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**Youth, Training and the Training State - the real  
history of youth training in the twentieth century**

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## Summary

This work provides an explanation for the existence of youth that goes beyond the analysis presented by the mainstream sociology of youth and its critics. This involves not only a deconstruction of the sociology of youth, but also a deconstruction of the nature of reality which it supports. I undermine this reality by utilising a theory of abstraction developed by Karl Marx initially from his work on alienated labour and later through his theory of commodity fetishism. Following Marx I suggest that the real world is in fact an abstract (virtual) reality. As part of that reality youth is an abstraction which exists in a concrete form. I trace the development of this abstraction to its manifestation in its most modern form as youth. I suggest that youth has always existed, but not as youth. I argue that the modern form of youth was derived in 1948 as the product of a particular configuration of the productive consumption between capital and labour. I explore the development of this relationship as it manifests itself in its various youthful forms (: Elvis...the teenager...punk) and through a particular regulatory device (: the training state). I conclude that there is no future for youth as youth, by which I mean there is no work, by which I mean there is no money, by which I mean there is no adulthood, by which I mean there is no responsibility, only not responsibility. I suggest that the sociology of youth, and in particular the work of the cultural theorists, e.g. S. Hall, and the practical policies that it supports are, in fact, condemning youth to its existence as youth, for which there is no future.

Although the subject matter of the work is youth I am also concerned with the nature of my own subjectivity. This concern includes my own subjectivity as a co-operating employee of the training state and as a subject involved in academic research. I become what I am: an immanent part of the social reality I am trying to explain. This incursion denies the detached perspective of social science and demands a critique of its methodology which I support with reference to painterly (:Cubist) and scientific theories of relativity. I connect these more complete explanations of the real world with Marx's own theory of relativity: the law of value. This engagement with relativity enables me to investigate the determined forms of social existence, e.g. time, space, subjectivity, youth and social life itself, beyond these determinations and, therefore, beyond the future.

## **contents**

<b>chapter one</b>	<b>Virtual Reality</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>chapter two</b>	<b>The Modern Science of Training</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>chapter three</b>	<b>Theory of Relativity</b>	<b>94</b>
<b>chapter four</b>	<b>Excessive Reality - a film</b>	<b>128</b>
<b>chapter five</b>	<b>Science Fiction</b>	<b>171</b>
<b>Chapter six</b>	<b>Training Scientology</b>	<b>213</b>
<b>chapter seven</b>	<b>Retrospective</b>	<b>261</b>



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## declaration

I declare that Youth, Training and the Training State - the real history of youth training in the twentieth century is a novel and original work. None of the material used in this work has been used by the author for a prior thesis nor has it appeared in any published form.

## Virtual Reality

### the subject

The subject of this work is subjectivity. Not the relativist subjectivity that describes the post modern condition; but subjectivity as practical, concrete, sensual human activity, the way in which it expresses itself, the limits to that expression and the way in which those limits are transcended and reconstituted. That is, absolute subjectivity: my social being in a real world that can be known - and understood. This is the most fundamental question for any examination of modern society, re-solving and dis-solving all other questions, e.g., the problem of order and theories of action. It is out of this matter that modern social thought has developed and sought to define itself as social science. But the concept of subjectivity designed by modern social thought, and in particular by modern sociology, the discipline within which this work is situated, has proved inadequate to the task. The various rationalisms within which modern sociology has sought to compose and recompose the notion of the subject have been exploded by the very subjectivity it has sought to define, not through a superior hegemonic discourse, but through the subject's concrete activity in pursuit of its concrete aspirations.

### youth training

The purpose of this work is to overcome [these difficulties of] modern

sociology through concepts that modern sociology has helped to define and support. I will do this by focusing on two concepts in particular: youth, as a dramatic form of subjectivity, and training, as a significant form determined by and determining that subjectivity. I suggest that these categories are not the starting point of social life, but are the result of a specific social process that is not immediately apparent; and which only, in fact, appears in phenomenal form. Through the positing of sociological categories as phenomenal forms I am problematising not just the methodologies and assumptions of sociology but the vision of the real world which sociology supports and is supported by. That is not to say that the sociological version of reality is wrong; but, rather, that it records a partial abstract account of the modern social world: a virtual reality.

### **sociology of youth**

Insofar as the sociology of youth is concerned it is only able to describe the phenomenal forms in which the process of being young appears. These forms are developed into categories through various types of sociological analysis to be further (de)constructed by competing and complementary discourses, for example, psychology, ethnography, interactionism, feminism, politics, race studies and cultural analysis, when these categories, undermined by the social activity of young people, prove inadequate to the task. This sociology of youth has been well documented and criticised elsewhere (Frith 1986, Davis 1990). It is not my intention to repeat that criticism here. Rather, I will suggest that 'youth' is, in fact, something quite different. It is inconceivable; and, as such, it cannot be defined: it can only be expressed and recognised. However, this expression is constrained by the structures and institutions of modern society which are themselves expressions of this subjectivity in the form of being denied (Bonefeld, Gunn, Psychopedis 1992: ix - xx).



I do not mean in any way to idealise youth, or present youth as any more determinate or determining than any other form of enclosed subjectivity, although it may appear more (melo)dramatic. Other categories could have been chosen and may be even more appropriate. For example, James and Costa in 'Women and the Subversion of the Community', Radical America 1972 examine the role of women as subjectivity reduced through the determinate form of 'the home' and the objectivity of 'housewife'. I leave it to others to research these categories. The point is that these are significant forms derived from the same social relations and it is on this universal basis that I examine youth in particular.

For the rest of this work I will concentrate on this process through the examination of one of these structured institutional forms: youth training. But before embarking on that analysis it is necessary to account for the real existence of the virtual reality through which sociology describes itself.

#### **commodity fetishism**

The virtual nature of bourgeois reality, and the uncritical representation by bourgeois thought of the apparent real world, was deconstructed by Karl Marx initially through his theory of alienated labour in the *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts* (1844) and later developed more concretely in *Capital Vol I* (1867) through his theory of commodity fetishism. For Marx, appearance implied presupposition. That is the naturalness of the social world is not the natural world, but the epitome of a form of social activity that is not immediately apparent. The problem for any deconstruction of bourgeois thought is that in capitalist society, things do manifest social power. The representations are real. The spaces for a

critique are the determinations that representation implies: the content out of which the form is derived. Bourgeois social thought denies this content, representing these representations (:ideologically) as eternal and immutable facts of life. Marx sought out the derivation of these apparent phenomenal forms through an investigation of their determinations. Writing through the work of Hegel, Smith, Proudhon and Engels, Marx began with the concept of private property. This was no arbitrary choice, private property is the crucial category of bourgeois social thought and is the foundation of bourgeois reality. It philosophically defines the alienated forms of social life, assigning social powers to things and thus obscuring the real subject of society.

Marx argued that it is not private property that is the foundation of alienated labour, but, on the contrary, that alienated labour is the foundation of private property. In a society based on commodity production "the worker becomes poorer the more wealth he produces...The devaluation of the human world grows in direct proportion to the increase in value of the world of things. Labour not only produces commodities; it also produces itself and the workers as a commodity... The product of labour [becomes] the objectification of labour. His labour becomes an alien object that exists independently of the worker...[and]..the more the worker exerts himself in his work, the more powerful the alien, objective world becomes which he brings into being over and against himself...What the product of his labour is, he is not" (*Capital I*: 324). This alienated activity, the way in which the product of labour comes to exist apart from the direct producer, is the result of the fact that the propertyless worker has become a slave to need, and therefore forced to subordinate his labour to the need for a thing: money. Thus through the activity of work the worker is lost to himself. But the worker is not only detached from himself, he is also

estranged from his species and his species-life: the active fashioning, creation and contemplation of the world around him, and from other workers. But if the worker is lost to himself, his loss is someone else's gain: "If the product of labour does not belong to the worker, and if it confronts him as an alien power, this is only possible because it belongs to a man other than the worker" (*Capital I*: 330). The product of alienated labour thus becomes the source of enjoyment for someone else. It is very clear that this source of pleasure, this private property, is the result of the activity of alienated labour.

As Marx has it: "through estranged, alienated labour the worker creates the relationship of another man, who is alien to labour and stands outside it, to that labour. The relation of the worker to labour creates the relation of the capitalist - or whatever word one chooses for the master of that labour - to that labour. Private property is therefore the product, result and necessary consequence of alienated labour, of the external relation of the worker to nature and to himself" (*Capital I* : 332). Thus the proprietorial relations between a person and a thing expresses a more fundamental social relation between people. The legal form of private property presupposes the social relation of alienated labour (Clarke, 1991: 67).

This rather simple formulation (theory of abstraction) has devastating consequences for liberal social thought and liberal notions of subjectivity. It undermines the liberal conceptualisation of the social subject as an individual separated from society through the privatising appropriation and consumption of the conditions and products of her social existence (Clarke, 1991:70). It provides the basis for an account of human subjectivity in the historically developed social relations which characterise a particular form of society. It also draws attention to the



means through which these alienations can be transformed. That is, by explaining the basis of separation, Marx reveals the process whereby human and social need and capacities can be reunited. This can only happen with the abolition of private property: if alienated labour is the basis of private property, the abolition of private property can only take the form of the abolition of alienated labour. Marx concluded: "...the emancipation of society from private property, etc., is expressed in the political form of the emancipation of the workers. This is not because it is only a question of their emancipation, but because in their emancipation is contained universal emancipation" (*Capital I* :333). By this Marx did not reduce the category 'worker' to men working directly in factories; but extends the domination of capitalist production to the whole of human experience: "The reason for this universality is that the whole of human servitude is involved in the relation of the worker to production and all relations of servitude are nothing but modifications and consequences of this relation" (*Capital I* :333). The potential for transcendence of private property can only therefore be contained within the activity of the working class: in the revolutionary abolition of themselves as workers.

