pointless, without object, without even resentment*' (Anelpis, p10). Gilfillan's take is that the violence reflects the everyday violence people face. The anelpic side of the argument is that '*this irrepressible violence is neither sound and fury, nor the resurrection of savage instincts, nor even the effect of resentment: it is man recreating himself*' (Sartre, 1965, p18).

Thus, what is crucial, from here, is that this is why violence as something in itself is important. Not because of the revolutionary character Sartre attributes to it, that is, as political, but 'revolutionary' as in it is violence as opposed to anything else that being is formed in and with. It creates the ground for what might be seen as a form of barbarism. The violent habitus is a habitus that understands violence without any need for words or guidance. More than this,

it understands relations of dominance through feeling.<sup>329</sup> How this relation is worked with is itself open to contestation. As Arendt suggested, public space is a 'space of appearances' that is made *'between people through exchanges of expressivity that instantiate the boundaries necessary to organisation and the production of forms of value that are immediately recognisable because unavailable to the majority of the population'* (Charlesworth, 2004, p2).

Perhaps things, then, have to be seen for what they are in all their positivistic glory. Then the mirror can be used to capture the multidimensional movement. It is in this sense that *'truth is not a matter of exposure which destroys the secret but a revelation which does justice to it'* (Taussig, 1998, p2). We can see that the power of the mirror is that both images operate with the same logic and under the same 'natural' conditions and the movement between them is diachronic and dialectic. Indeed, the *'tradition of disbelief'* can thus be seen as an indication of how when people from different parts of the social spectrum meet the interactions are almost always utterly predictable.<sup>330</sup>

Human beings are often seen to be distinguished by our capacity to talk, our capacity for language and symbolism. We are seen to express what we mean in words, symbols and what we can do. When words are taken only as words, and not as houses themselves, as social and political institutions with rituals and sedimented bases of understanding and tradition, language and meaning can then easily be seen as 'nothing' if not verbalized or made known as a cultural or technological artifact. Words can then operate with a power and the recognition

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<sup>329</sup> Thus, perhaps one aspect of an explanation into why we find incomprehension by social and care workers/services when their help is not accepted without problems. That is, there is a recognition of power relations and moreover that perhaps *'... no gentleness can efface the marks of violence; only violence can destroy them'* (Sartre, 1967, p18).

<sup>330</sup> Thus, the moral crisis found in discussions of violence can be seen to be a concern with reality as representation and actually emerging violent reality. This is the reflexivity of dialectical method; that is, that



that getting your '*baws kicked*' through words is as real as real can be. Semantics, then, in one sense, can be constitutive in that language as holding some quantity of symbolic power has to be negotiated.

In this sense, the 'great non event' and all the great and creative 'non-events' of modernity can be *rescued* from silence, and understood as a philosophy on ideas of a reflexive modernity itself. Indeed, perhaps this silence is not only a defacement of the subject that cannot be seen by modernity without disbelief but is also a defacement of the very idea of a pure and positivistic reflexive modernity. What negative energy stirs therein within modernity itself, within something that claims to know itself yet is always escaping from itself? Who feel the need through need and who feel the need through what they already have? By challenging this disbelief all those who have been represented as the periphery become the centre of the same universe that loved to hold them as different and without consciousness, without being.

The revelation of an account, then, is one that captures the narrowness of a truth and so reveals that truth as dependant and relational, and so opens up that capture to its own conditions of possibility. Here truth is to be found in Bourdieu's (2000) account of ethics as ethos, as a habitus as a trigger in a web of social relations. Is part of truth then not its hiding but in even the possibility of being present to it? Or is truth then something that depends on what *can* be said from a 'natural' state, from the order of things? As human beings we are creative beings constrained by and continually seeking to transcend our or other's 'nature'. Should accounts of reality be tempered with an account of desire and an explanation of this desire?

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change is incorporated within the moment as movement. Time is thus made real in the meeting between bodies already formed in time and through time and what and how this relationship to time has been born.

In the demented dormitories of the disconnected there is always big hope and strong belief. This is what flowers in people and this is what is social: it is all there to be publicly seen, and heard as unsociable as sociable. What alongside hope can be taken forward from this shelter that is so publicly exposed? What must be learned to live amidst these conditions, to feel comfortable? What 'mental life' is to be experienced here if not a heavy mentality that weighs a body down with its most 'natural' reason? Can we really be strangers to our own consciousness? Can we be strangers to the call and whispers of the social? How can we know or even imagine the social pain and the ecstasy of 'others' without committing ourselves to it, of traveling its length? Indeed, taking this to its logical conclusion, what becomes of such accounts when they are successful? To what extent are the demands of ethnography severe with respect to sociological representation and with respect to the ethnographic researcher him/herself (Dowler, 2001)?

Craig's front door looked as if it had taken its own fair share of kickings; indeed, his own door was open when I got there, a strange reversal of the saying that '*back then you could leave yer front door open*'.<sup>331</sup> The frosted reinforced glass window at the top of his door was cracked and there were a few screw holes where the letter box used to be. Something akin to a square of carpet was nailed on the inside of the door covering the hole that was his letter box. His door looked like Craig; open and public, weather beaten and toothless. An example of how '*the most personal is the most impersonal*' (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, p201).

McCluskey was hand written in pen on a piece of paper stuck on the door. The close was dense with graffiti and as the title of one book on Easterhouse went, '*the writing is on the*

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<sup>331</sup> As has been seen, Craig's open front door is more to do with his lack of material possessions (including his insecure tenure of the flat) and the amount of beer he drank the night before than it is to do with the routine activity of 'securing your premises'. Generally speaking, there is a real and deserved concern with the possibility



*wall*'. The names of the children and youth who lived in that close and in closes near by, some making reference to each other (*Maggie Smith is a pure Wanken Cow*) or to each other through their particular allegiance to football club religion- '*Fuck the Pope*' or '*Fuck the Queen*' or '*Fuck the Polis 100%*'. However you look at it there is a lot of fucking and active positioning going on: agency is amok. Official 'signs' are softer but not without their own fields of force. There are signs everywhere, written signs, official and not so official, this is me and this is my name, fuck you and yours, this is my space, this is me making my space, here are your directions, this is graffiti and this is not, just get on with it.

When I reached Craig's we weren't celebrating anything although this was a special occasion. The oddity of the afternoon was that I would be taking a tape recorder out of my bag, placing it on the table near the scattered tobacco and 'skins' (cigarette papers) and talking into it through each other. I would be asking him about his life and about his views. The interview was semi-structured but my aim had always been (at heart anyway) to let the people I was talking to and researching, the 'data' as it is put, generate or at least shape the direction of my writing and reading. This sounds detached and of course it is.

I could list Craig's objectivities in perhaps the same way objectivity is created on an application form for a job, for job seekers allowance or for a research grant but his essentiality would be robbed of its agon, its meaning, its weight. Methodology would in effect be already prejudiced towards the 'data' rather than the data being allowed to shape the methodology. It isn't difficult to lose this weight in reifications of the economic or of the social (as if such dualisms are to be unproblematically found in reality). Nor is it too difficult

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of burglary in the area which means that an empty house/flat will have a radio on, a timed light switch and/or a

to disappear a person by a singular focus on the meaning of violence. As the methodological 'tool' of my own research I had come to disappear myself in my relations with others.

Craig disappeared to his long narrow galley style kitchen and returned with two packets, one containing a frozen fish, the other a frozen pie. He asked me what I would like at the same time stating that fish was good for you. In talking about the food he had in his fridge and freezer he made reference to always having 'grub' in *for the wean* as if this was somehow something that had to be attained, as if he was making a distinction between himself and other people who did not recognize how to put a meal together for their child even if it was only to take it out of a packet and place it in the oven. As will be seen, though, having grub in *for the wean* is also Craig's reflection on where his responsibility is focused; that is, food as a most basic and yet also differentiating aspect of life is 'bought in' for the wean, not for him.

Craig served me up some fish, chips and peas and I opened a can of lager for both of us. We finished our dinner, had another can and Craig sparked up a joint. We didn't talk much during this but just ate and listened to Pink Floyd. I didn't immediately approach the subject of physical violence even though I knew Craig knew that is what I was interested in. From experience I knew it would come up anyway, it is always something close to hand, indeed, the one thing that there is often to talk about. It is almost ritualistic and indeed perhaps again this notion of ritual attends to violence as a structure of feeling and the social power generated by rituals. That in talking about violence there is a participation in violence and that '*to participate is, by definition, to become part of something larger than the self*' (Rappaport, 1980, p187). I broached the external subject of '*Easterhouse*' itself. I didn't want to hold up

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friend or family visiting to impress a presence in the flat.



any illusions about my own interests. I told Craig I wanted to know about 'everything', Easterhouse, work, school, growing up, the lot.<sup>332</sup> Although my idea of violence had moved beyond physical interpersonal violence I wasn't really sure what I wanted to know. I asked him if he could turn down the track that was playing, the poignant '*Wish you were here*'. Craig intentionally increased the volume to annoy his upstairs neighbour before switching it off.<sup>333</sup>

I was well aware of the effect of the recording machine (and what it meant) on me and those people that had talked to me about such an idiomatic and ontic 'thing' like violence. For some, the recorder was like the photograph,<sup>334</sup> literally the object of the objectified, the filth, the pigs, the objectified, the reminder, the self- 'turn it off', 'don't take my photograph', I don't like listening to my voice, seeing my photograph, I don't like to see me. On the other

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<sup>332</sup> In email correspondence with a former resident of Easterhouse I had asked him to describe his experience of growing up in the scheme. I asked him 'what is was like'. Understandably, he replied asking for specifics and 'what do you mean'.

<sup>333</sup> Craig mentioned that his neighbour had been banging on the floor everyday for over a week. He said this rat-a-tat-tat would begin at seven in the morning and last for a few hours. He approached his neighbour with a '*whit the fuck are you playin at*' to discover he was having difficulty laying a new carpet. Again, the issue of neighbours and noise and its effects on social relations benefits when analysed in relation to the quality of housing provision, itself a social relation. I listened as one sixty year old woman described how her effort at letting her thirty something through the wall neighbours of five years know she could hear every word of their heated arguments degenerate into a personal threat and advice to keep her nose out of other people's business. The lack of sound insulation allied to different generational experience has left her '*actually scared she was going to hit me*'.

<sup>334</sup> This idea of animosity towards the capturing of something of a person in an objectified or objectifying form is said to be found across cultures and society. Indeed, in western culture and from western culture, Sontag writes that '*To photograph people is to violate them... It turns people into objects that can be symbolically possessed*' (1978, p14) Of course, this point of view is contested. Perhaps, what is important is who is recording/photographing and why. What does our use of images or the lifting out of context words say about us as a 'society' and the social relations within it. This does not have to be taken to be a moralistic point but rather what does representation mean to society? To what extent is the gaze thus a force. Indeed, Bourdieu particularizes and grounds this symbolic economy of the image in arguing that '*even when the production of an image is credited entirely to the automatism of the machine, the photograph taken continues to be a choice which involves aesthetic and ethical values.*' (Bourdieu, 1979, p.22). Ethical values are 'public' values and public values are encountered and made in social and political relations. That is why any appeal to morality or questioning of morality in social science has to be at the very least reflexive. If morality is preached by itself the politics of the issue are made invisible; morality comes to define what are really political issues (Bourdieu, 2000, p201). Indeed, as a sociologist, it would be more accurate to understand concepts like ethics and morals as 'ethos', a concept that itself questions the science of the 'reflexive posture'. As Charlesworth explains, an ethos is a '*range of implicit values that are practically achieved in a person's embodied response to others, and which are the deepest form of moral existence (or conversely, alienation), governing the recognition of others' value in*



hand, I had experienced the use of the recorder in interviews as opportunities for people to talk like I had never heard them talk before, as if they were giving me, giving themselves a picture in words that they rarely had the opportunity to do in such a fashion. For one man it was an occasion to change accent and intonation and literally 'echo' what was a passage from a book. Indeed, in this sense, although the interview has its limitations it can also be revealing. Perhaps this space for distancing and telling a story about yourself and others is important.

The manner and character of the beer and the dope were not out of place and because of this the machine, the interview and its effects became part of the scene: Craig knew why I was there and he gave me his stories to suit the occasion. On one hand, I had begun to recognize the mantra like statements in the interview transcripts, the gloss or what from one perspective be misinterpreted as the presentation of self, the distinction between Craig's 'ought' and 'is', the genuflexions to the magic of education and my perceived role as a representative from the university and so as 'intelligent'. This was never more clear than in our direct discussions of the experience of school, what has been called the '*grudge and the regret*' (Wacquant, 1999, p147,).