#### **the commodity form**

Marx developed this theory of alienated labour by examining more concretely the social relations of capitalist society. By working from the most simple determination of capitalist society, generalised commodity production, he developed his explanation for the problematic nature of reality as the theory of commodity fetishism. Marx was in no doubt about the problematic nature of reality or the form and function of the commodity within that reality. It is the matter with which he opens *Capital I* : "The wealth of society in which the capitalist mode of production prevails appears as an 'immense accumulation of commodities'; the individual commodity appears as

its elementary form" (*Capital 1*: 125, my italics). The question Marx sought to ask was the derivation of this apparent form. Marx recognised the status of political economy as the real expression of a real process of abstraction. He therefore sought out the basis for this apparent reality within political economy, and he found it in the labour theory of value.

Marx did not uncritically accept the most developed form of this theory which he found in the work of David Ricardo. In fact he undermined Ricardo's labour theory of value through his own formulation with a theorisation that was to further devastate not only bourgeois notions of reality, but the reality of reality in ways that even Marx could not be aware of, prefiguring developments in the physical sciences and in particular Einstein's theory of relativity (something I take up and develop later in this chapter and more fully in chapter 3).

The essential contribution of political economy was its determination of value by labour time. For Ricardo this labour time corresponded to the quantity of labour time embodied in the commodity, without reference to the form of society within which this production occurs. It referred to a naturalised and technical relationship between the producer and the thing produced, independent of the social form of production. For Marx it was only by taking into account the social form of production that the value of a commodity could be determined. So that the substance of labour is not embodied labour, but the labour time socially necessary to produce the commodity. That is: "the labour-time required to produce any use-value under the conditions of production normal for a given society and with the average degree of skill and intensity of labour prevalent in that society" (*Capital I*:129). This is a crucial difference of definition "...it expresses the distinction between the naturalistic conception of value as

labour embodied in the commodity as a thing and the social historic conception of value as the labour that is socially attributed to the thing as a commodity" (Clarke, 1991:101).

What appears then as an intensely private activity is, in fact, the manifestation of an extensively social relationship. "Each act of production or exchange only makes sense as a moment of the total process of social production, so the motive of each exchange can only be found in the process as a whole" (Clarke, 1991: 122). That is, in commodity producing societies things are not produced for appropriation by their direct producers, but for the quality of their exchangeability (alienated labour) with other commodities on which the direct producer relies for her continuing subsistence and further commodity production. And so, while the desirability of each commodity is determined by the concrete quality (use value) of a particular thing, exchange itself is an expression of the social relation (value) out of which the thing is produced. So that value endorses not the quantity of labour embodied in a commodity but, rather, is a recognition of the social usefulness of a product and the socially necessary labour that constitutes its production.

It is, therefore, only through the medium of exchange (socially) that commodities can be recognised as approximate equivalents of that [identical] social substance: human labour. Exchange presupposes the existence of the commodity as the social expression of a social substance. It is only the expression of equivalence between different sorts of commodities which brings to view the specific character of value creating labour, by actually reducing the different kinds of labour embedded in the different kinds of commodity to their common quality of being human labour in general (*Capital I*: 142).



But, while human labour creates value, it is not itself value. In order for value to be realised it must take a material, objective form and be expressed in something other than itself. What this means is that: "The body of the commodity, which serves as the equivalent, always figures as the embodiment of abstract human labour, and is always the product of some specific useful and concrete labour. This concrete labour becomes the expression of abstract human labour" (*Capital I* :150). That is, concrete labour becomes the expression of its opposite, abstract human labour. It is within this fundamental opposition that the contradiction at the heart of the social relations of commodity production can be discovered: "The internal opposition between use-value and value, hidden within the commodity, is therefore represented on the surface by an external opposition, i.e. by a relation between two commodities such that the one commodity whose own value is supposed to be expressed, counts directly only as a use-value, whereas the other commodity, in which that value is to be expressed, counts directly only as an exchange value. Hence the simple form of the value of a commodity is the simple form of appearance of the opposition between use-value and value which is contained within the commodity" (*Capital I* : 153). This appearance in a form other than it is: its 'polar opposite' is the basis for the fetishism of bourgeois social relations: "the fact that the commodity reflects the social characteristics of men's own labour as objective characteristics of the products of labour themselves, as the socio-natural properties of these things" (*Capital I* :165).

This contradiction at the core of commodity exchange is 'solved' by the appearance of money as 'universal equivalent'. In the same moment that products of labour are transformed into commodities, one particular

commodity is transformed into money, as a social being crystallized out of exchange, yet existing outside exchange in order that exchange value be confirmed and realised. This crystallisation is not a natural process. It is only by the action of society that a particular commodity can become the universal equivalent. The social action of all other commodities decides the particular commodity in which they all represent their value (e.g. gold). Money is, therefore, the logical and historical 'resolution' to the opposition between use-value and value which is latent in the nature of the commodity. It is the commercial need to give an external expression to this opposition as an independent form of value (*Capital I* : 181). But this resolution is purely formal. The contradictory nature of its determination means that it articulates the fundamental crisis tendencies of capitalist society at a more abstract level (*Grundrisse*: 145-53).

As an external expression, this independent form of value (exchange value) comes to have a separate existence from the commodity as the money form in which all properties of the commodity as exchange value appear as an object distinct from it, as a form of existence separated from the natural existence of the commodity (*Grundrisse*: 145). As an independent form money appears to contain the equivalent form independent of the social relation from which it is derived: "as a social property inherent in its nature" (*Capital I* : 187). So that a social relation of production appears as something existing apart from individual human beings, and the distinctive relations into which they enter in the course of production in society appear as the specific properties of an exclusive thing (*A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* : 49). It is within the secret of the money form that the prosaic reality of capitalism is manifest in its most powerful form: the social power of abstract labour, existing outside and apart from the control of the conscious individual action of its direct

producers.

While the social power of money appears outside the process of commodity production, the motivating energy of this power lies imminently within the money form itself: not as money as money, but money as capital. Marx formulated the difference between money as money and money as capital within the equations C-M-C and M-C-M, where C=commodity and M=money. C-M-C refers to the simple circulation of commodities, selling in order to buy, in order to attain use-values as the rational satisfaction of need within which money serves to mediate the exchange and vanishes in the final result of the movement. M-C-M, on the other hand, describes a process where the circulation of money as capital is an end in itself, as the valorisation of value reproducing itself and expanding within a constantly renewing limitless movement (*Capital I* : 253). In this process money (the general form) and the commodity (the particular form) function only as different modes of existence of capital. Value is therefore the subject of this process, changing from one form to another without becoming lost in the movement, but in the process it changes its own magnitude, throwing off surplus value from itself, and therefore valorising itself independently: "For the movement in the course of which it adds surplus-value is its own movement, its valorisation is therefore self-valorisation. By virtue of its being value, it has acquired the occult ability to add value to itself" (*Capital I* : 255). In this process money is the independent form through which value preserves itself and expands. Money provides value with an identity with which to assert its dominant subjectivity through its process of self-expansion (:capital).

While money provides value in process (:capital) with an identifiable form through which it can expand, it does not imply any change in the magnitude



of the value. In the process of exchange (:circulation) money functions as the universal equivalent and therefore a change of value cannot take place in the money form (:exchange value) itself. The change, therefore, can only occur in the use value of the commodity, in its consumption. It was Marx's major theoretical breakthrough that he identified the commodity whose use value possesses the peculiar quality of being a source and creation of value. The commodity is the capacity to labour: labour power (*Capital I* : 270).

It was with the discovery of labour-power (the social form of labour) that Marx was able to postulate the source of surplus value (the social content). In this more concrete analysis the direct producer is replaced by the capitalist employer and his worker. The worker sells her labour-power, the capacity to work, at its value (the wage, variable capital): that which is necessary for its continuing reproduction for a limited time. The specific quality of labour power, unlike other 'values' is that its consumption involves production of value. But, having been purchased, the labour-power can be made to work for a longer period than it needs to reproduce herself. But, not only that, the worker has renounced all right to the product of her work and, as such, has no interest in developing the capacity of her labour-power beyond the terms of her contract of employment. Quite the reverse, with no material interest in the product of their own labour, workers seek to appropriate more of the surplus value than they have produced and for a shorter working day, or less intensive working arrangements against dehumanising and degrading work practices. In order to maximise the surplus (profit) the employer has to ensure that the amount of value paid out to his employees is kept to a minimum and that the workers work as intensively and for as long as possible without reservation. This is, therefore, a relationship of antagonism and



contradiction. This is not a natural process but involves two antagonistic wills, and, what is more, because of the nature of exchange (equitable) two wills with right on their side: "There is here therefore an antimony, of right against right, both equally bearing the seal of exchange. Between equal rights, force decides" (*Capital I* : 344). The capitalist is simply enforcing his right over the commodity labour power when, driven by the pressure of competition, he attempts to make it work as intensively and for as long as possible; and the worker, because of the nature of the labour contract, with its specified limited duration and duties, is attempting to enforce her rights as the possessor of her own commodity labour power. Capital is forced labour that has to be constantly enforced.

The separation theorised in Marx's early work (:alienated labour) is now given a concrete material and socially specific reality and takes the form of the working class as a mass of people separated from themselves (labour and labour-power) and the means of their own survival (the means of production). The perpetuation of this separation is the absolutely necessary precondition for capitalist production (*Capital I*: 716). It is this relationship of contradiction, antagonism and struggle over production, generalised through reproduction to the whole of human experience, and apparent in the everyday disputes between employer and employee, that forms the social basis for the social relations of capitalist society and by which their contradictory nature can be understood (*Capital I* :724). And, more particularly, determines the institutional forms through which the social relations of capital are administered and regulated: the law and the state (Fine 1984).