*'School, school dun nuthin fur me, a'll tell ye, a' don't think school done anything. A left school wi nuthin but mibbe that's cos a didnae listen: a hud the choice tae be the class clown and a chose tae be the class clown. Even if a hudnae been the class clown a don't think it wid huv done any good anyway... Aw a learned at school wis tae rebel. If your face didnae fit ye gote treated like shit and ye learned tae rebel. Sumdae looks at ye the wrang way. Its like yer*

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*existing (or conversely showing that they do not have value), granting their bodies space to feel comfortable and un-threatened in...' (2000, p82).*



*gonna look at them the wrang way... A lot of the teachers just suited themselves Pat. Ye could be the nicest person in the world an a'll guarantee that at least ten teachers in that school widnae like ye fur sum reason... See when a dun martial arts that gave me a whole new insight an outlook oan the world an people. It gave me a better insight than school ever did.*

*PQ: Like what?*

*Craig: Lotsa different things, a look at things different. A huv a helluva lot mare respect for no just people but everythin in general. Know how when ye wur young ye used tae abuse this an that and not think anything tae it: a don't dae anything lit that noo. It taught me that a person without respect loses all principles and dignity and therefore becomes a cheat and a liar. It gave me a lot of virtues; A learnt courtesy, integrity, perseverance, indomitable spirit.*

Craig's experience of school is understood as worth nothing because he did not gain any qualifications. His memories of school are not about 'education' but are about surviving. Like many others he experiences himself as an educational failure and yet as actually identifying the reasons for that failure in the school and what education meant to him. That is, education is encountered as regret because what education means is to be able to achieve certificates and those certificates are seen like keys to so many doors. The grudge is that this ability to achieve an education is not seen as *really* thinking: it is not seen as thinking because it has no practical relation to what is that individual's everyday life. In this sense, thinking itself is distinguished from 'really' thinking in that it is not experiential. Craig is not alone in presenting his memories with intelligence, pathos and intuitive understanding. I include only a few peieces of testimony.

*'Ultimately a didnae apply maself at school either an left wi wan o level and then went tae work fur a year an then saw education as my salvation. It wisnae but it should've been... She (then girlfriend) used to say I was gonny be a Peter Pan, and I really did think that ye know, always bein a student... when yer in education fur so long a think yer brain stopes working efter a while... '* (George, Interview in Pub, August 2003).

Similarly, in a more systematic fashion (Jim was writing),

*'people keep asking why I failed my highers in the first place...*

*I never know what to say except ... 'coz I'm thick'... what's your opinion is it :*

*a) coz I'm thick*

*b) nobody expected me to pass anyway*

*c) cos the teachers weren't aiming that high*

*d) cos my da kept telling me I was thick as shite*

*e) the media kept saying there's no point in studying cos there's no jobs anyway*

*f) cos you kept stealin' ma pen*

*g) cos everybody else had a job & because of my parents modest income I had to work to buy my drugs*

*h) cos my pubescent brain was warped by drugs and booze*

*l) it's all part of a complot by the upper classes to keep underprivileged scumbags like me from undermining their intellectual and financial superiority*

*j) all of the above but mostly a)*

*k) none of the above 'cept a)' (Jim, email correspondence, now lives in France).*

And,



*'If I could change anything it would probably be to push a wee bit more at school cos a didnae really bother about it. Good school attendance, when tae all the classes, done aw ma homework and everythin but it wis a case a ye didnae really know then... Its lit getting tae the conformin aspects tae not bein made tae look stupid and as if they're fly an getting away wi it, when really they've no gote enough brain power or common sense. They are too intelligent but they've nae common sense... (Richard).*

*'Its noo that a see a must a hud some sort a dyslexia... we've fun oot that both the weans huv dyslexia... a said fuck it tae school when the teacher asked me up in front of the class tae spell 'chib' oan the blackboard' (Malky, conversation in local park, march 2003).<sup>335</sup>*

Like Richard, Craig's experience of formal education is looked at retrospectively. It is *now* and here that formal education is held up as a means to be equipped and to engage with the world out there. What Craig remembers, though, is the way he was treated and looked *'at the wrang way... for some reason'*.

Craig explains how one year of martial arts gave him an insight into life that school could not. He mentions that this one year gave him a sense of respect for himself and for others. He says to me that whatever he was or had done before has changed: *'A don't dae that noo'*. On the window of the local chip shop I see an advertisement for Tai Kwan Do classes. The classes are advertised as promoting *'courtesy, integrity, perseverance, indomitable spirit'*. I recognise that Craig has learned the phrase from his year spent in martial arts training.

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<sup>335</sup> 'Chib' is slang for a knife intended for use on another person. I met Malky and his children at the park with my own children.

The change that Craig consciously verbalized as something he has achieved or wants in the interviews could be understood as an interview effect or as rote learning. This is reasoned in this way not because I know that Craig is involved in a long running feud with a few other local men but that I know from others who share his company that he has had a few weekend moments of violent detonation recently. What Craig wanted to '*get the fuck away fae*' was more than what could be verbalized or what could be done in a short space of time. This martial arts mantra is his and is his way of getting on with me in the 'artificial' interview.<sup>336</sup>

Craig had become a part of my work and I was grateful for it. The beer and dope were something we knew, something we could share, a form of bodily resonance without bodily contact, a communal somatic situation, drinking together, passing the joint, symbolically sharing the same even though we both recognized our differences in the same. For some, this is much like the experience and knowledge gained in and from violence in certain contexts. We could forget ourselves, could make it easier to talk to each other about things we wouldn't normally talk about. The dope relaxed us and took us, it brought us down and helped me speak and to listen and yet there is always out there, reality. What did Craig give me? What did he show me? What small part of him and his world did I see and see by not seeing? What did he see in me?

As noted, Craig's flat is an ex-council flat bought by its owner and now rented out to him. I found this out when Craig showed a letter from a bailiff company threatening to evict him for not paying 'his' mortgage. His landlady had been taking rent but not paying her mortgage.

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<sup>336</sup> I put artificial in inverted commas because representation is increasingly the reality.



Craig believed she was somewhere in Australia but was more interested in how he could sort this bailiff problem out because *'a could come back and find ma door boarded up or the locks aw changed... there's fuck all tae take apart fae the Playstation but a need somewhere tae stiye. A think the council wull sort it cos of ma daughter... av gote a meeting wie them oan Monday... Here Pat, Ye think a wid get a hoose dead easy aff the housing if a take this up? A know if a take that up to the housing they will huv tae gie me and ma daughter a flat. They wid probably gie us wan of the decants and then a proper hoose in three years'*.

Craig had a meeting with the local housing officer about an ex council flat that was going to be repossessed as private property by a private company acting on behalf of *the* bank (it is only a recent discovery that there are banks in the plural). He imagined this situation would lead him to being given a *proper* council flat/house in three years. He understood his situation would *be seen* as a priority by the local housing office because of his daughter. If he was a single man he imagined he would be in all kinds of 'properliness', homeless. He imagined that I would know how to work this out.

Craig is 30 years old but he looks biologically older when compared to people who have not faced what is 'natural' to him. He has that hard deep lined look of living with and in life from a particular point of always moving without moving. He is about five foot six, medium build, and has a smile that ignites and takes up his whole face. Tommy Vercetti says he has the gift of the gab and *could* have been something *'wi aw his talking'*. His voice has an infectious warmth and smoky earthiness to it earned in his attention to the art and science of inhaling and holding hashish smoke in the lungs and listening as is it makes its way slowly or quickly to the brain. He is a *character*. Craig has an indentation on the side of his forehead about the size of a fifty pence piece. Close by to this hollow are a number of scars. He has a few front teeth

missing. I only realized how bad his eyesight must be when he reached up to the top of his display cabinet to put on his thick lens glasses to read a letter from the bailiffs. His left hand is missing a knuckle, his pinkie finger rigid and stiff. His hand like his head are reminders of what he missed one evening as he lay on the pavement after being kicked unconscious by three of his peers (he was 'saved', *they would have done me in if it wisnae fur Tommy and his da comin oot the pub*).<sup>337</sup>

I describe Craig's scars because his animated body is and is not an obvious site for exploring the '*possibility of refiguring the hegemonic symbolic, imagining a future horizon that values bodies differently*' (Hekman, 1998). His scars are visible signs of his encounters with the social and with himself. He like all human beings provides materialized truth of human beings as social beings at the same time he affirms our participation in the twitching and mortal '*over arching flesh of the world*'. It is obvious because everything that Craig is as far as the dominant figuration at this moment in time is valued if only for its slave or clown like qualities: for entertainment, for parody and for distinction. It is often the case that it is bodies and faces like Craig that give others meaning and purpose in their own lives.

As far as Craig is concerned both his mind and body are '*fucked. A can still hear them kickin intae ma heid... it scars yer mind*'. Indeed, as will be seen, it is only in encountering Craig through a socially embodied vocabulary of communication, one that values his sensuous experiences as key elements in the structuring of perception, that there is some sense to be found in the idea of men's violence as containing elements of what from a perspective of total agency could be called masochism; that is, the disturbing idea that some 'victims' of

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<sup>337</sup> Those same peers were later to be charged and cleared of the murder of a 20 year old man.



violence can come to be involved in a process of self validation in that physical and psychological damage is accepted as routine.

Here we can see a potential meeting between understandings of the social body vis a vis the philosophical body. That is, Caputo's (1993) concern for the '*afflicted flesh of the world by revealing the underlying unification of all beings in the flesh of the world*' (Carey, 2000, p25). This is the humanistic and philosophical concern for primordial being, the body that comes before and beneath the rational, at the same time making the rational possible. The sociological concern is explicating the body in actuality, how this underlying unification of the flesh (a common humanity) emerges in the rational forms that it does, that is, in social and economic relations of power.<sup>338</sup>

Craig could present his own biographical reference to Adler's model of psychological and developmental maturity, one that gives credence to the notion of a developmental model but also critiques it. Like Tommy Vercetti's description of his meeting with the occupational psychologist and my own description of Ronnie, Craig is unequivocal, '*A see maself as a stupid immature young boy an a probably would always huv been lit that if a hudnae became a faither.*' There is an imagined encounter with self as lacking those qualities that are seen to be definitive of both adulthood and manhood. In a way, this sense of having failed to reach self hood is accompanied by a withdrawal of the responsibilities associated with adulthood. Indeed, the whole gamut of self concepts used to describe and to constitute an 'identity' are

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<sup>338</sup> An abstract example: when Merleau Ponty recognises that '*my body is made of the same flesh as the world... and moreover... this flesh of my body is shared by the world...*' this understanding is dramatically changed when we discover the scale and character of the sale of human organs for transplantation between people in developed countries and under developed countries. As Scheper Hughes (2000) remarks, the social and economic relations between organ donors and recipients, the conditions of living that each person on either side of this transaction

then questioned for their ability to 'purchase' what a self can attain with the psychological and cultural resources available.

Craig looks to the pragmatics of looking after a child to give him a sense of what it is to be an adult and a man. The role of father and this represented family form as giving him a 'sense' of what this 'adulthood' might mean as he actually encounters it. The relationship between child and parent is understood as one way and as instrumental: that is, that a child is a child and because of this I am an adult. There is no sense of reciprocity. As will be seen, I do not think it is a coincidence that in each of these three men the notion of 'adulthood' (and its implication of infant and infantilizing), psychological trauma (maddening and angering effect) and place coincide at the same time that I attempt to situate their lives in a language that seems already to be ready to judge.

For some, Craig has had a difficult upbringing in that his father was 'generous' with both his emotional and physical affection to the extent that Craig can now describe him as a person without feeling. Craig's relations with his father are not exceptional. That is, to encounter a father as a person without feeling is to encounter a living stereotype. In the course of my research I have not encountered one man over twenty five who has a relationship with their father that is not marked with violence or alcohol-as-negative. One man described how his father chased him about the flat with a Stanley blade and when unable to batter down his bedroom door stabbed his sister's four foot cuddly toy to death (Tommy Vercetti). Another describes his own initiation into relations of corporeality when having caught a clothes line

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lives, makes this transaction both rational and logical (even if then understood sociologically as a modern form of cannibalism).



thief his father held the fellow ten year old and demanded that his son punch him in the face (Andy McLafferty, Conversation in Flat, November 12<sup>th</sup>, 2002).

Indeed, Craig went on at length about his own childhood relationship with his father. There is indeed a sense of a deep continuity, one that fills the generational gap that has been intensified by the separation of the shared world of work that men and boys shared in the past.<sup>339</sup> But what is to be made of this as a 'difficult' upbringing if it is a common experience? The grudge and the regret of education, the relationship to teachers, the attempts to be one of the nicest guys (the class clown), the recognising of being looked at the wrong way, physicality as communication, the escape as the total package.

*'Ye wid rather go intae school an take a tankin than take it aff yer da... How can ye hit yer child wi so much force. Think its just hard hearted bastard... Here, know how we wur talking aboot hard heartedness, a wis up loch lomond, a wis talking tae Jamie, his da's an auld cunt an aw, know whit a mean... A wis up fishing, when a wis a boy, campin by the river. A wis lit that, 'Heh, da there's sumdae in oor tent'. He's lit, 'thur's naebdae in oor fuckin tent' an skudded me across the heid. 'Naebdae wid be stupid enough tae go near our tent'. Ended up he wis lit 'there is sumdae in there!', and we started runnin. It wis a big fuckin Doberman... Ma da hud aw his butcher meat in this cool box... the dug had made this big hole in the side of the tent, it ate fucking everything, bits of stew aw ower the the place. But this will stick in ma nut, they should never huv took me the following week. He should huv left me in the hoose if he knew he was gonna go an dae this. Hand up tae God, we wur aw staunin fishin an we saw that*

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<sup>339</sup> The essential continuity between the adolescent and adult male worlds'... Gill (1977) found that tension and aggression between adolescent and adult males was rare, in other words there was no generation gap' (cited in Hobbs, 1997, p808). I have found that this formulation is dependant on what is taken as continuous and what is discontinuous.

*big Doberman again. Ma da has fucked off away tae the tent and came back wi a big pound of steak whistling tae the dug 'cmon boy', showin it the meat an that. The dug came ower tae take the meat oot his hawn an he stabbed it in the belly, stabbed it right in the belly, picked it up and threw it in the water. He could huv left me in the hoose, a didnae huv tae see that. See another thing, he used tae take me tae the meat market tae see aw the cows getting dun in, 'listen tae that noise, listen tae that noise, ye know whit they are all moaning fur, they know they are dying, they know they're next'. Then ye see the cow's getting that big bolt shot into their nut. Noo whit wis he dain? Wis he tryin tae talk me intae something? Cos a know he's nae feelin, a know that'.*

For Craig the motivation is aimed at an intention. *Whit was he dain?* What was the something he saw in his father? I am reminded of a definition of violence from one of my men when he replied to my query 'what is violence': *violence is someone taking you somewhere you don't want to go* (Luke Wyfally). Craig recognised that the 'place' he was being 'talked intae' (without words) was a place without feeling, a structure of feeling without feeling: a grounding of an emotional self in a poverty of emotion. A day out to the local slaughter house and a dog killing camping trip as access to a self in this interview situation. George Lukas shares some of Craig's understanding of how a psychology can without alternative experiences become a most singular relation to a self and to others.

*'A think if yer weaned in a certain direction, ye'll end up like that. A think weans huv gote it a bit better these days. There's mare opportunities fur weans these days. Going back wan of the biggest things fur me is lit role models. That's why a think a lot people go looking fur role models an find them in the local hardmen...A never hud the heart fur it... That's whit it was about. When ye did see it (bloody violence) it wis horrible' (George).*



Being weaned in a certain direction is George's take on childhood and local influences. It could equally be a commentary on wider social and economic change and the relationship between 'local weaning' and the adult world of global 'culture'.<sup>340</sup>

Craig knew I was interested in the role that violence had in men's life and I knew this would have an effect in the context of an interview. In this sense, I was aware that whatever violent realities we might create that day across the small expanse of his living room I was paralytically confident I could untangle threads of relevance from amidst our talk and our fantasies. No matter if that understanding emerged from a haze of beer and smoke- I had already listened to countless heroic stories of actual and fantasized deeds of violence over and through the lips of what now must be literally an epic cast of thousands of beer cans and many pungent rooms. I felt as if I had passed through the uncertain zone of not knowing whether to '*write up or throw up*' (Hobbs, 1978) and had managed to combine both.

In this ethnographic circle, to talk about violence is routine and to experience the educational merits of childhood violence is routine. To drink is routine. To 'get out of it' is routine. It is a violent reality in that in stone cold sober terms it is one thing after another. To be 'dead normal' is to recognize that violence is normal. To fight like fuck is the *extraordinary*

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<sup>340</sup> In this sense I have only skimmed the surface of how class and gendered psyche can be explicated in relation to both the immediacy of the parent- sibling relation and the different personal structuring realities faced by a family in and through time. Here it is enough to state that this early socialisation period is an area that could be theorised more fully in relation to physical interpersonal violence. As George mentions it is perhaps here that class structures are reproduced most completely. That is, in the minds and psyche of children and in the early period of socialisation. George recognises the impact that more opportunities for self- expression or engagement can have on a psychology. In this case, the absence of a competing psychological/symbolic structure (of what it is to be a person, a Glaswegian, someone from Easterhouse and so on) is felt and the culture that one is socialised into fills the void that becomes identity.

achievement of that normal. This was something that Craig recognized in its disappearance in one local man.

Craig: *'See Pete, he used tae be dead normal, he used tae be able tae fight like fuck.'*

PQ: *'Whit happened tae him?'*

Craig: *'Drink, just the drink (the emphasis is 'as in not drugs'). See just the drink, alcoholicanism, Pete's away wi' the fairies noo, widnae harm a fly. The drink's a demon if ye let it be a demon, know whit a mean?'*

To fight like fuck, to be 'something else' (as far as violent capacity is concerned) is to be and to utterly correspond with the reality that one is faced with. It is to be reduced to that reality, to have to deal with that reality in one form or another but always having to deal with it. This violence is not only physical violence. What *was* public is what comes to be identified as something other: from living the private *as* public the public is recognized as the private.

A moment for me recognized in the space of 10 hours of interview and one that in recognizing I, not Craig, was always fighting against (*'get the fuck away fae it'*), was in the aftermath of a long list of possibilities and paths Craig believed he could have taken if he had committed himself to those paths. He came to show me the subtleties of decisions as decisions, and the subtleties of sociological life itself. It was as if after recounting the long list of temporary and part time jobs he has done (and the skills he had learned) he came back to himself as Craig here and now objectifying his own future before it is made. It was as if in saying it aloud made it real and gave the passing of time itself some meaning outside of being dominated by it



(Castoriadis, 1991). It was a moment where my interpretation of his life and my ethnographic fumbling met, it evidenced that the *'subjective consequences of objectivity is based upon his desire to recognise the fact that so totally reduced to structural relations is his life that even structure and his responding to it via habitus cannot escape into a substantive something in itself for the ethnographer to analyse'* (Gilfillan, 2000). This is the point where *'everything'* becomes *'nothing'*, and nothing is everything and I wasn't sure if this nothing was in me or in everything.

*'Av hud everythin Pat. Av done building work, road work, been a runner, done some cabling an drillin. Av always hud a bit of casual work somewhere. Av always done a bit of work. There ye go, av gote ma ane qualifications wi oot dain anything, just through experience... Av never hud a full time job or nothing, apart fae when a wis up in Aberdeen. IWhit a done wis a hung aboot building sites. A started aff workin in demolition. That workin in the demolition got me into a routine fur a while but it wis still casual, ye gote yer money in yer haun. A didnae huv fuck all for a couple of months an a hud tae get used to sitting oan ma arse fur a few months. A couldnae go oan dain that, a hud tae be workin. Its lit a wid go uptae Argyll street at eight in the morning, the guys putting doon the slabs, a wid be, 'any haunders needed mate'? That's the kind of things a can dae. A can dae all the slabs, the concreting, lots of different things'.*

PQ: *Aye but are you getting any security out of that? Its aw cash in hand an casual innit?*

T: *Aye, that's whit am sayin. There's nae security, there's nae security unless ye've gote a career. If you've no gote a career then nothing's secure (here I saw an interview effect, the*

*talk of career as if I had a career because I came from the university, yer learnin, tae go tae college).*

PQ: *Where's a career fae though?*

T: *Yer knowledge, yer learnin. Dae ye know whit ad love tae dae. Ad luv tae go tae college and learn tae work wi the weans. A kin dae cartoons an impression, heh watch this... (Craig then went into a 5 minute routine of one line impersonations of Billy Connolly, Frank Spencer, Kermit the Frog, Roland Rat, and the Lion from the Wizard of Oz) ... Pat, a could av been in the navy but a failed the exam... A could av dun it again but a hud tae come back up here fur ma daughter... Sometimes a think about how a could huv been something important, lit fur the wean tae look up tae'.*

Craig's description of his work and his relation to work echoed through a number of my informants; from Richard's's recognition '*that wis the downfall of it, dain things fur money. That wis it, tryin tae get money in an keeping yerself aff the broo*', all the way back to Hammy's recollection of working in demolition and scaffolding and his more entrepreneurial self-employed stints stripping roofs of lead. Craig wants to make himself 'a better person', to get the fuck away from his past, from 'himself'. It is as if the only way he can engage with selves other than 'himself' is to get the fuck away from himself as an adult or how he perceives adulthood. He implicitly and realistically evidences the philosophical as the social in that that '*to live that which one is means defeat, resignation, and death*' (Marcuse, 1964, p61). There is nothing there to engage with and the navy is seen as a way out.<sup>341</sup> He wants to be

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<sup>341</sup> It is no surprise, then, to discover the regular sitting of army and navy recruitment vans outside the local shopping centre. As has been noted, to what extent this 'way out' is itself becoming too expensive a career option



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something important for his daughter 'tae look up tae', to see himself in her eyes, someone who could look up to him. It is as if this 'importance' is somewhere else, as if his own significance is found anywhere but 'here'. Behind all of this, though, is a relation to money and a relationship to necessity: shit jobs and shit money. Indeed, this 'here' is the fundamental problematising of 'context' as a taken for granted explanatory tool.

His relationship to the 'economic realm' is one of structured insecurity, an engagement with a variety of both legal and illegal economic streams, the lack of transposable skills or certificates a strong feature. Craig said he wasn't sure how he would fare if he was a single-man-without-child but then went on to tell me that he had been without a place to stay two years previous. Again he evidences the difficulty there is in finding local council accommodation and how this structured unstructured relation to the most basic of needs can come to structure human relationships. Here 'structural' forces are invisible because everyday life is itself dominated by structure.

*T: Know whit a hud tae dae Pat? A hud tae ask wan of my wee mates not too come back. Ma we mate Pat, through his ane fault of his own, he's got nae where tae stay. He came roon an a let him crash fur wan night. A said 'Jamie, ye can stay as long as ye don't help yourself in ma kitchen or take aff yer shoes.'*

*PQ: Take aff his shoes?*

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for those traditional recruits is evidenced by the recent news that army recruits are failing to match up to the new intellectual service requirements of an armed services that engages with killing via computer systems and thus 'theoretically'.

*T: You don't want tae know, he did take his shoes aff and Pat, a came in here and I coudnae breathe! A told him tae get tae fuck. A swear oan ma hand tae god, a hud ma windaes open, dowsing ma settee wi air freshner. I was scared tae sit oan that settee (points to the one I was sitting on). He came back a coupla nights later- see when a hud told 'im tae skedaddle he went up tae big Mark's- Mark hud thrown him oot and he wis lit 'a'll tell ye before he dis, he threw me oot cos of ma feet'. He always chaps the door wi nothing. He wis sittin there wi a fiver in his pocket smoking ma fags: he smokes other people's fags but disnae buy any fur himself.*

*A never forgote Pat that a few year ago a wis stuck an he put me up. He's a harmless guy Pat, a'll never turn him away from ma door. If he wants tae come in a'll make him something tae eat but he will never stay in ma hoose. It took me a day tae get rid of the smell. See from noo oan he's no stayin unless he starts goin tae a sauna every second night tae clean himself up. A think he's losin the plot a bit as well. He changes his laugh every coupla months.<sup>342</sup>*

Craig looks after his daughter Monday to Friday and tries to get either her mother or her mother's mum to take her from Friday to Sunday night. He says the girl's mother is 'mare interested in the dancing than the wean' come Saturday an that it is her granny who looks 'efter her'. He immediately makes it clear to me that he doesn't hold this against her but would later go on to note the number of times the girl's mother does not take her at all at the weekend.

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<sup>342</sup> In transcribing this testimony I was struck by how Craig had come to identify his friend as losing the plot; that is, that he changes his laugh *every coupla months*. The focus on 'holding it together' and keeping the plot is one that is found at the level of what is emotionally real. Mental health and mental illness is encountered as a social issue. Craig's friend and his mental state is encountered in relation to a sense akin to 'laughing a self stupid'. This most fundamental aspect of a self, the emotion and motion of laughing as reflecting his friend's 'drift' from here to wherever he can sleep for the night. Like the voice, laughter is encountered as coming from the whole of what a self 'is'. That the depth, tone and engagement from and with of Jamie's laugh can change from meeting to meeting is perhaps as much a comment on Craig's intuitive understanding of what is real as it is of his friend's fragmented experience of the 'social' and the 'political' itself.



He spends this free time, this nothing time 'gettin blitzed... a only huv a few cans during the week, if anything... just a few blaws an that's it'. It is an everything and nothing time because there is everything that Craig can think about doing and nothing that Craig can afford to do, other than drink.<sup>343</sup> It fills a void and helps him make sense of that void, drinking and smoking dope is something he knows and has known all about since childhood. It has always been there, it is on the one hand an enjoyable and normal experience and then on the other something he describes in its level of intensity as damaging. In the context of the interview situation Craig describes how 'A heard ma wee nephew wis up that Kevin's stayin... a know fur a fact he's puntin hash... a wis lit that, 'wis he up your hoose stayin? A said tae him 'a will kick your cunt right in if he's up there again'. But then a thote Pat, he's 15 noo, a wis dain aw that shit when a wis eleven... But that's aw we dun winnit? Sit in the hoose an smoke dope aw they years, never done fuck all— don't get me wrang it took us away fae aw the gang fightin right enuf.