#### **the state form**

The social power of capital lies not with the capitalist but with the power

of money as capital. This leads to antagonistic social relations (disorder) between labour and capital which need to be resolved. Just as money 'solved' the contradiction of exchange (the economic relation) as the separate existence as a universal equivalent, the problem of order (politics) is 'resolved' by the separating existence of a universal equality existing formally and independently as the power of law. Just as money is the alienated economic power of social labour, law is the alienated political power of social labour existing in formal legal and democratic conventions. But just as money provides for the crisis of capitalist accumulation, so the existence of law provides for the existence of disorder and the consequent intervention by the state as legal power. This is not a natural process, but is historical and logical : the result of class struggle as capital struggles to contain the abstract holders of legal powers, 'the citizen', within their juridic form (private property).

But the social relation of right is exploded by the social relation from which it is derived. Capitalist commodity production is a collective social process that undermines the privatised exchange process by which capital is realised and reproduced. While in theory the imposition of hunger and scarcity regulated through the wage (the economic power of capital) should ensure the compliance of the worker, the progressive co-operative nature of capitalist production creates needs, capacities and aspirations that cannot be satisfied in the separated forms of capitalist production. The alienated power of labour (capital) which appears in capitalist production in the form of money, a portion of which is granted to the worker in the form of the wage (variable capital) to service - but not fully satisfy - her needs, provides the possibility for - but does not demand - the existence of the alienated power of labour (capital) which appears in the form of the state. It is this progressive character - as

the social power of capital (the law) against the private interest of capital (profits) - that gives the state its legitimacy (apparent neutrality) but also determines its provisional form (unsatisfied aspirations: class struggle). The state then is neither the instrument of capital nor a neutral institution detached from the class struggle; but is, in fact, a moment of that class struggle that seeks to regulate the class struggle. Unable, therefore, to resolve the contradictions in, through and against which its own form is determined, it is condemned to attempt to reproduce the same contradiction in other forms. This process leads to qualitative transformations and expansions of the state form itself, e.g. as the military state, the police state, the training state etc.

This theory of abstraction, developed by Marx, shows the precariousness of this process and how the separations (negations of life: life as death) contain the basis for their own negation. Capitalism is a social system in which the necessities of life are constituted by private property, expressed in their social form by commodities. Needs and capacities are separated from each other, and the gap between them filled by the structures of private property - the political state and the law of contract ( Kay and Mott, 1982:1) Private property presupposes, therefore, a legal bond between the subjects and objects of property, between the individual and the world of things, a relationship premised upon their real separation; a gulf that is filled and upheld by the state. The *raison d'etre* of the state is constituted by the maintenance of 'universal subjectivity': the right of individuals to own property in abstraction from property in its historical materiality. This is essential for the intensification of property into capital and labour: the emergence of a



class of workers who are formally free to own property, but who own no property except their own person; and for the emergence of capital as the self-constituting, ever-expanding subject of private property. The formal content of liberal capitalism, the freedom and liberty of the individual, is thus contrasted with the absolute poverty of individuals as a class of producers; a class alienated and estranged from the necessities of life, other than those required for their continuing reproduction as workers, and all property except the self (Taylor and Neary 1994).

But the subject of labour cannot be totally objectified for it is constituted by the life force of humanity (:absolute subjectivity). The possibility of labour power (:the working class) recognising itself and therefore transforming itself into labour (the rational kernel of society: the unity of needs and capacities) constitutes a constant threat to the capitalist state form and the processes by which it is constituted, and forms the basis for continual restructuring of society by which the abstract individual is maintained by the elaboration of ever-changing administrative and regulatory forms, e.g., youth training.

#### **youth training**

On the face of it 'youth' seems a simple and uncontroversial category. Being young is a condition that is not confined to modern experience, nor are the particular attributes that are associated with it. However, when it is considered in terms of its relations to the economy 'youth' becomes as modern a category as are the social relations which create it. Unlike the pre-modern world 'youth' does not apply to particular activities of young people, or even groups of young people, but to all young people. It adopts the role of 'universal equivalent' and is then indifferent to any individual or specific form of youthful experience. This indifference

presupposes a very developed totality that supports real kinds of youthfulness of which no single type is any longer predominant. Young people are then able to express their 'youth' in a variety of different ways because that which they are expressing has ceased to be linked with particular individuals in any specific form.

Indifference is the fundamental presupposition of capitalist class relations. Capital is human indifference, it has no interest other than itself. It relies on the predominance of capital as subject and the subordination of labour as object. It is to the credit of the sociology of youth that they noticed this abstract phenomenon, but they were unable to do anything other than describe it in the form in which it appeared as 'youth culture'. Such a state of affairs appeared initially in its most developed form in the 1940s in the most modern society at that time: the United States.

Indifference presupposes the class relations of capitalism which are then used to enforce indifference. Indifference must be enforced because indifference contains within it the possibility of difference. The form in which indifference exists is the result of the struggle between itself and the possibility of it not being itself. This is not a merely a metaphysical argument. Its reality is evidenced in the everyday experience of men and women as they struggle to realise their concrete aspirations, and the administrative and regulatory instruments that attempt to contain these demands. In so far as the young working class is concerned an important form of struggle over indifference appears as training.

Training does not presuppose 'youth'. There is nothing about 'youth' that

implies training, although the terms have become synonymous in recent years. The development of the modern form of training has been the attempt to enforce abstract labour in the form of useful labour, or sameness as particularity. The contradictory nature of this duality is indifference in its most modern form. In the 19th century and during the modern period of training (from 1814 to 1948) this indifference appeared in a number of forms as young people struggled against its imposition. These can be identified as apprenticeships, as child labour and as juvenile labour until its formation in 1948 as youth training. This reality of indifference is evidenced in the everyday problem for training science to know what to call young people. The uncertainty results from the fact that they are defining an abstraction. This problem is strikingly brought out in the debate in the House of Commons in 1948 where MPs discuss what to call the young working class. I deal extensively with this debate in Chapter 2.

All these indifferent forms of being young are the expression of capital's attempt to objectify as labour power the subjectivity of labour, to recompose the young working class as part of the working class. However this recomposition and reformation of indifference at ever more abstract levels capital creates the possibility of difference at ever more concrete levels as the gap between the real experience of life for 'youth' conflicts with its virtually real presentation. As this separation has developed out of contradictory social relation it appears itself in a contradictory form as conformity: the young working class as capital enjoying the satisfaction of their material aspirations ,e.g., as the teenager; and antagonism: the young working class as not capital refusing their youthful containment ,e.g., as punk.

This analysis of training presents the working class as a dynamic force



within the social relations of capitalism and training and its changing forms as a result of the dynamic relations between the working class and capital within and against capital. By concentrating on the working class, and in particular the young working class within capital, I show the extent to which the forms in which training appears are manifestations of capitalist control brought on and continued by the ability of young workers to undermine capitalist accumulation. In this way then training and the imposition of indifference is a part of the struggle over the reproduction of capitalist social relations and not just the result of such a struggle.

### **mainstream**

This explanation for the existence of youth training as a determined social form is very different from the mainstream training analysis which deals with capitalist social relations and their derived forms in the discrete, separate, abstracted, fetishised and alienated categories within which they manifest themselves: the economic, political and ideological forms of capitalist power. In their taxonomic models, training appears as something exogenous, external and outside capitalist accumulation: not a social relation, but a functional technique that corresponds to the logic of capital. Training is functionally analysed as a device for social control, or preserving the work ethic, or limiting wage demands, or facilitating the introduction of new technology, or enabling the unemployed to find work, or massaging the unemployment figures. Training is then criticised for the extent to which it has been unsuccessful or too successful, in achieving any of these implicit or explicit functions (Finn 1987).

In order to substantiate this theory it is necessary to examine more particularly the determinations out of which the modern capitalist state



is derived. In order to do that it is necessary to explore more concretely the nature of working class subjectivity as it is created in, through and against the social relations of capital. In order to do that it is necessary to examine the real activities of men and women engaged in everyday life. But before I do that I want to examine the way in which this problematic (:everyday life) was dealt with by two forms of analysis that are important influences on this work. These forms of analysis came out of what became known as the Autonomy movement and the Situationist International (SI). I will explore the theoretical basis of these forms of analysis through the work of their most influential intellectual energies: Guy Debord (SI) and Toni Negri (Autonomists).

#### **the most modern discourse: subjectivity refined**

The most recent coherent attempt to theorise subjectivity within capitalist social relations was attempted by the Situationist International (SI). The SI is important to this work for that reason, but also because of the way in which, through its theorisations of subjectivity, it has connected and engaged with the concept of youth as a significant antagonism within modern society.

The SI was a revolutionary movement of extraordinary ambition and importance providing the theoretical and practical energy for progressive movements dedicated to the transformation of society. It formed part of a tradition of reaction to the dehumanising effects of the commodity form, that includes Marxist theory and philosophy, in contradiction to orthodox Marxism which merely perpetuates it, various artistic avant-garde modernisms and cultural critics, in particular Futurism, Dada and Surrealism and other forms of spontaneous refusal and resistance. Representations of these antagonisms converged in 1957 in Italy with the

amalgamation of the International Movement for an Imaginist Bauhaus (IMIB), Nuclear Art, the London Psychogeographical Society and the Lettrist International at the First World Conference of Liberated Artists to form the Situationist International. Beginning as a subversive art movement, the SI evolved into a practice that denied art insofar as it was not political, and denied the political insofar as it did not involve the revolutionary transformation of everyday life. In this way it sought to destroy the gap between art and politics to create not simply a new form of art or a new form of politics, but a new form of life. It was defined most clearly by its involvement in the revolutionary upheavals of 1968 in Paris and elsewhere. It provided the text and the sub-text for this extraordinary period, inventing, designing and rehabilitating forms of revolutionary activity and re-interpreting the alienated and alienating structures of modern society through the perspective of possibility. Although the SI destroyed itself, it is not extinct, it has become something else, providing the inspiration for a kaleidoscope of cultural, political and social oppositions, artistic subversions and assorted revolutionary milieux.