Ah wis bad wi it mind u... I was walking aboot like a mongol. Gerry wis asking me wan day where a wis goin. A wis lit (rolls eyes back, makes a whistling sound, whoo-hoo) a didnae know, then its dawned oan me, a wis goin hame. Johnny (his friend) even said tae me that the dope wis sendin me cuckoo. See Brian Heaney? A swear tae God, see trying tae talk tae him noo, see the state. Yur there aw day fur wan sentence. He's been smoking skunk everyday fur eight year noo. He's haud a constant supply of skunk. His bro' has just been done fur ten ounces a skunk and they want me tae get involved again. But a know they want tae use me fur something. Anyway, this is Gerry, this is how the skunk has affected him noo. If a wis still

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<sup>343</sup> Afford as in widest sense of costs, political economy of emotions, physical forms, resources.

there a widnae be able tae look efter ma wean. Gerry's lit this, 'remember...eh', long silence, 'remember...eh'. He stutters lit hell noo, its lit he canny get his words oot noo. Ye can see it in his eyes that he is lookin fur the words, he's looking fur where they have gone .

This is 'social drinking' and 'social smoking'. Like the dope, drink helps him both 'escape' from reality and reaffirm the meaning of reality. He feels 'real' when he is drinking and smoking dope, it is a time when he is both transcendent and resonating with 'culture' - a somatic state that corresponds with his experience of 'work life' (or lack of work life) and his 'everyday life': a mimesis or resonance that has taught him the '*gold standard of feeling and reality so that whatever does not mimic this reality is felt to be unreal, unsatisfactory or fake*' (Gilfillan, 2000, p133). Craig drinks to both awareness and 'oblivion' alone or with company. Drink and dope renders a very modern service for him, it has a central place in the social '*economics of his libido*' (Freud, cited in Gay, p730).<sup>344</sup>

For Craig '*if it wisnae fur the wean a'd be an alky, ad be in a hole, ad be getting mad wif the drink if it wisnae fur ma wean. Ad be constant. Aw ma money wid go oan getting mad wi' it*'.

In the interview, Craig's wean is a reason for being. Without her he would be a being without a reason for being (Bourdieu, 1990, p196; Bourdieu, 2000, p280-284).<sup>345</sup> He would be in a hole, a space where movement and perspective is immediate, where there is a sense of being

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<sup>344</sup> This is *one* meeting with modernity that is shared across the class structure. As Marshall concludes his volume on anthropological and cross cultural studies on drinking habits, '*Solitary, addictive, pathological drinking behavior does not occur to any significant extent in small scale, traditional, preindustrial societies; such behavior appears to be a concomitant of complex, modern, industrialized societies*' (p. 451). As will be seen, this is not to obliterate the intrinsic qualities and enjoyment of particular drugs themselves.

<sup>345</sup> This is in one sense a comment on human being and its basis in sociality and so the foundation for what must always be a critical sociology. That is, it is an encounter with humanity as finding its '*raison d'etre*' in its meetings with other human beings in that there is no intrinsic meaning in simply being human. What being human '*means*' is other human beings and '*the need for justification from others*' (Bourdieu, 2000).



hemmed in, where life is really a hundred times too short to bore ourselves (Nietzsche). This is a constant reality that is unreal, incomprehensible in if not its boredom then its 'unreality'.

Indeed, from here it is not only social action that can be conceptualized as a border line concept; reality itself is open to such a rendering (Crespi, 1989, cited in McNay, p100).<sup>346</sup>

Fatherhood for Craig meant he could divert and change his social practices 'over a longer period of time'. This longer period of time (that is, a relationship to self through 'being' a father) is itself social, sociological and so open to the same relational forces that provide a reason to have a reason for being.

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<sup>346</sup> Evidenced by the level and use of prescribed and not prescribed psychoactive medicine. I discovered that one woman (48) had been on high doses of anti-psychotic medication, chlorpromazine (anti-psychotic), for eighteen years (for anxiety and depression). The prescription had been a long term rolling one, years of medication from the squiggle/signature of a male doctor. The detail of the prescribed chemical is such that it rides free of perspective, emotion and the grainy detail of life. One of my key informants described his own use of prescribed anti-depressant medication; after taking twice the dose he experienced tortuous cramps and butterflies in his stomach and chest and resorted to a two in the morning cold bath in an effort to reduce the feelings. In a phone call to another man (aged 34) he asked if I could tell him what one particular drug was, one that he got from a friend to 'try and get a nights sleep'. He didn't have any valium or sleeping tablets. Despite discovering it was medication for men having problems getting an erection he took a few of them in his quest, '*might gie me a buzz anyway*'. This priapic chase for a buzz is a chase for an engagement with reality that finds 'what is already real' in altered states of being: reality in itself at this moment in time is utter social nakedness. That is why from this perspective it is not an escape from reality it is up to the researcher to see reality differently. It is to understand the demands of everyday life and everyday experience of life as something found in chemicals that is in a different fashion to that speculated by, for example, Weber and his discussion of ecstasy: '*Because of the demands of everyday life, the layperson can experience ecstasy only occasionally, as intoxication*' (Weber, 1965). The role of 'intoxication' and of drugs in everyday life is thus a whole sociological and political field. In this sense, the chase for a buzz is not to be seen as a peculiarity of a particular biology but must be understood in its complexity as a meeting between lived realities, forms of life and political justifications for 'chemical programmes' aimed at curing or alleviating substance dependency through the use of chemicals defined as non-addictive. For example, how we see and what we see and the value given to particular knowledge can be explicated in relation to the 'time and place' that knowledge emerges from. In other words, our cognitive structures of perception are tied firmly to the social system (and our position within it) in which we perceive. In his own words, there is seen to be an '*ontological complicity between habitus and the socially constituted principle of perception and appreciation, and the world which determines it*' (1992, p20). This is Bourdieu's theory of action and its relationship to his concept of field(s). It is a perspective that takes a step back from the immediacy of phenomenological forms. For people like Richard and George, drugs (in this case hash) enable them to *manage* and to perceive things more deeply and more clearly and to sense ecstasy in these moments of intoxication. Both recognize that their habitual use of hash can be described as addictive and that in such light virtues can be made from necessity. George is adamant, though, that smoking hash changes his perception and 'normal' relationship to reality in that after a joint he can '*just stick ma headphones oan and ma relationship tae the world changes...*' The fact of enjoyment can like the smoke from George's joint disappear into thin air.



**Figure 5: John Wheatley College**



The new cultural campus and its syllabus only half a mile up the road seems a long, long way away. The building is now part of a central 'hub' in the redevelopment plans for the area: it includes John Wheatley College, (see Photo 3) a new crèche facility, a proposed 'cultural campus, and Easterhouse's very own Social Work Department (See Fig. 4): a stark indication of the level of social work 'input' or 'demand' in the area.

**Figure 6: Easterhouse Social Work Department**





A local voluntary worker feels that recent changes in social work provision and delivery have distanced social workers from the people they are employed to work with and for: in the turn to 'clients' as 'consumers' it is likely that recipients of social work services will have to empower themselves (as long as that empowerment does not infringe on the power of the profession) by attending in person.<sup>347</sup> Like the new community schools entry to the Social Work Department is surveyed by outdoor and indoor CCTV cameras and access to the building is via controlled security doors.

And of course, Easterhouse the place now has its own business centre, home to the marketing, investment and employment recruitment 'business', the Greater Easterhouse Development Company (GEDC),<sup>348</sup> whose expertise was recently celebrated in a visit by Estonian politicians keen to discover routes to European Funding. One local newspaper describes the 'wealth of knowledge' and 'expertise' that the GEDC has in relation to negotiating the maze of bureaucracy and paperwork that any successful application for funding must go through. It

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<sup>347</sup> Ted points to an increasing management style ethos of modern social work, centralisation of resources under one fortified building (as opposed to small community bases and home visits), and the increasing workloads and scarce resources that social work entails. Scarce resources conceptualised as not only monetary but as cultural- the ability to talk to people on their level, the threat of violence and being able to deal with it. Despite the sense of purpose in occupations related to the social there is often a sense of being up against 'it'. Bar-On (2002) and Jones (2001) cite similar arguments and evidence. Jones shows how this combination of stress factors may be the reason why Social Workers in Glasgow have the highest rates of absenteeism amongst Scottish council workers. One theme of Social Work involvement with young adults is in managing the transition from school to the workplace. Of an approximate population of two thousand young adults aged between 15-18 years over six hundred have contact with Social Work services (<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/cru/kd01/blue/imss-11.asp>). There is a recognition that many young people are not prepared for what are seen as the new demands of the job market. The market here is not seen as a benign and invisible 'fiction'- like Barthes' understanding of myth, the market is an *'interested fiction in which not everyone has an equal interest and whose social and economic consequences are very real for whole chunks of society, particularly those which, for want of any economic, cultural and social capital, must rely the most upon the state to accede to the effective exercise of citizenship'* (Wacquant, 1999, p132).

<sup>348</sup> See web site for aims and breakdown of company <http://www.gedc.org.uk/>



is hoped that the GEDC's advice will improve the quality of life of people in 'Eastern Europe' (East End Independent, Jan 30<sup>th</sup>, 2003, p10).<sup>349</sup>

This building in and onto place of culture and the opportunity for cultural expression seems from here, at least at this moment and from this place, as exactly that. It is as if it would take an act of extraordinary courage for Craig to visit the place and ask what was on offer. It is because of this that the reasoning behind the campus has a local character and insight in that it includes the incorporation of a number of what might be seen as non cultural services. For example, alongside the varied and more visible cultural activities of dance, music and art is the presence of a community alcohol detox unit. This thinking recognises the sheer amount of effort and organizing that it could take to bring some people to the centre and the kinds of issues they may bring with them. Moreover, it is a necessity in that while the advice given while waiting for a hospital admission is to keep drinking in order to reduce the likelihood of

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<sup>349</sup> The business centre is also host to the 'Youth Involvement Project'. The project describes its aims as 'working with young people aged 12 - 25 who are not engaged in other services' (<http://www.youth.org.uk/ad/youthinvolvement/youthinvolvement.htm>). It is as if youths must have contact with some public service. To what extent does this echo Foucault's notion of the 'carceral archipelago'? For example, those institutions which make up this web, the school, the social work department, as routes for this power, enabling it to survey and operate '*through progressively finer channels, gaining access to individuals themselves, to their bodies, their gestures and their daily actions*' (Foucault, 1980, cited in Shilling, 1992, p75). In a way this leads onto to the 'dispersal of discipline' thesis (Cohen, 1979, 1985). Here we find the tendency of crime prevention measures to 'blur the boundaries' between those people defined as delinquents and those not. Cohen (1985, p60-61) is explicit in his attention to the expansionist direction of this process and in particular the increasingly reciprocal relationship between the judiciary and non-judiciary services. For example, those agencies found in the educational, health and welfare sectors. Wacquant has documented the expansion of neo-liberal policy and political reality and its impact on the relations between welfare and those who need it. Recently, Timmermans and Gabe (2002) draw attention to and ask questions of the interaction between the realms of health care and the criminal-legal: a point that had been made years earlier by feminist criminologists who always understood that the study of crime and punishment demands transgressing criminology into wider fields (Hudson, 1996). Of course, I am working with habitus and fields, then, this amorphous 'power' is symbolic violence and social relations. Indeed, Garland (1990, p291) argues much the same in relation to punishment, that is, rather than seeing community sentencing and crime prevention programmes as uniform strategies of power or discipline, they are more profitably understood as the 'nature of punishment's social support and its cultural significance'. If this is done pre-emptive schemes such as this can be seen as a way in which 'society defines and expresses itself... and at the same time the means it exercises power over deviants'. Or in this case, those suspected of becoming deviants (see Shearing and Stenning, 1985; Feeley and Simon, 1992 for discussion of New Penology, described as the '*replacement of the individual with an actuarial language of probabilistic calculations and statistical distributions applied to populations*').



fits, the reality is that hospital admission is refused if the individual has been drinking on the day of admission.

Craig has no contact with his own mother and father; they live less than 500 yards from his own flat. He showed me the toys he had bought his daughter. Her picture was on the wall next to a framed painting of Jesus and Celtic: like the majority of Catholics and Protestants in Scotland this is the closest to formal religious participation Craig gets and that suits him fine: religion is part of the human condition. The living room has a two seater leather couch and chair with various hash burns on it. One of the panes of glass in his front windows was cracked. I asked what had happened. It was *'the young wans fightin, wan a them hit the windae'*.

I was to discover that the window had been smashed during a friendly punching match involving Craig, his brother John and a friend Tommy Vercetti. The men had taken it in turns to punch each other in the face until Craig hit John over the head with a glass bottle of brown sauce. As has been stressed, this level of generosity and violence between friends is not uncommon and is not far removed from non-violent friendly everyday interaction. There is no malice between the men, no emotional direction or intent. Indeed, the more I found out about Craig's relation to his friend Tommy the more I wondered if there was a time when they didn't come to blows. In this case Craig had, yet again, been 'knocked oot' by his friend Tommy. However, it was another less friendly loss of consciousness that was to mark my talk of violence with Craig. It was one that did not have boundaries and one that travelled over four years from his first beating to running out with a machete two weeks after this interview to 'back up' a prone and under attack Tommy Vercetti.

I have already mentioned the indentation on Craig's head. It came about after

*'... They kicked me into a coma. Efter it me an Tommy would go up and wait for them tae come oot of their ma's hoose... am walkin doon... he's lit, 'cmon then', there must have been, a dunno, a good crowd of them anyway. A wis lit, 'am getting it here', a knew a wis... It ended up a square go, he gote me a topper, hooked me, a wis drunk right but fair dues he gote me a topper but a took it right, ma sturdiness. So a whacked him a cracker an av headered 'im and he decked it. They just aw pounced oan me... Ma face was aw oot like a big pulp, they kicked me intae a coma, the whole spank...'*

The 'they' of Craig's kicking are men he shared the same space with as children and then as teenagers. *This* kicking was one of two that had taken place about three years previous and had involved the same three central characters in a loose group of young men. Then, Craig's friend Tommy had joined him in waiting for them in their own flat before 'stalking' those young men's mother's flat looking for revenge. I had asked Craig about how well he knew them. They were people I had grown up with but had not seen for years. Craig remembers them as peers and through their *'puntin hash an acid fae their bedroom windae... thur ma an da gote thame tae sell shit... thur ma didnae give a fuck'*.

I enquired as to the murder charge that they had faced two years previous. *'They gote away wi it but thur's people waitin fur them'*. I misunderstood and was misunderstood when I asked Craig if he felt those men felt any remorse, indeed it was only then that I discovered that Craig had received more than one beating from them.<sup>350</sup> It was in opening up this misunderstanding

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<sup>350</sup> Remorse is a word that is dependant on a universalisation of a social model of both society and of individual psychology. Projecting an idea of an emotion like remorse onto a general population will invariably provide



that we began talking about the police, grassing, and the forms of learning and communicating that Craig had alluded to from his talk of his school years and what he had remembered from martial arts.

*PQ: Dae ye think they feel any remorse?*

*Craig: No way. They're sad. They huvnae gote a brain in thur heid an the brain they dae huv is so sad its unbelievable. If they did feel bad about it, if they grew up a bit then why did they come back the following year and murder Joe.*

*PQ: That's whit a thote ye wur talking about.*

*Craig: No, they kicked me intae a coma.... We left it a couple a weeks an then went roon tae his hoose, chapped the door, naebdae in... so we put a letter through the door.<sup>351</sup> We kept goin roon but it gote aw shut up. Efter that me an Tommy would go up and wait fur them tae come oot their ma's hoose... we went tae his ma's hoose but never went near the door. Ended up that hoose gote shut up an they fucked off tae Maryhill...*

*PQ: Whit happened wi Graham stickin them in?*

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evidence to support arguments for a 'decline in morals' or evidence of a purely *individual* pathology. For example, it can be argued that this symbolic violence is found in Freud when he postulated the relationship between an ego and a super ego as only psychological, something out with race, class and gender, out with power relations. A lack of remorse for particular acts is thus seen as pathological. Remorse finds the roots of its existence in a particular understanding of the individual in society and the individual interpreter's relationship to social and material forms. It is an intellectualized understanding of what is a social form of reasoning. Here is where there is an argument to be made for a political economy of emotion or identifying the constituent and related parts of a psychological economic system (Fanon, 1967, p35). Bitterness and crisis, likewise, depend on a particular understanding and placement within social forms and relations. Williams (1997, p18) points this out succinctly in reference to English literary sociology's own defense of the seeming erosion of those supposedly wider qualities of vitality and sincerity.

*Craig: He's still getting stick for that, well he did dae it.*

*PQ: A know he gote a lot of grief fur it.*

*Craig: Well lets put it lit this, you will never ever see Graham Sharp drinking a pint of lager in the Station Bar. He tried it wance and he came oot an gote his cunt kicked in.*

*PQ: By the wans he grassed? (Who are the same men who battered Craig and then faced murder charge)*

*Craig: No, that's just the fact fur bein a grass. They can't stand the boy fur whit he done. He stuck in wee Mackie.*

*PQ: But they're ostracised tae a certain extent are they no?*

*Craig: Aye, that wis a fuckin liberty whit they done. But Graham admitted he grassed. A put it doon tae he wis young when he done it and the CID would have brote it oot 'im. See, when the polis start getting at ye, ye've gote tae be a bit of an arrogant bastard, 'am telling you fuck all'. They try everythin under the book. Graham shat himself, he did grass them. Even tae this day thur are people who will say 'whit ye talking tae him fur'... When yur scared ye don't know whit ye'll dae or say. He should never hve hung aboot wi they wi arseholes in the first place. Remember that big Forry? He wis shaggin that Morton's wife an they found oot aboot*

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<sup>351</sup> The letter said something like 'you cunts are getting it'.



*it, they went up tae his hoose and gave him a tankin'. He wis a grass as well, he gote that big mars <sup>bar</sup> in jail fur grassin... Ma dab rote me up tae believe the polis wur bad, a hated the sight of a uniform when a wis younger. Am thinking noo that the first thing ye say tae yer wean is that if ye see a bad man ye go an tell the policeman. We wur getting reared up tae hate them. Its lit yer weans might no go and run tae the polis fur help.<sup>352</sup>*

*Ian's (his brother) annoying me just noo. He's sayin tae Danny (his brother's ten year old son) that if he gets caught wi the polis when he's up fightin the Drummy he's getting a doin. Noo he should be kickin his cunt in fur that. That's ma da aw ower again. A want tae think aboot where a went wrang an how a could help ma wean's future. Its lit stupid things, if a dae*

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<sup>352</sup> The issue of 'grassing' is an utterly fundamental expression of particular aspects of working class structuration. Indeed, when it comes to crime and physical interpersonal violence the three wise monkeys are the general guidance as far as providing information to the police or the state authorities are concerned. Although it is important to place the issue of 'grassing' alongside issues of the more middle class and rule bound sounding 'whistle blowing' (in that both evoke almost universal feelings of aggravation, for example see Larmer, 1992), the word grassing implies a particular social (rather than etymological) root. To focus on 'grassing', then, as a peculiarity of a special group often tells us both about the aims and disciplinary background of the analyst (as well as the embedded relationship between language, meaning and culture) as well as those perceived as subject to the study.

Why? Simply put, the word is most often used to describe a particular relation between an authority, most usually some policing force, and an individual or group who are potentially subject to the power of this authority or who more than likely do what they have to do relation to this authority. It describes someone who 'tells' and in telling has paradoxically denied themselves. Their identity is defaced. In this case, it has a strong relationship with the identity and possibility of being (as) a victim. A victim is some one who has told or shown their story/themselves in and to particular social space. A victim is an official representative of the policing community. In this sense, the word finds its gravitas in a particular context and in particular sets of social and economic relations rather than say a 'culture of non-disclosure'. This asks the researcher to situate exactly what are the consequences of 'bringing something to light' that was perhaps 'grassed over'. In the case of grassing/whistle blowing what was private or unsaid can become known and in being made known reveals not only what has happened but that what has happened in private is actually what gives the public institution its appearance, an element of its constitution. The act and the 'knowing' of the act as a secret are part and parcel of the same truth.

It is no surprise then to discover that 'grassing' has a particular place in the historical relations between working class populations and the police, welfare agencies and generalized to authority. It is a term that indicates the closeness/distance of a particular community to actual social-economic hegemonic norms. Indeed, as Evans et al note, the term grassing 'comes from cockney rhyming slang- 'it stems from defining someone who is close to a 'copper' as a 'grasshopper', and was used in the criminal underworld of the 1920's' (1996, p365). Historical and popular accounts of the relations between the police and particular communities sometimes reveal the mutual understanding and antagonism that can exist between them (Henderson, 1994). As Marx noted some time ago, this is no accident in that 'the existing relations of production between individuals must necessarily express themselves also as political and legal relations' (Marx, quoted in Bottomore and Rubel, 1963, p92, in Hobbs, 1989. p92).



go up <sup>—</sup>~~tae~~ ma da's and they go, 'get' (as in go away, Craig mocks a pretend slap) the wean dis it back. Am lit 'stope dain that tae ma wean, stope learnin ma wean tae hit'. They go 'aw shut up wur only playin'. Its no that when thur oot or up the café and the wean dis dae sumthin, then its 'stope bein a horrible wean'.

### 7.3 *Leaving Craig's*

I left Craig's in a bit of a haze. The tape recorder was in my rucksack and it felt like I was taking something with me and away from Craig as I walked out his front door.<sup>353</sup>

Velma had told me that her sister (Linda, a 30 year old woman) had been beaten up by her boyfriend (Davie, 25). The father of the woman's son (Jim) and former long term partner had heard about this and had become involved. Velma told me that Jim had been carrying a knife. He had said he was 'going to do the wee bastard in'. Local rumour had it that Davie (who was now staying with his parents) had been bragging that he was also intent on 'doing' Jim in. I decided to walk the short distance from Craig's to Linda's, my intention to see how she and her ten year old boy were getting on.

On the way I met Linda's ten year old son Robert. I asked him about his mum and he said 'she's awright'. I asked him if about Davie and he said 'he's a big spazzy, he canny talk'. I was to find out later that Robert had tried to stab her mum's boyfriend and had indeed been successful in arranging a meeting between a hammer and the aforementioned boyfriend's head as he sat watching the telly. Robert had taken the matter of self- defence into his own hands.

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<sup>353</sup> It was the last time I was to see Craig in that flat despite numerous attempts to contact him. The flat was repossessed and he has been moved to high rise flats in Milton.



As we walked past one of the local primary schools Robert told me that the 'den toi' and the 'drummy' had been fighting the previous evening on the football pitches near his home, nothing extraordinary in that. The old imagined and real gang territories seem less real but perhaps that is just an effect of age. The 'young wans' still carry out their ritual to and fro's on the old unfenced playing fields in the summer evenings and less so the rest of the year.<sup>354</sup> A local voluntary group is in the process of fund raising with the aim being to build a large adventure playground on this land.

In an interview with Bob Holman he reminded me that 'violence' is not endemic in the area (November, 2002) and pointed out that most of the gang battles are between youngsters who rarely get close enough to inflict any serious damage upon each other.<sup>355</sup> This is a point Stanley Made would agree with Ted about in that

*'See when a go up they pitches, ye hear the gangs shoutin fae wan side tae the other. Very, very rarely dae they meet. Aw shoutin abuse, wan bunch runs and the other wans run away. In the auld days ye hid tae fight lit fuck'* (Interview in his home).

Robert, though, went on matter of factly on how one of the boys who fight for the 'drummy' was caught by the 'den toi mob' and his face looked like *'aboot ten bottles a tomato sauce bottle hud been splattered over it. It wis aw ower his shirt an everythin. He wis knocked out'*.

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<sup>354</sup> Indeed, at the weekend the local youths also hold running battles that can, as Robert makes clear, spill out of the playing fields, into the street and sometimes through your front door. Velma informed me that while sitting watching television on Saturday (June 14<sup>th</sup>, 2003) her front door was banged open and a young man ran up her hallway shouting 'don't let them in'. He continued through her living room into her garden and scrambled over her garden fence. His pursuer stopped at Velma's front door.

<sup>355</sup> Bob Holman is a Professor of Social Policy who set up a self organising local voluntary group in the area.

He wēnt on to say *'they bashed his face in wi poles'*. I said *'a hope you don't get involved in that'*. Robert told me *'a' just watch. 'If they come up here a just run away. If ye want tae see fightin ye should go doon tae the shoppes (where we were heading). Ye see guys throwin bricks at thur da's an aw that. They're always fightin doon there'* (Field Notes, September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2002). In his description of the scene there was no sense of exaggeration in the tone of his voice; it was flat, matter of fact and without energy.

I was already aware that at ten years old Robert had witnessed or heard about plenty of 'atrocities'. This type of conversation is not uncommon. As has been mentioned, I eventually got to hear about most of the 'chibblings', deaths (through whatever cause), fights, threats and so on that happened in the area that my informants were based. This world is immediately available to children and learning to deal with violence (as something concrete and symbolic, actual and potential) is something learned by simply listening and being there. Indeed this socialisation into a familiarity with violence is something I actively tracked in the formal interviews and in the field. It is an area that seems of crucial importance in matters of reproduction and of a psychology of habitus.