#### **situating the situationists**

Writing in what has become the most important theorisation of the SI's position, The Society of the Spectacle (SoS) 1968, Guy Debord maintained that in modern society life presents itself as an immense accumulation of spectacles, where everything that was directly lived has moved away into a representation. The 'spectacle' is not a collection of images but a social relation. It defines the alienated individual as a passive, contemplative spectator consuming, but otherwise not involved in, her own life and the world around her. Yet, the spectacle is, paradoxically, in turn

(relationally) defined by the desirings of the same individual whose dreams and imaginings, inspired by the spectacle, contain the means by which the spectacle and its alienations can be transformed. The negation of life contains its own negation.

The SI contextualised themselves against a crude, vulgar, orthodox Marxism (SoS: 84-89). This has lead cultural theorists to describe them as a development of Marx, a new paradigm (e.g. Plant 1992 ). The SI did, in fact, contain a certain originality and was a significant and serious attempt to contradict orthodox Marxism and various examples of social democracy with a rediscovery of the communist perspective by which humanity is redeemed through the activity of the working class emancipating itself (SoS:74). And yet, despite that, it was still an incomplete formulation of a revolutionary theory, pieced together from an interpretation of Marx's early work and a plagiarism - plagiarism being no bad thing in the Situationist world (SoS:207) - of the work of various Hegelian-inspired Marxist philosophers most notably Lukacs, Lefebvre and Adorno. The result was an inadequate theory of abstraction based on a formal, rather than determinate analysis of the abstractions of modern society, producing a phenomenal study of society's phenomenal form.

### **alienation**

The limitations of the Situationist theory begin from their analysis of production. They do not ignore production, as Jean Barrot would have it in What is Situationism: critique of the Situationist International ( Unpopular Books 1987), but refer to it directly. Their notion of separation: the basis of (wo)man's detachment from everyday life is, in fact, explicitly based on the alienating processes of modern production (SoS:140). Their theoretical problems arise because of their inadequate



account of the processes of production and its resulting alienating forms. This inadequate theory of abstraction is based on a common formalist misreading of Marx on the subject of alienation. Following Marx in the *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts* (1844), Debord identifies alienation as the major problem for modern (wo)man in modern society. Following Lefebvre, he attributes alienation to the division of labour: "It is equally clear that Marx sees the *division of labour* (his italics) as the cause of alienation" (Lefebvre 1947: 63). As Debord put it: "Separation is the alpha and omega of the spectacle. The institutionalisation of the social division of labour, the formation of classes...It shows what it [the spectacle] is: separate power developing in itself, in the growth of productivity by means of the incessant refinement of the division of labour into a parcelization of gestures which are then dominated by the independent movement of machines; and working for an ever expanding market. All community and all critical sense are dissolved during this movement in which the forces that could grow by separating are not yet reunited" (SoS:25). This explanation has serious implications for the Situationist International. Constrained by an analysis based on the organisational form of what is essentially commodity and not capitalist production - the division of labour occurs in all productive societies - they are unable to theorise the basis of working class antagonism and are reduced to prescriptive, external and organisational solutions, e.g., workers' councils. And without an understanding of the nature of the determinations to which the capitalist worker is subjected and objected, they are reduced to reproducing the voluntaristic wish-come-true desiring dreams of the not-yet post-Blochian subject where commodity labour is overcome not by its overthrow but in its generalisability: not only a baker, but a footballer, graphic designer and teacher as well. Or, as Lautremont might say, we are all poets now.

Without an adequate explanation for the causes of separation, Debord's analysis of the commodity is stuck in the abstract: 'the spectacle', and ends with the victory of the commodity. He never escapes the commodity nightmare system that he constructs. Unable to reveal the basis for revolutionary antagonism or the real life contradictions in which, through which and out of which class opposition occurs, Debord's working class subject is reduced either to the 'other' of liberal social theory: a radical individual entranced by the "propaganda of desires"(SoS:53); or, following his formalist account of alienation, is generalised into a collective political consciousness through the instrument of the workers' council. Trapped within a closed system of commodity logic, where possibility is reduced to innovation, Debord's commodity form moves towards its absolute realisation : the spectacle (SoS:66). The spectacle becomes what it has always been for Debord, the subject of its own process. He is not able to theorise the other subject within the process: antagonistic subject (the working class) by which the spectacle can be transcended. The basis for this misunderstanding is that he does not understand value, the value-form, the self-expansion of value, value-in-motion: capital.

#### **value versus theory of utility**

Without an understanding of value, Debord cannot adequately explain how and why the system reproduces itself, and therefore how it can be transcended. Instead he attempts to counterpose against the law of value - of which he has little to say other than in functionalist (SoS:45) and regulatory terms (SoS:46) - a theory of general utility by which he can theorise his spectacle. For Debord, "The spectacle is the other side of money: it is the general abstract equivalent of all commodities. Money dominated society as

the representation of general equivalence, namely, of the exchangeability of different goods whose uses could not be compared. The spectacle is the developed modern complement of money where the totality of the commodity world appears as a whole, as a general equivalence for what the entire society can be and can do. The spectacle is the money which one only looks at, because in the spectacle the totality of use is already exchanged for the abstract representation. The spectacle is not only the servant of pseudo-use, it is already in itself the pseudo use of life" (SoS:49). This attempted generalisation of consumption is an extension of the formal logic which he used to explain alienation in production (the division of labour). That is, a process by which the consumer is separated not only passively from the spectacle, through contemplation; but also actively, in the act of dissatisfied consumption based on their own pseudo-need and the fact that the commodity is not what it claims to be. However, Debord is arguing against himself. His spectacle cannot exist. If use value exists only in use then it cannot exist as non-use, as contemplation, or as not-useful-pseudo-use. Marx has already addressed this matter in *Capital I* and *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*. Not only is it the usefulness of a thing that makes it a use value, with usefulness being a function of that which is peculiar to itself, e.g., its physical properties (*Capital I* : 126), this usefulness has value only in use, and is realised only in the process of consumption (*A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* : 27). The concept of utility is meaningless except where it has a particular material form. As something in general it has no meaning and is therefore unreal ( Kay in Elson, 1979: 53). It exists purely in the imagination of Debord, the unreality of which he is forced to concede with his notion of pseudo-life: an escape into contentless abstraction.



**metaphysics: false consciousness and pseudo-need**

While Debord refers to this 'illusion' as the fetishism of commodities (SoS:67), this is not the same thing as Marx's commodity fetishism. This is not simply an academic point - Debord's metaphysical imaginings have not-Marxist consequences in that they lead into and from Lukacsian notions of (false) consciousness which provide the intellectual legitimation around which elitist parties and their ideologues can gather. While the SI reject vanguardism (SoS:96) and advocate direct participation, emphasising the importance of political activity by the working class as the basis of emancipation, Debord does not theorise adequately the basis of this antagonism. He demonstrates a tendency to idealise consciousness and to separate intellectual activity from practical action with a propensity to grant a certain primacy to an Hegelian interpretation of the dialectic with its emphasis on thought process as above, beyond and before practical activity. Therefore, "it requires workers to become dialecticians and to inscribe their thought into practice" (SoS:123) and "The class struggles...develop together with the thought of history, the dialectic, the thought which no longer stops to look for the meaning of what is, but rises to a knowledge of the dissolution of all that is, and in its movement dissolves all separation" (SoS:75).

Related to the notion of false consciousness is the Debordian concept of pseudo-need. Debord uses this idea to theorise the basis of the contradiction of 'the spectacle'. Antagonism to the commodity form is based on the fact that it is either not what it claims to be, leading to dissatisfaction, or it is what it claims to be but what it addresses a false need. That is, Debord compares the material existence of the commodity with a metaphysical and idealistic notion of human need: "the



satisfaction of primary human needs is replaced by an uninterrupted fabrication of pseudo-needs which are reduced to the single pseudo-need of maintaining the reign of the autonomous economy" (SoS:51). If commodity production produces psuedo-need, then it can only be producing pseudo-abundance which undermines the progressive nature of capital and an essential prerequisite for communism.

These are very different interpetations from those of Marx who saw the consciousness of the working class coming out of working class activity itself (immanent), who identifies contradiction in the commodity form itself (immanent: not between the commodity and something which it is not: an external point of reference), and who theorised need and its development as an immanent progressive part of the capitalist production process ( *Grundrisse*: 409-410).

#### **otherness**

Unable to explain the basis of radical antagonism, SI is left with no adequate description of an antagonistic subject, other than 'the other' of bourgeois theory' rational choosing individual reconstituted as the desiring dissatisfied deconstructor. As he can provide no meaningful account of how this systematic model can be transcended Debord escapes into his own form of abstraction. Unlike other modern discourse, e.g. post-modernism, which abstract into a series of 'others', the SI defines not the essentials of otherness but 'the otherness' of 'otherness': an abstraction of an abstraction (hyper-reality). The positive element of this is that it attempts, against post-modernism, to focus on subjectivity and the part played by real people in real life processes. The danger is that it reifies subjectivity, e.g., 'youth': "the transformation of what exists"

(SoS:62), reducing it to a series of formless abstractions which it then attempts to rescue through prescriptive organisationalism categorised as revolutionary working class activity.

The Situationist International was a real expression of revolution, and yet it was not the revolution. In that sense the Situationist International was inadequate. It could provide no basis for opposition outside the spectacle and became, therefore, a part of the spectacle. In order to recreate the revolution it is necessary to recreate the Situationist International and make it more. It is not enough to simply repeat it, as the radicals do, but rather to write through it, to make up for its inadequacies, to theorise more completely their incomplete account, rather than celebrate their theoretical weaknesses (Plant 1992). These theoretical weaknesses are not just theoretical - they have political implications. There can be no revolution developing from Situationist theory. The revolutionary theory of the Situationist International needs to be revolutionised. In order to do that it is necessary to look beyond the 'noisy sphere' of the spectacle at the way in which the spectacle is really produced.