Indeed, it is important to stop the narrative here and identify two incidents that happened near places that are identified as places of love, support and safety: that is, his own home with his mum and his surrogate home that is his grandfather's one bed roomed flat.<sup>356</sup> First, directly facing his flat is a plot of vacant land that two months previous had been the scene of a murder. This was something I had discovered when in the context of an interview with Ted he had mentioned that in the previous month a male teenager had been stabbed and killed on the

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<sup>356</sup> Robert is one of twelve of his grandfather's grandchildren. He sleeps on his grandfather's floor or on his small couch when he stays.



land directly in front of the building. I remembered that this must have been the murder that Velma had told me about a few months previous.

*'There's a guy just done in the night up at the shoppes. They tried tae cut aff his legs, slashed aw doon here (pointing to groin). That's that guy deid'* (Velma).

Velma lives nearby Robert's grandfather and shares a view of a street that is my second point. That is, while staying with his grandfather on Christmas Eve (2003) Robert and everyone else on the street's attention was directed to the body of a man who had been murdered that evening after attending a party on the street. His body lay uncovered for *'about two tae three hours'*.

I reached Linda's to discover she wasn't in. Robert didn't know where she was and he left for his grand dad who lived locally. This was a situation he was used to. It is first hand experience of what Taylor has described as the *'burden of the family unit to carry broader social change'* (1999).

Age is an issue of mind over matter. If you don't mind, it doesn't matter. We can talk about the social construction of childhood but that social construction is always in relation to a construction that is taken as real. Institutions and interventions are built on these social constructions. It is recognition that the most biologically grounded features of what it is to be a human being are socially defined.

In view of the power of childhood as a something as opposed to a socially constructed nothing, Robert is said to be old before his time like a lot of children *in this type of*

*situation*.<sup>357</sup> In a lot of situations, 'street wise' and 'common sense' is a way describing a necessity that he negotiates. These days are sometimes referred to as the '*happiest days of our lives*'. The social and economic construction of what it means to be a mature adult has lead some commentators to note that '*For a long time now the practical/material pressures in socially excluded households have forced substantial numbers of children to 'grow up' very quickly*' (Jackson, 1992; Wilson, 1993; Jenks and Petersen, 1991, cited in Winlow and Hall, 2003).

On the one hand, this 'growing up' is basically a commentary on self preservation and survival until the biological signs of adult hood emerge. From either position, childhood or adulthood, neither makes sense, that is childhood and adulthood are illusory markers made by people. If childhood and adolescence are social constructions (Mead, 1928, Aries, 1962) then so is maturity, adulthood and all those markers of what it means to be a competent actor on the social scene. We have people 'failing' prescriptions for what it means to be a child and to be an adult.

Ronnie (38), in passing, asks how I am. I don't know him in any close fashion, in fact I have never had anything other than a passing conversation with him. He knows me through my family. I reply, '*aye, awright Ronnie*'. Ronnie looks like a lost boy, a ghost of a person. I would later say to a friend that I met *Ronnie* and how I thought he looked like a 'lost boy' (despite or perhaps because of a fearsome reputation when it came to matters of slash and hack). I don't exactly know why I said he looked like a young boy; it was just the way he looked. I know he has been in prison numerous times and I know he has a father who enjoys

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<sup>357</sup> This type of situation is childhood poverty.



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talking about violence (not that there is anything peculiar in that but more to the point perhaps it is because of it). Indeed, it seems as if I had been equating physical violence with some sense of adulthood, as if violent capacity and performance was an indicator or at least some aspect related to maturity. It was the vein that crawled all over the skin of my writing, this area, the people I was talking to, the growing up to quickly, the projected futures, the *'getting tae fuck away fae it'*, the continuities and discontinuities across the generations.

My friend Tommy went on to tell me he had entered into counseling in an effort to keep his job. He had been drinking more, self prescribing both legal and non legal drugs, and had been involved in a few serious fights. His counselor remarked that he was 'trapped' in his childhood reliving strong attachments to times and place. Perhaps the metaphor of a trapped identity can be more charitably replaced with a psychological and economic one. That is, perhaps he was struggling to find the symbolic and cultural resources that would enable him to finance a higher and different psychological identity (Gilfillan, 1999, p183). What Tommy feels trapped by is the sheer weight and singularity of his own cultural currency; he is loaded with all the 'wrong' resources. Indeed, Easterhouse is a place that seems to attract psychologists in their departmental droves, migrating emotional issues across time and place to those areas of 'dead certainty', those places where particular psychological resources are low and require extra external 'funding' and propping up in their interpolation with structural pressures and external expectations.

Jack's reply to my formality was *'aye, ye don't fuckin live roon here though dae ye'*. I was to discover that Jack died a few weeks later in his sleep, the cause of death a burst ulcer. I had heard when while visiting my sister a neighbour had shouted out loud from her front door across the street *'ye hear that Jack's deid'*? He had been stabbed in the belly the week before

and was frightened that his mother would find out. The only people I imagined who would be sorry ~~to~~ see him go would have been those who either held a grudge or who fancied making a name for themselves through 'doing him'.

In a way I was glad that Linda wasn't in. The closer I got to her flat the more anxious I became. There were a number of young men having a laugh on the corner. I didn't recognize them and I felt a sense of anxiety. This was daylight in the afternoon. My fear was multifaceted- it was in relation to the 'young wans' because I was unsure of what young Tommy's attackers looked like but was sure they would recognize me,<sup>358</sup> and because I was already hesitant about the possibility that Davie might be there. I wasn't sure how things would turn out if he was. I felt a sense of duty to at least 'dig' him up about his assault on Linda and at the same time did not want to understand why she was still allowing him to live there. I was also aware that he carried a knife and had been bragging that it was for Linda's previous boyfriend who himself had been threatening to stab Davie.

It was moments such as this that made me think about prescriptions of non-violence in research that involved investigating the experience of violence. Although, I had already made a personal and conscious decision to avoid physical violence before I began my research I found myself thinking of the layout of Linda's flat and strategies for both offence, defence and outright flight. As it was I headed off to see Tommy.<sup>359</sup>

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<sup>358</sup> Tam had become embroiled in a feud with a few local men who lived on this street. A week previous they had attempted to run him over with their car. Tam described how the leader had tried to stab him in the belly as he lay on the ground after jumping over a parked car and falling.

<sup>359</sup> For Hearn the decision to refrain from violence is straightforward in that it is 'demanding'. As he makes clear, *'For men to research on the topic of violence can be demanding... it demands a personal and political commitment against violence'* (1998, p52). My question in presenting circumstances is why the demand? Why does it take such an effort of will to refuse what is really physical violence? Why demand anything before the research has even begun?



#### 7.4 *The Station Bar*

*'We thote there had been a murder... there wis blood fuckin everywhere. A said tae every cunt this pub is now full of Stevie Wonders. Donnie wis lit, 'aye, Fred, that cunt deserved it anyway' (Fred, Age 55).*

*'See now as I get older it has put me in good stead because up here its quite hard to have a drink without somebody coming over and annoying you. That's why I don't drink up there anymore. It doesn't matter who you are you will still get some fucking bam coming over and annoying you when you are having a quiet pint. Its not as if we are going out to fight, that's the last thing we want to do. But if it ever comes to my door I'm quite equipped to fucking handle it' (Grant, age 28).<sup>360</sup>*

I had found my way to the Station Bar after knocking on my friend Tommy's door and finding out he wasn't in. It was about 5pm on a sunny afternoon and I thought that he would either be here or up in the Crossroads pub. I guessed right and found him in the station. Historically, the Station Bar has been situated on a relatively secluded spot on the outskirts of the scheme. As part of Easterhouse's 'image management' there have been aesthetic improvements to the area and especially to those roads that lead into the area or away from the area (near motorway entrances/exits). This includes hanging baskets on street lights and landscaping of green roadside areas with plants and bushes. I have found out that a number of local residents are thankful to the council for providing them with a 'free' and easily accessible plant nursery. The location of the pub in relation to the flora and fauna may be a deciding factor. Stanley Made says he 'coudnae believe it' when on leaving the Pub 'steamboats'

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<sup>360</sup> The 'it' of Grant's talk is not reputation as representation: the 'it' is the realistic self-awareness of his own capacity and ability to do and handle violence and the threat of violence as a wave of possibility. Grant recognises himself and at the same time recognises the constancy of social reproduction and the attractiveness of violence. He knows that reputation is a commodity.

(very, ~~very~~ very drunk) his friend Bobby began heaving at the roots of what he called a small tree.

*'That cunt wis tryin tae pull up a bloody tree... a said fuck that an walked oan. Its right in front of the CCTV cameras'* (Field Notes, March 15, 2002).

It is worth repeating here that Easterhouse is included in the relatively new East End Watch system of CCTV cameras that form a system that reaches across the East of Glasgow to the city centre itself. In Easterhouse there are forty CCTV cameras situated along the main thoroughfares. Some of these cameras have also been placed in areas that have been recognized as high crime areas.<sup>361</sup>

The relative isolation of the Station Bar has changed in recent years with the building of business property and private housing estates nearby. Nevertheless, it has long been a local pub with generations of regulars passing through its doors (often straight into the bookies next door). Its clientele are predominantly working class men and less so women, who know each other in some capacity. The pub has its regulars who more often than not take up their regular positions in and around the central bar area. For some, it is a convenient place to socialize and have a drink in the company of others, while for some it is not the kind of place you can visit for 'a quiet pint'.

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<sup>361</sup> In the local pub I listened as a well built man (28) told me how he had been 'ambushed' just below one of these CCTV cameras that map the main thoroughfares from the east end to Glasgow city centre. The 'ambush' happened after he took the 'bait' that was verbal insults and threats from two teenage males who he had earlier refused when asked to purchase two large bottles of 'Frosty Jack' cider for them (it costs £2.50 for a two litre bottle of 7.5% white cider as opposed to £4.99 for 750mls of Buckfast wine that weighs in at 15%). His *'a'll kick*



In the many occasions that I visited the pub in the first two and half years of my research I never actually saw much outright physical violence. For sure, there have been the incidents or confrontations that threatened to 'boil over' (or did boil over but not at that time), often those situations that might be referred to in the literature as involving a 'minor affront': that is, how (from a particular perspective of unknowing) a seemingly innocuous exchange between two men leads to words and actions apparently out of proportion to what has been said or witnessed. In the Station Bar this type of incident more often than not took place in the vicinity of the pool table which is set apart from the main seating area and on a lower level (3 steps down). It is a highly visible area within the pub. Any personal challenge or confrontation is charged with public significance and demands either subtle or not so subtle negotiations with the nature of that challenge and with the person who has made the challenge. In effect, reputations are often at stake in an environment where most people not only know each other but know what this knowing means in relation to violence.<sup>362</sup>

One observed example stands out, as one man lines up to play the shot that could win him the match his opponent jokingly mentions that '*aye, yer under pressure noo*'. The response from the prostrate man stretching across the pool table was as immediate and strained as his missed shot and sudden departure from the pub, '*Pressure is shoving a gun intae the back of a guy's head in a pig sty and threatenin tae blow his brain's oot*'. Unusually, neither of the men knew each other although the initial wisecracker was a regular. The remainder of that afternoon in the pub was spent with one eye on the front doors.

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*your arse wee man*' was met by the appearance of many more teenage arses who proceeded to '*punch(ed) me tae fuck and stole ma kerry oot*'.

<sup>362</sup> This idea of reputation, that is, how it is used by those who hold the reputation and also by those who associate with the reputable person. How older men have reflected on the baggage that is reputation, how it gave some prestige and status but also how it became something that others used *them* for. There is an awareness

Although I did not witness violent incidents in the Station Bar I got to hear about them and invariably they were centered around the pool table. In one case I was sure that a remark aimed at me after I had asked if the Rangers game was on the telly was with the intention of putting me in my place as a Celtic supporter who would probably only be asking such a thing with the intention of switching it off. I am also sure that if the 'Whit the fuck is it tae you' was directed at a more familiar and capable local the attention on the television screen was likely to be directed elsewhere.

There are always the living marks left by disputes, the injuries and the damage to things. I got to listen to the war stories that followed, the details of the fights, who battered who, the use of weapons: the knives, glasses, guns, swords, bottles, pool cues. As I have outlined earlier though, violence is a phenomenon that generates its own structure of feeling in abstentia. It doesn't have to be seen to be felt and incorporated. Not that I was complaining, the stories were legitimate data as far as I was concerned.

As it was, my visit to the Station Bar was now an unusual occurrence. Over the last year or so the frequency of events in the station increased and more importantly got closer to home, or more specifically, people I was close to became involved. It was highly likely that I would be a target for retribution following a particular incident in that a man was left unconscious after a particularly severe beating.

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that in some way they have been deceived or tricked and that '*a think noo that mibbe the polis are right*' (Stanley Made).