#### **not just the labour process**

Since the 1970s, following the breakdown in the accumulation processes of capitalist production - featuring the reorganisation of work by capital and the reorganisation of non-work by labour - capitalist work processes have become the subject of increased debate ( Handy 1984, Pahl 1988, Gershuny 1983, Thompson 1984, Braverman 1974 ). The focus of this debate is the labour process and the increasing self-conscious awareness of workers' position as workers within that process, an awareness that takes

the form of increasing work-place agitation based not simply on the wage relation but on the quality of working life and the nature of work itself.

While this debate addresses a part of the accumulation process previously ignored, it is limited from my point of view. It tends to focus on technical aspects of the labour process and value only within the vague schema of 'exigencies of valorisation': dealing with value merely insofar as it is concerned with exploitation and the extraction of absolute rather than relative value, implying that problems are capable of resolution (Palloix 1975, Aglietta 1979); rather than dealing with the contradiction in the value process itself. Also these studies tend to be trapped behind the factory gates and, although there was some recognition that work needs to be done beyond the production line (Brighton Labour Process Group 1977, Elger 1979), the failure to link reproduction with production, and in particular the role of the state in this process, is a major limitation.

But these limitations, expressed by the Brighton Labour Process Group and Elger, are not resolved simply by extending the object of enquiry. The shortcomings within the research are derived from a specific theoretical approach to problems associated with capitalist production. Their work is based on the dominant orthodoxy which claims that the importance of Marx's work lay with its examination of the exploitation of labour rather than the law of value and its abstract forms of alienated capitalist power: money, the law and the state (Clarke, 1988: 15).

**negri**

For a more fully developed account of the labour process, that includes the antagonism of the class subject within the process of subordination to capital as it develops through the state form and the implications for



working class cohesion beyond production, I need to look elsewhere. A more convincing account can be found in the work of Toni Negri, and although his theoretical formations are not without limitations (Holloway 1989), his work can be used to provide a theoretical framework to examine the process of subordination (real subsumption) beyond production and with it the basis for working class antagonism that gets beyond the workerist definitions of class. It also provides a formulation, following the work of Marx in the *Grundrisse*, for the conceptualisation of the formation of absolute subjectivity in, through and against the form of the training state.

Negri's work, informed, written and conceived amidst the upheaval of Italian society in the 60s, 70s and 80s, forms part of "one of the most...coherent challenges in Europe to the system of austerity politics and the role of the established Left within it" (Merrington in Negri, 1988: 1). He restores the revolutionary, political content to Marxism, something that has been missing from the more academic treatment of Marx's work and the strategies for socialism advocated by some sections of the established left: "This approach is radically different from traditional Marxism, which has always treated politics as one subject among others, especially distinct from economics, and often carefully tucked away in the attic of the superstructure. Over the years Marxism has been sterilised by being reduced to a critique of capitalist hegemony and its 'laws of motion'. The fascination of Marxists with capitalist mechanisms of despotism in the factory, of cultural domination and of the instrumentalisation of the working class struggle has blinded them to the presence of a truly antagonistic subject. The capitalist class is the only class they recognise. When they do see working class struggle, it is almost always treated as derivative of capital's own development. The true dynamic of capitalist development is invariably located in such internal



contradictions among capitalists as competition" (Cleaver in Negri 1981: xxi)

Negri's work provides a critical reference point for ongoing debates and activity about the position of the working class from within a dynamic reading of the capital-labour relation; and, as such, it forms part of a "sustained and systematic concern to politicise and historicise economic categories from a working class standpoint" (Negri 1988:2). In so doing it provides a vision of communism not as a linear process working through transitional stages to a future or even present utopia; but, rather, as Marx has it in the *Grundrisse* a material antagonism developing class forces in the present; hence a new problem of development between the state and capital on the one hand and the growth of proletarian autonomy, what Negri calls the self-valorisation of working class needs, on the other. "Now that the class struggle is over the whole social working day and is being waged by a fully socialised proletariat, it is impossible to see relations of reproduction as merely a by-product or 'result' of production relations: the contemporary crisis of capitalism requires a further social dimension beyond the workerist analysis of the 60s and 70s - the crisis is both a crisis of production and of the reproduction of wage work relations as a whole" (Negri, 1988:177).

Negri examines the development of this antagonistic subjectivity through an analysis of the state form. He argues that the state moves historically in reaction to various crisis, e.g., the Russian revolution (1917), the Great Crash (1929); from planning and command at the level of the factory through Taylorism and Fordism, with limited state intervention; to planning at the level of society through the planning-state (Keynsianism) to its present manifestation as the crisis-state. Because of working class activity, in

what amounts to a form of permanent revolution and catastrophic crisis for capitalism, the state has been forced to recognise post-1917 the working class "as a historic protagonist in its own right" (Negri, 1988:10), and accept that "the working class can be neither put down nor removed: the only option is to understand the way it moves and regulate its revolution" (Negri, 1988:19).

The way in which it now attempts to do that: "Given that the state form (post 1929) has to register the impact of the working class on society, is now precisely at the social level that the state constructs, within the fabric of the state itself, a specific form of control of the movements of class. Moving away from the earlier antithesis of despotism in the factory and anarchy in society, capital is now obliged to move the social organisation of that despotism, to diffuse the organisation of exploitation throughout society, in the new form of a planning based state which, in the particular way in which it articulates organisation and repression throughout society, directly reproduces the figure of the factory (Negri, 1988:30).

After 1917 a form of control at the level of the factory was introduced in an attempt to replace the obstructive (for capital) labour hierarchies and aristocracies that had arisen involving a recomposition and socialisation of the workforce through technical systems of mass production. This involved the introduction of de-skilling, an increase in the organic composition of capital, scientific organisation of work, etc. However, this strategy was counter-productive. Designed to take Bolshevism away from the workers, Taylorism and Fordism only succeeded in relaunching class composition at a higher level. Therefore a higher level of control was required. This formed the basis for the justification and legitimation of

Keynesianism, argues Negri. By introducing such a regime: "The Keynesian instruments of state intervention and the management of circulation turned all society into a factory. And economic development was assured (for the time being) by an alliance between the bourgeoisie and the socialists" (Negri, 1988:193).

The working class was now acknowledged for the first time as the motor for capitalist development, attempts to deal with it were now to be based on including it within the process of accumulation. The device for achieving this was planning. Planning, argues Negri, was intended to remove the fear of the future. Confidence must be restored so as to attract investment. The crisis destroyed confidence: investment risks must be eliminated or reduced with the state acting as guarantor: "The state has to defend the present from the future. And if the only way to do this is to protect the future from within the present, to plan the future according to present expectations, then the state must extend its intervention up to the role of the planner" (Negri, 1988:25). But what is the future: the future is catastrophe (Negri, 1988:25). And catastrophe for capital is the working class.

But this strategy contains its own limitations and paradoxes. Not only did this new composition of labour as mass worker confront capital latent with the potential for collective action in the future, it could also remove itself from the process: "The irony of capitalist production is that it must assure the continued reproduction of the living subject. The antagonism is created on higher and higher levels as capital develops. What begins as the horror of zombie-like dead labour being summoned against living labour becomes, over time, an increasingly desperate attempt by capital to protect its own existence against an ever more powerful and



hostile working class. Capital can never win, totally, once and forever. It must tolerate the continued existence of an alien subjectivity which constantly threatens to destroy it. What a vision: capital, living in everlasting fear of losing control over the hostile class it has brought into existence! This is the peacefully placid capitalist hegemony of traditional Marxism turned inside out, become a nightmare for the ruling class" ( Cleaver in Negri, 1981 : xxiii).

Capital is unable to satisfy the aspirations (needs) it has created, nor to control the capacities it has engineered. The process is contradictory and therefore antagonistic. This antagonism expresses itself in the form of wildcat strikes, absenteeism, extension of wage demands, sabotage etc. The working class through this activity raises the level of the necessary labour wage, and capital is constrained by this action to diminish the amount of living labour incorporated into production, or to reclaim part of the surplus in the form of inflation. "With inflation the crisis of accumulation becomes first and foremost a crisis of the state" (Negri, 1988: 120-121). So that the workers' struggle becomes an irreducible limit to capitalist development. And even as capital attempts to reassert the fundamental relation of forces, this merely displaces the precariousness of capitalist development.

Negri then suggests that, with the failure of reform, capital is forced to accept the logic of its position and restore order by openly engaging in generalised command in order to survive. Confusingly he theorises this development in terms of the cessation of the law of value to be replaced by the law of development within which profit is redefined not as an economic category but as a political function of domination and violence. That is to

say, the role of the state is taken over by enterprise in the form of the enterprise (crisis) state, by which the political function of the state comes to play the dominant role over and above its economic function, which is no longer resolvable at the economic level. This takes the form of attacks on the mass worker and on any element of homogeneity in the social composition of class, especially in the critical area that links production with reproduction, and to reconstitute the working class in terms of "institutional state values" (Negri, 1988: 181). This involves a huge increase in repressive centralisation, e.g. anti-union legislation, benefit restrictions, etc.

And so capital attempts to reorganise its command over social labour time "...over the entire space of proletarian life conditions and possibilities [by] imposing a general command over labour" (Negri, 1988:184). There is therefore, as Negri puts it, no outside to capitalism. There is no civil society, it has been completely subsumed: "Real subsumption of labour cannot but be (in the same moment) real subsumption of society...the subsumption of society has become the production of that society" (Negri, 1988:142). In Negri's conceptualisation the mass worker becomes the social worker.

However, far from resolving the problem, this recomposition of the working class, from mass worker to the social worker, gives rise to an antagonistic subject that is even more difficult for the state to deal with (Negri, 1988:178). "The proletariat is now fully social...and it has extended the contradiction/antagonism against capitalist accumulation of profit from the factory area to the whole of society...responsible for upsetting and destabilising the whole circuit from production to reproduction...it represents a mobile sort of labour force... a labour force which is

abstract and projects new needs which enabled it to create conditions for equality and homogeneity (through bargaining etc) in the working class" (Negri, 1988:183) . The separation within the category has not been suppressed (Negri, 1984:143).

While this is not a total victory for capital it does require, as Negri argues, a redefinition of the class antagonism in a way that connects with the now total subsumption of society, of social labour as a whole, to capitalist domination: "a new conception of 'the working class' broadened and extended to contradiction and antagonism in the sphere of social reproduction as a whole.. "beyond direct production" and factoryist definitions (Negri, 1988 :199).

That is to say, in attempting to restructure the working class back to labour power: "to reduce the intensity of the political composition of the class" (Negri, 1988: 212), through a strategy of job redesign, task fragmentation, legal devices, welfare reorganisation and planning in an attempt to counter the abstraction, mobility and consequent massification of labour power; and by extending the margins of labour power involving and invoking production and reproduction relations over the whole of society, in a process of real subsumption on the part of capital, which has now reached a level that encompasses the whole of society (Negri, 1988: 210), capital has paradoxically forced a growing awareness on the part of the working class of the interconnection between production and reproduction. This is evidenced in growing social struggles between women, youth, blacks, etc; against the forms and forces of capital.

So that in defeating the mass worker capital has created the social worker: "from the working class massified in direct production in the factory, to



social labour representing the potentiality of a new working class, now extended through the entire span of production and reproduction - a conception more adequate to the wider more searching dimension of capitalist control over society and social labour as a whole" (Negri, 1988: 209).

In this way the social worker: "completed and concluded the dynamic which existed with the mass worker as a tendency and transformed the independent variable into independence tout court. This antagonism develops at a pace dictated by the rhythms of real subordination which capital puts into operation in relation to social labour. As social labour advances so the social worker is brought into existence, as irresolvable antagonism...as regards conception of life, the liberation of time and thus bringing about spatial and temporal conditions which are wholly alternative [through self-valorisation]" (Negri, 1988: 220 - 221). What Negri suggests is that what is created is a "new industrial feudalism" (Negri, 1988: 218) where the proletarian subject is reborn in antagonistic terms, around a radical alternative, an alternative of life time as against the time measure of capital (Negri, 1988: 219).

#### **over-schematic**

But Negri's work is not without its limitations. Quite apart from his idiosyncratic economic interpretation of the law of value which underestimates the determining nature of modern society and which characterises the revolutions as an external autonomous event, his work can generally be described as over-schematic. This is evidenced in terms of its periodisation of the state (Clarke 1992 ), the labour process (Williams, Haslam and Williams 1992 ) and the composition of the working class (Holloway, 1989). And Negri's neat historical packaging of state

formation overemphasises the distinction between phases of accumulation at the expense of "the permanence of the contradictory foundations in the contradictory form of capitalist production" (Clarke, 1991: 149).

Nor have the social relations of capitalist production ever been confined to the factory. [ Marx did not reduce the category 'worker' to men working directly in factories; but extends the domination of capitalist production to the whole of human experience ( *Capital I* :333). The social worker, no more than the flexible or mass worker, is not a recent phenomenon.

His interpretation of so-called Fordist mass production overstates the homogeneity of the labour processes in a way that leads to a caricature of capital's attempt to decompose and recompose the working class in its own image. This leads to a tendency to reduce the struggle to the logic of 'creative destruction' rather than the possibility of rupture. And by his use of the productivist term the 'social factory' there is a danger of excluding those people he seeks to include (James and Costa 1972) and to undermine his own important theoretical formulations on the state as a device required to enforce capitalist social relations.

The subordination of capital to labour is not established simply through the labour process, in production in the factory; nor is it enforced merely through the amount of surplus distributed: wage or welfare benefit. These devices reproduce the capital-labour class relation which is constituted prior to the circuit of capital in the separation of the worker from her means of production and subsistence (Clarke, 1980:10). The purchase of labour power is the prelude to the production process and this prelude is constantly repeated when the period agreed for sale has come to an end, e.g., at the end of a contract. So that, and this is very

important: "A division between the product of labour and labour itself, between the objective conditions of labour and subjective labour power, was therefore the real foundation and the starting point of the process of capitalist accumulation. But what at first was merely a starting point becomes, by means of nothing but the continuity of the process, by simple reproduction, the characteristic result of capitalist production, a result which is constantly renewed and perpetuated" (*Capital I*: 716).

Therefore to theorise society as a social factory in this way is to conflate the labour process into the determining social arrangement in a way that is typical of labour process studies. The factory as the place of production is important, but the social relations of production are determined as much outside as inside production. Production is very important but it is only a moment in reproduction. While production is the dominant moment it [production] can only be conceptualised in terms of the circuit as a whole, and this includes reproduction. By concentrating on the 'factory' element Negri [and the Autonomists] prefer productive relations over reproductive relations and thus deny that which they are attempting to theorise: the inclusion of those concrete individuals who appear unrelated to capital production and therefore outside the working class.

#### **new social subject and the training state**

The purpose of this work is not to deny Negri, but to write through him, not to propose my own alternative schema, but to investigate the precarious process of decomposition and recomposition of the working class, and so reveal through a concrete historical material analysis the nature of subjectivity: the way in which it expresses itself, the way in which it is limited, and the way in which it transcends those limitations. I will do this by filling in part of the 'outline' of Negri's process of class



formation and the development of the 'social worker' through a more detailed study of the process of class composition and recomposition. This will be done by a more concrete examination of a particular form of subjectivity: 'youth'; and by the study of a process by which that subjectivity is determined i.e. through a detailed examination of the form of the training state.

#### **authorship**

Before embarking on that investigation, it is necessary to define the concept of absolute subjectivity as it relates to the dominant subjectivity of this work: the author. In order to confirm the absolute nature of the subjectivity that I am attempting to define, it should be possible to refer to this question within the analytical framework that I have already proposed. It is my contention that my formulation about the virtual nature of reality based on Marx's theory of commodity fetishism, which was derived from his theory of value, is absolutely adequate for this task.

#### **research the researcher and the problematic (virtual) nature of reality**

Marx's theory of value not only problematises bourgeois reality it also calls into question the way in which this reality is described. This raises fundamental questions about the form and function of the research process and the role of the researcher, i.e. who is the research for? And whose interests is it serving? This suggests that the research process is more than academic curiosity, and points beyond intellectual pragmatics to the political nature of research. But more than that, not only does the theory of value politicise research and its methods, it also does it in a way that is politically useful: "The theory of value enables us to analyse capitalist exploitation in a way that overcomes the fragmentation

of the experience of that exploitation...it enables us to grasp the capitalist exploitation as a contradictory, crisis-ridden process subject to continual change...it builds into our understanding of how the process of exploitation works, the possibility of action to end it and identifies the space within which political activity can operate...it gives us a way of exploring where there might be openings for a materialist political practice" (Elson, 1979: 171).

My investigation of the theory of value provides not just the methodological tools that are associated with this form of analysis, but has implications for the appropriate methods of analysis, about the validity of concepts I use and why and how I carry out these research projects. That is this work carries political as well as academic possibilities. Emphasising the political nature of this work and of theory as a practical activity raises a question about the role and position of the researcher as a creative organic part of the process.

Mainstream training research avoids this question; or, rather, deals with it in the reified form in which it approaches its object of enquiry. That is, not only is the object for analysis taken as given, but so too is the role of the researcher. Sociological research methodologies (e.g Burgess, 1985) usually begin from a perspective developed within an assumed set of certainties constructed around the role of the researcher and the object of enquiry. In this way the researcher is detached from the researched. There is a gap between the observer and that which is being observed. This gap is apparent to modern social science which attempts to close the space between itself and the observed world through the resolution of various reified dilemmas conceptualised within a problematic of research methods, moralities and techniques. These are real dilemmas, but they are beside

the point. Presented in this way the researcher is afforded only an external relationship to the work with which they are involved.

There have been various self-conscious attempts to deal with this modern research condition: the space between the real and the apparently real. These have taken the form of attempts to conceptualise the gap out of existence through various theoretical articulations, e.g. the synthesis of the conscious with the unconscious (:the dream with the awakening) to define a state of absolute reality (e.g. Breton and the Surrealist); or by condemning the existence of the gap by denying any significant existence to authorship ( e.g.Foucault); or by an indulgent preoccupation with writerly notions of engagement through commitment and 'being there' (Orwell: Down and Out in Paris and London (1933), Sartre's existentialism, Rushdie's 'Magic Realism'; or solidarity through identification (feminism, ethnicity), or by dis-engagement through narcotics or constant movement: 'not-being there' (e.g. the Beat writers: Burroughs, Kerouac), or by attempting to dissolve the gap in an anti-theoretical relativist vacuum: there is no reality so there is no gap (e.g. post-modernism). All of these approaches are real, but only in the sense that they are not complete, they are virtual. They describe a part of the real world and, as such, are abstract theories rather than theories of abstraction. They fail because of their inability to conceptualise the contradictory nature of reality out of which the gap and the competing subjectivities (capital and labour) which form the apparently real gap are determined.

The most complete attempts to deconstruct the gap between the real world and the world of appearance, between the observer and the observed, are contained in the work of the cubist painters and in Albert Einstein's theory of relativity. Although these works appear unconnected, they are



linked through their mutual concern with the methodological problems associated with the relationship between time and space and motion as viewed from the perspective of the emerging secularised consciousness of the modern world. This is the same emerging secularised consciousness that Marx had identified, and which had formed the substance of that antagonistic subjectivity which he had defined as the working class.