I had seen the effects of this fear of retribution on one man who taken to carrying a blade in his jacket pocket, a practice he had been familiar with in his younger years. It was his son who had severely beaten someone's father. He was prepared for the same to happen to him. This cycle of revenge is not unfamiliar. In the immediate weeks after the beating there was a marked change in Stanley's behaviour. Already a daily heavy drinker he started drinking more and the increased drinking had the effect of multiplying his on alert status to the level of paranoia.<sup>363</sup> He became more aggressive and defensive, threatening acquaintances in the local pub. What before was taken as friendly banter, part of the pub talk, personified in the extreme by auld George who on meeting you for the first time would ask through a voice of smoke and nettles '*what the fuck dae you waaaant*', before letting you in on what 'everyone knows' that the man sitting directly in front of him (his friend) is '*nothing but a fat greedy, useless bastard*'. This usual friendly banter was encountered as threat.

I had found Tommy sitting in the corner of the pub talking and laughing loudly with two local men I knew to see but rarely to talk to. They knew me through my father. Both of them had lived in the area for over thirty years. Peter and Jack, both in their late 50's, their faces and thoughts hypertensive red and their eyes watery and dulled with years of boozing but always alert to the slightest whiff of disrespect from anyone deemed below them. Indeed, I had learned that Craig Davro had been choked to the point of asphyxia by Peter a few months

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<sup>363</sup> Like Tomsen I find that the association between alcohol and physical violence is not straightforward. Tomsen (1989, cited in Tomsen et al, 1991, p179) has indicated what are the main arguments against taking a mono-causal approach to the aetiology of violence, and in particular using alcohol consumption as the explanatory variable. He mentions four factors that could influence research conclusions: (i) biased sample (ii) exceptional sample (iii) alcohol consumption and violence may be related to an important third factor- for example, social and economic conditions (iv) deviance disavowal. In a different context, Gadd (2000) discusses how one man described how he would drink after being violent. The problem with this approach is that it particularizes the moment of violence and then the moment of drinking. In Fred's case it was difficult to know when the 'effects' of alcohol could not be related to feelings of anger, edginess and so on. In other words, alcohol has such an integral part in his life that the biological effects of withdrawal were almost always present. Indeed, this was

earlier—after a brief exchange of pleasantries. At twenty years Craig's senior Peter still had enough strength in his thick wrists to make the point that there remained *'very precise rituals of superiority and subordination. Even at the height of a drinking evening... members were never in the least allowed to forget that non-observance of distances always remained dangerous for lower ranking, younger members'* (Elias, 1997, p103). Both men welcomed me to the table and asked if would like a pint.

The conversation came mostly from Peter and Jack as they recounted times gone past and times to come.<sup>364</sup> The themes of violence and humour were the grid upon which most of the talk was based or returned to. Peter described how three weeks earlier him and his son had managed to catch and 'kill' a deer near Provanmill (near parkland but almost inner city) and on taking the deer back to their flat were left scrambling for their knives as the deer regained consciousness and began jumping and kicking throughout the room. Most of the laughs from this afternoon were to come from descriptions of physical violence.

Social learning theorists have been rightly criticized for the simplicity of their genetic model of the transmission of norms for violence. In its most basic form the 'cycle of violence' thesis professes that the experience of childhood violence contributes to the production of violence in adult life (for example, Straus et al, 1980). This argument finds a circular relationship between violence in childhood and violence in adult life: violence is both cause and effect. In adopting a circular argument (violence as contagion) social learning theorists can provide logical examples of the theory by assuming that what they already know (experience of

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something that came through in Tommy's descriptions of violent incidents. He would describe how *'sometimes am worse without a drink in me'*.

<sup>364</sup> Prophetically, two months after this meeting I was to discover that Peter and his own son were attacked leaving another local pub. Both suffered serious head injuries and broken legs.



physical violence in childhood) is the *causal* source for the emergence of violence in later life. Research across diverse fields has shown that this modeling and instrumental paradigm of *learning* often fails to explain why the majority of positively identified ideal types (that is, those who perhaps experienced the most childhood violence) do not go on to have officially defined violent lives. As has been discussed earlier, this is no small sociological anomaly: it is a form of reasoning that encompasses the very idea, power and direction of history.

However, perhaps the anomaly can be worked with via the perspective that is taken. The social of social learning theorists much like the social of sociology is a social that itself demands a sociology. For sure, there are marked discontinuities between generations, '*the snapping of links... between past and present*' (Hobsbawm, 1994) just like there are marked differences in perspective within the 'homogenous'. But this tells us nothing of the weight of violence in those lives, the supporting contexts or the meetings with other personal structuring realities (or indeed, the apparent lack of 'heavy' structures in a life). It tells us nothing about an individual's relationship to the past or to the future. It lays no weight on the value of violence as *educational* and neither of the personal if short lived careers that an apprenticeship in violence can entail: that is, violence as an adult initiation rite. In sum, although social learning theory is a perspective that is simplistic in both its positivism and in its denial of contingency and human creativity it is also a perspective that does not shy away from the possibility of encountering lived experience *as tautology*.

Tommy and I had sore faces with laughing as Peter and Jack told their jokes and stories. When a fellow drinker at a neighboring table leaned over to ask if the piece of steak he just bought on the cheap from a local shoplifter looked a funny colour, he was probably half expecting the less than frank reply, '*well a fuckin hope it's a funny colour, its fuckin deid!*'

The man who had mentioned the steak is about 50 years old and has three brothers. Tommy Vercetti had months earlier been involved in a 'fight' with one of the brothers (John Martin) after being told to '*get oot ma fuckin way*' as the man pushed him on leaving the pub. The fight was as brutal as it was one sided and both John Martin and his girlfriend were hospitalized.

The point is, John Martin was friendly with Tommy's father when '*we aw jumped about thi gither*'. Again, the idea of friendliness needs reiterating here: that is, Fred shared many of the same experiences with the brothers and that included fighting with John Martin and his brothers. John Martin's '*get oot ma way*' to Tommy stretched all the way back to these times. Here, violence and kinship or violence and the family are closely bound at the same time that violence and coercion are seen as matters to be dealt with 'internally' and outwith police jurisdiction. This slight on Tommy was a challenge to his own reputation and to the childhood he feels 'trapped' within: that is, he is trapped within his own psyche. His memories and reputation of his father and the adult world of violence, drink and the place where children did not go except to stand outside with a packet of crisps and a can of irn bru (fizzy drink), that is the social institution of the pub.

This is where alcohol, violence, masculinity and social relations meet: that is, it is here in the man's world and the man's pub that violence as actuality and fantasy is born and grows, in the imagination of childhood and the route to 'adulthood'. The Easterhouse pub is an unknown quantity as far as children are concerned from where adults brought back stories of heroism and fraternity as violence and of making sure they are feared enough. This is where violence and alcohol become intimate, not because alcohol *causes* violence but because this is how they



become known to each other in this case (Douglas, 1987). This 'culture of violence' is order being sought amidst political fragmentation.

Peter recounted his own involvement with one of that man's family (John Martin), his brother Brian Martin, and in particular how '*those bastards don't die. A tried tae cut that bastard's eye oot cos he tried tae stab ma wife*'. Peter did try to cut this man's eye out (he did lose his eye due to the damage done) and this man did try to stab Peter's wife. Indeed Elias' (1997, p107) description of '*a pitiless human habitus*' is apt, it is a description of an engagement with what morsels of respect and value are available here and indeed what will and can be done to protect a self that comes under attack. Once again there is not the slightest notion that official agencies should become involved: a victim is someone who allows them selves to be victimized, a victim is someone who has left the parent culture and went out with that culture for *help*. It is a double damnation whose chief emblem is a sign of weakness and '*weakness was contemptible... anyone who revealed himself as weak counted for nothing*' (Elias, 1997, p107). In contrast, to stand up violently against a threat or to identify a weakness or difference in others is an opportunity to instantiate a sense of superiority. Getting a violent reputation and a name had immense rewards as well as risks.

Indeed, in the course of talking about Brian Martin, Peter moved onto Tommy's father. It was another violent account of a violent reality emerging and being reproduced. '*Your da wid huv taken you when he wis younger. He wis something else.*' The conversation stalled at this point before moving onto the time when Peter and Jack woke up on a golf course still '*pished from the night before*' and were asked to move by two early morning golfers. Jack described through laughter how Peter '*knocked fuck oot a both of them*'. It was on leaving the pub that Tommy expressed his feelings on the comparison with his father and that 'Peter is awright but

he's a dick'. This 'fantasy football' of imagined contests in and across time is in this case more than the unsaid recognition of the male pub hierarchy and who could take who (Winlow, 2001).<sup>365</sup> Here, it is one man's recognition of what Bourdieu (1999, p507) has called '*the tendency to perpetuate in one's very being the social position that inhabits the father*'. Peter had paid Tommy a complement at the same time he withdrew that compliment. The 'educational acts' that Tommy was perpetuating in the name of his 'house' were being judged and Tommy's violence was being asked to again distinguish and go beyond his father (Bourdieu, 1999, p508). Tommy's 'cultural resources' remained limited to the practice of 'fighting repute' and of protecting that repute: he is even more of a throwback to a different time than was his father.

Moments are to be opened up like the atom has been opened up: there is both theory and the application of theory.<sup>366</sup> Within the moment is a lifetime. This moment in the pub was like a hundred moments rolled back through time, in time and straight through one possible future. Jack leaned over and put his hand on my knee in friendly gesture as he was talking. He was talking about a man who occasionally came into the pub. It appears it is common knowledge that this man's wife was '*getting shagged by Tony Dean... while he's oot workin aw the 'oors that God sends. A wid gie her a good smack across the face*'.

I was to discover that Jack had built a reputation for himself as a younger man, one that involved both a familiarity with knives and combat and an entrepreneurial spirit: that is,

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<sup>365</sup> Of course, these hierarchies and imagined match ups are often mentioned. In my experience it is those least likely to be involved that are most likely to speculate. Again, this brings the point back to the weight of reputation and how people come to see this reputation being used against them. In the Station Bar two men became known as having a reputation for being involved in fights that they invariably won. Both of them were and are close 'allies'. In retrospect it was only a matter of time before they got to know each other more intimately.

<sup>366</sup> The atom and its constituent parts are not known but are theorised.



through his work and the various 'jobs' he shared with Peter he was never short of money ('*ah always hud money in ma poakit*').<sup>367</sup> In the course of that afternoon just before Jack placed his hand on my knee, I had become aware that I had mistaken his son for someone else. His son was Ronnie (*aye ye don't fuckin live roon here*). In my mind, his gesture of friendliness changed and I felt a deep sense of what after two and half years this ethnography was about: it was, and this may sound cheap, as if something valuable had made itself known to me.

The setting, the whole mood of the place, the conversation, the memories, the relationship between men and their sons, between people and place. I felt sick at the physical and communicative reality of it. It was as if the understanding was forced upon me by the very act of touch. And in that sense the realisation took on an even deeper and congruent meaning. His son, now another dead son, the man who like his father had an 'edge' about him and his eyes, had in his possession a local reputation as a mad slasher that went beyond his father in that the reputation was all he had.

I have heard that in his many incarcerations he was the quiet prisoner, keeping himself to himself, doing his time with his head down till his release date. That before he died he was worried that his mother would worry by finding out he had been stabbed in the belly. As a younger man he would have been feared by his peers in the local area. Indeed, as a teenager I remember the stories of his friends movements well. He is someone who if about in the 1960's could be picked up and used as a form of existential body politics in that he was an 'activist'

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<sup>367</sup> One of Peter and Jack's ventures involved setting themselves up as chimney sweeps. This involved a level of expertise that would see Peter climbing the roof and dropping a large cannon like ball down the chimney while Jack would cover over the fireplace below. They recounted the time (a few years back) they done a job for a blind woman whose '*hoose wis immaculate. Cream carpets, cream settee, curtains the lot*' and had somehow failed to communicate to each other that the fireplace had not been covered before Peter let the big ball drop. The room

and that he came from a political family in that his father was provided regular 'readings' in the practicality and theory of violence for negotiating local politics.

His father's touch, the intensifying effects of the alcohol and the drugs, the searching for meaning, the immediacy and history of the moment, the stories of slashings and beatings, the presence, the insecurity of everyday economic life, the relations with authority, the logic of violence itself, all came together in that afternoon in the pub. Like Craig I experienced a feeling that feeling and emotion, that a structure of feeling can emerge by the very structured absence of feeling. But I also sensed that this lack of feeling was known by those men themselves.

I had been drinking with Tommy a few weeks earlier. He was telling me of a run in he had with a group of men in the Crossroads pub (another local pub). He was drinking with Ronnie and had mentioned that he had worked himself up to confronting one of the men- '*kicking the cunts heid in*'. Ronnie had said to Tommy that he would deal with it. He walked up to bar and put a friendly arm around one of the aforementioned 'cunts'. His gesture of 'friendliness' was touch and his reasoning was too sense for bodily, psychological capacity and understanding: to get a hold on what was to be dealt with. His reputation made any illusion of trust facile from the start. When Jack leaned over and touched my knee I didn't feel a gesture of friendliness. I sensed a long emptiness and that this was one of those moments that was to define this ethnography.