Einstein's theory of relativity undermined the vision of the real that had been defined with Newton's structured, mechanical, clockwork universe. He redefined Newton's absolute notions of limitless, symmetrical universal and equivalent time and space held together by linear and predictable motion (gravity). He proposed that "instead of forces acting at a distance across space from one object to another, force, object and space time were united in a single concrete formulation, whose structural principle was discontinuity" (Kay and Mott, 1982 :77) There is no gap. Subjects and objects and objects and subjects act and react in through and against each other, since they are directly structured into each other. They are each other and they are not each other. But if there is no gap, then there is no outside. This methodology places the scientist unavoidably as a participant in the system she is studying. Einstein gave the observer her proper status in modern science (Calder, 1979 :31).

Cubism did the same thing in a different way. It changed the nature of the relationship between the painted image and reality, and by so doing it expressed a new relationship between man and reality. The appearance of their work implied the virtual, i.e. that which was not self evident. Art became a process of revelation through the investigation of the relationship between different aspects of the same event, between empty and filled space, between structure and movement, between seer and the thing

seen (Berger, 1969: 23). As John Berger argues, when looking at a cubist picture we are forced to look at the surface of the painting: "We begin with the surface, but since everything in the picture refers back to the surface we begin with the conclusion. We then search - not for an explanation, as we do if presented with an image with a single predominant meaning, but for some understanding of the configuration of events whose interaction is the conclusion from which we began...The spectator has to find his place within this content which the complexity of the forms and the 'discontinuity' of the space remind him that his view from that place is bound to be only partial" (Berger, 1969: 25).

The work of the Cubist painters and Einstein's theoretical formulations were not external observations (virtual) of a virtual world, but were the determined activity of a process that sought its own completeness through itself. They provided in their abstract artistic and scientific forms dramatic forms of the subjectivity that Marx had theorised through his theory of value. Their expression of this subjectivity and of the possible completeness that it implied: of (wo)man as part of the world and indivisible from it, of wo(man) as the world which she inherited, made it no longer possible to exclude the researcher from her responsibility as an immanent part of the researched, nor to detach the theory of the work from its practical application, nor to detach the form of the work from its content, nor to detach its methodology from its empirical investigation.

This understanding of theory and practice, form and content, researcher and researched, as a fused, concrete, unified, formulation is not a closed, sterile process; but is, rather, practically reflexive (Bonefeld, Gunn, Psychopedis, 1992: ix - xx). That is it is a dialectical refraction that opens categories to reveal the full spectrum of their possibilities. By



formulating the research process in this way it is possible to escape the eschatology that is 'the training debate'. By revealing the subjectivity of the researcher as the subject of the research, and by deconstructing the closed categorisations which researchers are encouraged to identify with, or commit themselves to, I am underlining the positive possibility of the living creative subject while providing an antidote to the restricting bourgeois concept of training: "the negative possibility implicit in the new relation of the self to the world" (Berger, 1969: 13).

I am, therefore, the subject of this work. The work is an expression of my subjectivity, not just as researcher, but as an employee of the training state determining and determined by the antagonistic subjectivity of youth that I do so much to define, and yet am defined by. Through this research I intend to 'redefine' youth and, therefore, 'redefine' myself. The work then follows my own progression through conventional forms of the training state : as a worker employed by the MSC, local state authorities and the Inner London Probation Service. It also reflects the particular form of my own creative, practical development around the activity of writing.

The work will begin with an investigation, through detailed archival and documentary evidence, of the modern training form; from its first appearance in 1814 to its conjuncture with its determined youth-ful form in 1948. This will lead into a reformulation of 'youth' from this most significant manifestation in 1948 through its various excessive forms in the post war world. I then dramatise this excess - following expositional techniques developed by the SI - through a film script. I use this cameratic device to zoom in on the youth sociology of the period, provide a documentary of its consequent training forms and take a snap shot of its epic refusals: the urban riots of the early 1980s. Returning to more



orthodox methods of analysis, I examine the way in which the categories of youth sociology, and in particular those of youth culture, mutated into the more generalised metaphorical definitions (e.g. post-Fordism), and the way in which they were utilised to establish training initiatives based on their theoretical conceptualisations (e.g. the notion of enterprise). The final substantive section deals with the position of the training worker within the training state. Through a series of conversations with employees of the training state (:the training police) I examine the way in which workers involved in attempting to define and contain youthfulness understand and define the real nature of their own predicament.

## The Modern Science of Training

### training: the most modern science

The modern science of training is based on a contrived principle of organisation. This principle has been derived out of capital's struggle to contain (objectify) the antagonistic subject, identified in the previous chapter, within the institutional framework of bourgeois society. Unable to explain the underlying dynamic (the law of value) in, through and against which this overwhelming subjectivity develops, the first social engineers of this most modern science (e.g. Luther, Calvin, Smith, Ricardo, Bentham, Taylor, Ford...) were reduced to pragmatic and precarious formulae (theology, natural law, political economy, utilitarianism, marginal economics, sociology, psychology...), as they sought to eradicate contingency (class struggle) within the presumed natural clockwork mechanical order, described by the traditional (Newtonian) laws of motion (energy) and inertia (resistance). This science, developed in its most complete form in 1948 when what was previously regarded as inertia was understood as energy, made its first formal appearance in 1814 with the repeal of the previous training doctrine, the Elizabethan Statutes of Artificers 1563.

The main complaint against the Statute, "a poisonous insect" (Onslow MP, April 27 1814 Hansard XXVII), was that its provisions acted as a restraint

of trade, restricting skilled labour to the activity for which it had been trained, and, therefore, freezing the labour market; although the basis for the repeal was not limited to this point. Indeed, the necessity for review was presented in language that came to characterise the modern science of training: not only was the repeal of the Statute an acknowledgment of the principles of political economy, it was also a recognition of the proprietary rights of labour to the enjoyment of its own "genius and industry" (Romilly MP, May 13 1814 Hansard XXVII) and more generally a satisfaction of the innate rights of man (Giddy MP, May 13 1814 Hansard XXVII).

Confident in the glorious traditions of Elizabethan England the legislators in the House of Commons, or at least those who took an interest in political economy, were less certain about the basis on which decisions affecting commercial activity were taken. As Mr Philips MP, speaking in the repeal debate, put it: "Glorious as the reign of Queen Elizabeth undoubtedly was, they [the opposition to the repeal] ought not to refer to that period as affording wise commercial regulations. The true principles of commerce appeared at that time to be misunderstood; and the Act in question proved the truth of this assertion. The persons most competent to form regulations with respect to trade were master manufacturers, in whose interest it was to have goods of the best fabric; and no legislative enactment could ever effect so much in producing that result as merely leaving things to their own course and operation. The proof of this was to be found in the fact that manufacturers for which this country was most famous were precisely those to which this Act did not apply. If this narrow principle had been carried into every branch of art, the machinery of Sir Richard Arkwright would have been lost to the country - and the genius of Mr. Watt, whose inventions have added more to the productive



powers of the Empire than if the population had increased by one half, would have been still unknown. By this Act, which is said to be so beneficial, a man who has served his apprenticeship to a trade he detested, was prevented from exercising another for which he might feel an inclination. And, where a manufacturer ceased to employ the usual number of hands, and another had not a sufficient quantity, the superabundance of one, was prevented from being employed to make up for the deficiency in the other. This principle went, in fact, to place the trading classes in this country on a level with Indian castes" (Phillips MP, April 27 Hansard 1814 XXVII).

But the 1814 Act was not created out of the principles of political economy that were dominant at that time, although it may have been explained in that way. The Act was the expression of a material process already in existence, the culmination of a process of work intensification and specialisation in progress since the middle of the last century, marking the break up of pre-capitalist (feudal) working practices and commercial capitalist (mercantilist) labour formulations. Political economy becomes then a *post festum* intellectual apology for this material process. These processes include the disintegration of previous methods of accumulation as a result of growing foreign competition and the breakthrough by capital into the sphere of production, replacing the unmediated relation of labour under the domination of another person, with the mediated relation by which social labour is dominated by money: wage labour (Clarke, 1988:24-26). In this situation the product of the worker does not stand in any direct relation to his needs and capacities, but in both respects is determined by social configurations alien to the worker: capital.

**the 1814 act and the form of the state**

The penetration of capital into production undermined the mercantilist training form, and laid the foundations for a new form of training, in which the accumulation of capital would be based on a penetration of capital into production (wage-labour). This required the radical separation of the state from civil society by dismantling the mercantilist regulation to subordinate the accumulation of capital to the disinterested rule of money and the law (Clarke, 1992: 140). This separation forms the basic characteristic of the liberal state. Its particular form is based on the reality that under capitalism, the exploitation of the working class by the ruling class is mediated through the sale and purchase of labour power as a commodity. It follows from the nature of this form of exploitation that the social coercion essential for class domination cannot be directly associated with the immediate process of exploitation, but must be located in an instance separated from individual capital - the state. The existence of the state as a separate instance is thus dependent upon the capital relation and its reproduction dependent upon the reproduction of capital. In this perspective the existence of the political and the economic (for it is only their separation which constitutes their existence as distinct spheres) is but an expression of the particular historical form of exploitation (the mediation of exploitation through commodity exchange). The economic and the political are thus separate moments of the capital relation (Holloway in Clarke, 1991: 230), and it is through this process of disintegration and recomposition that the unified expression of the class relations typical of pre-capitalist societies is dissolved. This fragmentation is a precarious process and not an established fact (Holloway in Clarke, 1991: 240). It has to be constantly enforced. Training became an important device in dismantling regulation, enforcing the radical separation and subordinating social need to the requirements of capital accumulation.