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that held the fireplace was '*absolutely covered in soot, everywhere*'. Jack and Peter took payment for their work and left the place as they had made it.



## 8 Conclusion

I abruptly end my *ethnographic day* and abruptly begin my conclusion with touch because this ethnography is about social bodies and bodies encountering, mixing and avoiding each other in symbolic, spatial and material forms. In recognition of this 'conference' I take a step back from the closure that is expected in such meetings and leave the imagined possibilities to the active reader. My aim is to review what this ethnography has found in relation to a hypothesised relationship between men, violence and place and to give closure to this thesis while showing an ability to conceive how these findings could be used to generate both further research or constructive engagements with issues deemed problematic.

Thus, in formulaic style I present a summary of my key findings and relate these to the theoretical perspectives outlined in the body of the text. That is, I reflect on substantive issues that I have already identified as important in the text and in the details of writing the text, and so again illuminate these issues in relation to theory and in particular Bourdieu's concepts of habitus, reflexivity and field. To begin this evaluation I go back a few paragraphs to Jack and his touch that like Bourdieu's discovery of the world behind the immediacy of words and actions holds so much more in his hands. In effect I will attempt to work my way backwards to the points identified in my introduction and give the thesis a sense of closure/structure that I have already argued is difficult to find in lived reality.<sup>368</sup> That is, like ethics and Bourdieu's analysis on a paradoxical foundation of ethics a structure can be found that to remark on it is to give the game away and so to distinguish a self or be seen as a non player in the game

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<sup>368</sup> For example, Hobbs (1993) recognition that criteria for authenticity can exist at the same time that authenticity is denied.

(Gadamer, 1979). To play this game about games, then, I will work my way back from psychologism and individuals to the sociological and historical ground.

I encountered Jack's touch from a position where I could see where his touch met his talk and his talk met what I had heard and seen in the interviews and watched and felt and come to know through the art of not only hanging around but from coming to recognise my effort at trying and failing to look like a 'local' even though I was a local for nineteen of my thirty two years and always a local as far as my family were concerned. My reality was a need to escape from the place at the same time I recognised how much the place held me and how much I wanted to respect those whose company I was in. In this I recognise that space is not only geographical but is constructed in the psyche. Space and spatialisation are concepts that need to be filled with human experience as it happens and how subsequent experiences affect our memory of what happened. How this is recorded by human beings employed in the capacity of 'recorder' is not an external matter.

When I look at my field notes I recognise that I encountered Jack's touch with utter disgust and tried so hard not to evidence this. No human being is a sealed unit. Everyone leaks. I understood where his talk was not only coming from but what it was as an adult to an adult 'trying to talk me intae'. I had listened to Stanley Made describe his own violent encounters in the 'field' and yet had heard a resigned maturity and recognition of a self engaged with a self from a past time. With Jack it was as if he was ready '*tae cut sumdae up*' all over again, as if there was still something left to prove, an audience still watching a previous memory. If not him as the master then his son as the disciple he would both relish and regret in his fetishistic descriptions of his 'power' and dominance over those in his immediate vicinity.



Indeed, I listened as he described how Craig Davro had tried to make some money cutting the grass for the new owners of the new gardens that come with the new housing association flats and houses. Craig, like me, did not know that the now dead Ronnie was Jack's son. Craig had engaged in heated 'banter' with Ronnie over the now competitive local business of cutting grass only to be told who ma 'boy' is. Jack described how Craig went off with his tail between his legs and his lawn mower on his shoulder. My point is that in understanding Jack's relationship to his son I recognised a relationship that was not unique. This is my first unremarkable finding: that at the same time there is discontinuity in social and economic *forms* there is continuity in essence and being through generations and that physical interpersonal violence has a remarkable capacity for providing an ego with sources of sovereignty and esteem where alternatives are absent. Thus in the darkest ad sensum practices of slashing and victimising there is a working with what it is to be masculine and what it is to be human, albeit an uglified and degraded form of humanity. Here, the horizons of human potential and the appreciation of beauty are circumscribed by the very things that mean the most: communication as visceral, survival as 'in yer face' and the look of the hunted in the eyes. Perhaps, the 'hunted' look is where the sociologist of disempowered groups should *be* in an age where as Sontag suggests the gaze as understanding and defining is hegemonic.<sup>369</sup>

This is not to give glamour and focus to violence as an expression of some underlying revolutionary ideal or an oversocialised concept of human being. Neither is it to accept the insights of phenomenology or the polemics of the researcher as all there is to say. There is always more to say and do. My small experience of sociology as a PhD student evidences my own reduction. As has been noted, within groups defined as homogenous there *are* multiple

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<sup>369</sup> Of course, the point is that the meaning of understanding is that things are *not* as they look. However, as Sontag argues, alongside those who experience the gaze, representation is both real in its effects and indicative of

perspectives on the relationship between what is or should be. *This* seems to be a universal.

What is being argued here is that contemporary levels and expressions of physical interpersonal violence in Glasgow are not something new. They have an explanation and one with force is found in the *marrying* of sociology, history and philosophy, in the political ontologising of being and time, a post-positivist philosophy that recognises the empirical but does not look beyond it. Instead, and with caution, it seeks to understand violence as it constitutes and is constituted in spatio-historical processes. For Jack and Ronnie, violence is simply a way of being, there is a practical logic to its use. It is a cultural practice.

In this sense, my *second* finding is that this source of *self-funding* can become a shared cultural resource itself. That is, that violence and reputation can become a core sense of self that is recognised in others (mimesis) by a presence or its absence. On an individual level this is why violence is attractive and attracting. Indeed, as has been shown the presence or expectation of violence is one that is known and is incorporated into relations with others and relations with a self and their local ecology. This habitual character and *ever present* reflexive management is what I initially referred to through Williams (1977) as a structure of feeling. I have tried to show how this structure of feeling is, and has come to be shown to be, a mirage if conceived as something in itself. Violence can become structured in to a masculine and violent habitus but at the same time actual violence and attitudes towards violence differ within a similar population of males. It is to this that I followed Gilfillan's (1999) *findings* and identified the need to be sensitive to the different personal structuring realities that can characterise an individual life and the different resources available to fund a masculine self. It seems important for those men who feel a sense of masculinity and who evidence a masculine

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an underlying reality. one that finds the escape from the real through representation of the real.



habitus to engage with 'their masculinity' *in some form*. Thus Craig Davro felt like an adult and felt like a man by 'being' or seeing himself in the role of a father. The important issue here, though, is that violence, as an indication of a shared cultural resource that has emerged in relation to previous worked dispositions is that when those dispositions are no longer required the dynamic character of this visceral habitus will emerge in some other form. This can be the totally destructive and 'mindless' violence of Ronnie or the strategic and planned violence found in the night time economy described by Richard Longly.

A *third* finding is that an understanding of intention and of funding a self is related to real lived relations and to real concrete situations and that like Craig's attempt to make money and so *feed* himself (both biologically and symbolically) this self funding must be situated in the time and place that investment is made. That is, action and agency cannot be understood outside the social and economic relations that characterise a time and place or what comes to be the politics of place. Indeed, in this thesis what comes to be the time and place in text has been a source of tension and so a source of revelation in relation to meanings of violence and the logic of practice found in violence. There is a sense that history is about someone else and that representations are about someone else and that both have no meaning and so have no value for everyday practice.

And this is my *fourth* finding, that there is a dialectical recognition of this lack of meaning within people that is recognised as a lack of value in them and that this recognition emerges in complete ambivalence with regards to representational forms (for example, traditional engagement with politics or public forms of value or indeed in a recognising of *themselves* as a public self). This engagement with 'nothing' or 'mindlessness' is what I have made problematical in relation to positivist or unreflexive forms of research that take reality as given

or as accessible through some method that could 'pick up' and 'take away' how a life is lived. Instead, my argument is that not only does a researcher have to 'sit down' they have to sit down in the same place, in the same way and for the same time as those being studied. Of course, this does not mean that the researcher must or has to take part in what they see as ethically wrong. In this sense there is a methodological theme to this point. However, it is also one that goes beyond methodology in that it recognises how, in relation to unreflexive forms of research, there is an easy engagement and cheap engagement with data and that the cheapness of the returns can reflect and re-invest in social relations themselves. It is in this contemporary engagement that I find symbolic violence flourishes and the market society is exemplar.

For example, the focus of this thesis has been men, violence and place. At first glance this combination of words implies certain fixity and perhaps a certain familiarity that generates particular associations between the terms and between the reader and the representation. Indeed, this is how I initially engaged with the research: that is, as a set of facts that did not require if not explanation then at least some form of questioning. Things are things, people are people and the aim is to 'tell it like it is'. From this perspective a family is a family, a man is a man, violence is violence, money is money and a place is a place: there is nothing else to know because whatever is happening that is not known 'should not be happening in this day and age'.

What has been added to this triumvirate of men, violence and place is the concept of time and an engagement with time as a living thing created by people. The experience of time as lived in a particular space and in relation to forces of circumstance and the representation of time as history has been one area in which violence and a relation to human agency has been explored.



This importance of time as change, permanence and social relation presents a finding which had not been formulated at the outset of the research.

In this sense, what *is* happening in 'this day and age', that is, increased forms of physical interpersonal violence, has its own explanation in an understanding of human practice that has its own history and its own relation to 'this day and age'. Indeed, I have used the recurring tradition or culture of disbelief that is found in historical representations of particular 'communities' as evidence of this differential relation to what is taken to be real and 'really' happening. Similarly, I have discussed the relations to violence and definitions of violence. It is to recognise how people can become identified as a form of being in relation to other forms of being and how this encounter is 'thoughtfully felt' and 'felt thoughtfully': it is to recognise the relationship between social and economic relations and cultural practices. It is in this sense that I recognise culture and recognise violence as a *cultural* practice, albeit self destructive.<sup>370</sup>

And this is my fifth point. This identification of 'feeling' and of livedness as an important aspect of researching the social and so as an important aspect of everyday practice is to go back to Hammy and his experience of himself in relation to others. That is, it is to be reminded that communication and reasoning is not to be assumed as a given form but that it is to be situated and understood within the context that is an individuals' life and that this 'form of life' is to be identified in its relationship with other 'forms of life'. Although there are clear ways in which this point can be developed to 'see' how people use space and are recognised in space this is not to be read as a sociological fence around some unchanging being. It is to recognise how people are related in their non- intimate relations and how a habitus possesses as opposed to

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<sup>370</sup> As opposed to the *explanation* of violence given in Subcultural Theory (Wolfgang and Ferracuti, 1967).

being posessed. Again this is not to engage with a discussion of practice as either/or agency and fatalism: it is to ask how people get on and what they do in actual physical and social environment. How do things end up? This is why I focused on Hammy's (Chapter 5) almost throw away comment that '*for a while I didn't go out*' as a way to engage with social relations, the body and social space *as in the making*. Hammy did not accept his agrophobia, he found a way to ridicule it and construct himself out of it in the company of others.

It is in this sense that I have *found* and engaged with the practical relevance of Bourdieu's social praxeology. That is, that social analysis has two moments that cannot be understood out with the effects of the other: first, the objective structure and second the social phenomenology. These moments are situated within relations of power and struggles over meaning. Thus, I recognise that the relations between representation and meaning is an important area and one were there will be intense struggles over what is taken to be reality and indeed how we can know this reality. How this is to be understood is through practice. My thesis can take part in these debates.

To conclude, the insights to be gained from ethnographic research are in many ways to be re-discovered by working through academic assumptions and representations about 'the field' and the relationship between the researched field and the academic field. While this process of negotiating research is inherent and necessary in any (qualitative) research project, it nonetheless has proven a difficult and in many instances also painful (to admit) experience researching and thinking about the 'presence' and the past of my place of upbringing, and the social relations involved. Is this something I set out to do in the first place? I recognise the importance of objectivity in research and at the same time recognise the critique of the academic white tower. Indeed, the opening up of the academy to the market and to the



accusation of producing something that will only be read by other academics is a valid point. However, that accusation was made in a time and place by those who felt they were barred from the institution. Times have changed.

In this exists the continuous tension of (re)presentation and production, as well as translation and mediation, of everyday and academic knowledge. This tension speaks throughout the pages of this research, and often does so uncomfortably. Rather than smoothing this tension out and glossing over it as part of a finished end-product, I have tried to make sure it remains in this document. While the reasoning for this has been made clear throughout the thesis, it is also the necessity to move beyond representations of violence to an understanding of violence as embodied and embedded in everyday social relations of a market society. The danger of glorifying violence is one that will have to be cautiously engaged with as is evidenced by the proliferation of popular literature on 'hardmen' and the like. I hope that my attempt to engage with the reality of violence in everyday life has been one that has shown respect to those involved and has refrained from the easy step towards sensationalism.

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