**inadequacy becomes perfection**

Although the intensification and specialisation which the 1814 Act supported developed out of work practices already in existence, these practices were mutilated, inverted, dissolved, displaced and transformed in a process that was no longer based on the natural attributes of producers (life) but the contradictory processes of capital accumulation (death). Through the forcible transformation of pre-capitalist labour (:the emancipation of the serf) to the free worker of modern society - a freedom defined by separating the worker from his means of production (absolute poverty) - and through the reduction of work capacity to the one-sided habitual particularity of the machine minder, enforced through violence, the rule of law, the planned application of natural science and the substitution of one form of labour for another, i.e. women and young people replacing adult male labour (Thompson, 1980: 259-296), the modern science of training began to develop in this period of manufacture, and more completely with the introduction of large scale industry, its most essential component: competence. Skill as unskill. What had previously been inadequacy became perfection. While at the same time as the petrified mysteries of medieval trade formations were revealed, the alienating secrets (fetishism) of wage labour were concealed not only from outsiders, as with Guild custom and practice, but also from the initiated.

There are, in fact, no outsiders for the modern science of training. The refusal to exist as a component, as competence, to be trained, is denied and criminalised. The act of producing the free individual is the same act that produces the criminal. On the one side wage labour, on the other the vagabond and beggar. The act of producing the criminal is the act of



producing the free worker. Through the constant production and reproduction of this process (training) the traces of violence and force that have created it become more difficult to discern: "The organisation of the capitalist process of production, once it is fully developed, breaks down all resistance. The constant generation of a relative surplus population keeps the law of the supply and demand of labour, and therefore wages, within narrow limits which correspond to capital's valorisation requirements. The silent compulsion of economic relations sets the seal on the domination of the capitalist over the worker" (*Capital I*: 899). What is a socio-historical process based on violence and force appears in the form of natural laws.

#### **Utopia of control: the prison and the factory**

While the modern science of training recognised the centrality of productive labour in the production of wealth, it could not curtail the attendant inertia (resistance) which increased the more pressure (deregulation) was put on it. This resistance was expressed most dramatically in Trade Union activity in the 1820s and during the Chartist uprising of the 1830s and 1840s. Therefore the modern science was forced to adopt a more pragmatic policy involving direct intervention in the transformation of the productive capacity of society into wage-labour: proletariat. It was during this period that the science developed its principles in their most sophisticated form (:Utilitarianism) and through direct legislation (:the Factory Acts).

Nothing characterises the spirit of capital and the emergence of the liberal state better than the factory legislation 1833-1864, contradicting

instrumental and functional explanations of the existence of the capitalist state. The Factory Acts were not simply functional for capital but were the result of a protracted civil war between collective capital and collective labour, and as such, formed a negative expression of capital's 'voracious appetite'. These laws curbed capital's drive towards a limitless draining away of labour power by forcibly limiting the working day on the authority of the state, even though the state is ruled by the capitalist and the landlord (*Capital I*: 348). But while the length of the working day was reduced, the terror of incarceration was reinforced by the utilitarian institution of the workhouse, prison and the factory.

The principles of Utilitarianism had been tried and tested elsewhere. The first experiments in training were pioneered by the authorities in houses of correction, where inmates were compelled to work in a disciplined way to produce a profit (Kay and Mott, 1982: 103-4). Within these institutions, through the implementation of heavy and monotonous labour, e.g. rasping, inmates were prepared for a life of laborious labour: "The workhouse and house of correction was not a true and proper place of production, it was a place for teaching the discipline of production...to ensure the suppression of a world of productive capabilities and instincts in order to concentrate upon that minute part of the individual useful to the capitalist work process" (Melossi & Pavarini, 1977: 21). It is no accident that one of the primary aims of the workhouse was the socialisation of the young. There were houses of correction for young people and parts of a workhouse would be set aside for young people, some from good families having been sent there by their fathers: "Clearly, it was fully recognised that the new order of ideas, without precedent from the previous centuries, the new 'spirituality of order and repression' (Luther, Calvin) had to be taught and inculcated from infancy" (Melossi and Pavarini, 1977: 27). To learn

and be convinced.

### overcome inertia

The struggles over the length of the working day that are expressed in the Factory Acts mark the decline of the period of extraction of absolute surplus value and the beginning of the next intensified phase of capitalist development: the extraction of relative surplus value. In this period real wages rose for some and capital looked to increased productivity through the introduction of machines to intensify labour and reduce the value of wage goods. While the training science transformed the productive capacity of society into labour-power (:proletariat) and established the basis for industrial capitalism, the wage system and the labour market, it could not ignite the working class into the necessary form of motion. This required a redefinition of labour-power.

With the development of capitalist production from manufacture to large scale industry, from the extraction of absolute to relative surplus value, the despotic and reformist principles of utilitarianism proved inadequate to the task. What was now required was not simply predictability, discipline and obedience - although they were still essential aspects of any training process - but also the capacity for wage labour to adapt and be flexible to cope with the increasing demands of modern industrial capitalism. As Marx put it: "Modern industry never views or treats the existing form of a production process as the definitive one. Its technical basis is therefore revolutionary, whereas all earlier modes of production were essentially conservative. By means of machinery, chemical processes and other methods, it is continually transforming not only the technical basis of production but also the functions of the worker and the social combinations of the



labour process. At the same time, it thereby also revolutionises the division of labour within society, and incessantly throws masses of capital and of workers from one branch of production to another. Thus, large scale industry, by its every nature, necessitates variation of labour, fluidity of functions and mobility of the worker in all directions. But, on the other hand, in its capitalist form it reproduces the old division of labour within its ossified particularities... this absolute contradiction does away with all repose, all fixity and all security as far as the worker's life-situation is concerned; ... it constantly threatens, by taking away the instruments of labour, to snatch from his hands the means of subsistence, and, by suppressing his specialised functions, to make him superfluous.... this contradiction bursts forth without restraint in the ceaseless human sacrifices required from the working class, in the reckless squandering of labour powers, and in the devastating effects of social anarchy. This is the negative side. But if, at present, variation of labour imposes itself after the manner of an overpowering law that meets with obstacles everywhere, *large scale industry, through its very catastrophes, makes the recognition of variation of labour and hence of the fitness of the worker for the maximum number of different kinds of labour into a question of life and death. This possibility of varying labour must become a general law of social production, and the existing relations must be adapted to permit its realisation in practice (my italics).* That monstrosity, the disposable working population held in reserve, in misery, for the changing requirements of capitalist exploitation, must be replaced by the individual man who is absolutely available for the different kinds of labour required of him; the partially developed individual, who is merely the bearer of one specialised social function, must be replaced by the totally developed individual, for whom the different social functions are different modes of activity he takes up in turn" (Capital I: 618). The

social process through which this imposition occurs exists as training.

The embryo for this new form of training was already present in the Factory Acts of the 1860s and developed spontaneously from within the new processes of production. Out of this period emerged the embryonic form of training recognisable in its contemporary form. This appeared in the form of technical and agricultural schools, and the foundation of schools for vocational education, in which the children of the workers received a certain amount of instruction in technology and in the practical handling of the various implements of labour (*Capital I*: 618 -619).

### **progressive**

Although these provisions of the Factory Acts were a meagre concession wrung from capital, which was concerned to limit elementary education within the constraints of work in the factory, these establishments contained within them, through the struggle out of which they had been formed, progressive possibility. As Marx had it: "there can be no doubt that, with the inevitable conquest of political power by the working class, technical education, both theoretical and practical will take its proper place in the schools of the workers. There is also no doubt that those revolutionary ferments whose goal is the old division of labour stand in diametrical contradiction with the capitalist form of production, and the economic situation of the workers which corresponds to that form. However, the development of the contradictions of a given historical form of production is the only historical way in which it can be dissolved and then reconstructed on a new basis. '*Ne sutor ultra crepidam*' ('Let the cobbler stick to his last'), a phrase which was the absolute summit of handicraft wisdom, became sheer nonsense from the moment the watchmaker Watt invented the steam-engine, the barber Arkwright the throstle and the jeweller Fulton



the steamship" (*Capital I*: 619). Capital then is socially progressive, rendering regressive idealism for past working practices impracticable and nonsensical.

#### **training and the liberal state**

However, far from resolving the underlying contradiction of the capitalist mode of production, the imposition of a new order of skill and unskill encouraged the growth of organised worker resistance, while the progressive nature of training enabled the working class to more adequately organise themselves. The state responded within the limits of its form, categorising and fragmenting the working class through decriminalising collective organisation and a process of social administration: health, housing, and welfare, alleviating the harshness of the poor law and through a system of industrial relations. In this way the state attempted to confine working class struggles within an increasingly complex web of regulation, inspection and supervision that sought to reconcile the physical reproduction of the worker with the subordination of the working class to the reproduction of capital within the law of money (wage) and the law (citizenship). But constructed on the demands of the working class, capital could not contain those demands (socialism). These demands threatened to break out of the limits of that which failed to satisfy: the form of the liberal state. Although threatening to erupt at the beginning of the 20th century through direct action socialism, the confrontation with the state in Britain was postponed until after the First World War. That such a confrontation should occur elsewhere in the world in October 1917 meant that the problem could not be ignored. And training as a device to discipline labour was to assume even greater importance as capital sought to recompose the working class back to labour-power.



october 1917

The immediate reaction to the revolution in Russia was to regard it as an external event which needed to be contained, defeated or at least isolated. It was to be what it appeared to be: a foreign event. While at home the threat of revolution was to deny the working class the possibility of Bolshevism. This denial took the form of a class recomposition that attacked the hierarchies of labour by a systematic process of de-skilling and re-skilling to break "the striking power of the old working class aristocracies, neutralising their political potential and preventing their regroupment" (Negri, 1988 : 11). That is capital was forced along the technological path of repression. This technological attack, which involved training as a central point of struggle, involved retooling, new forms of assembly, scientific organisation of work, subdivision and fragmentation of work. This process has become known as 'Fordism', although we should be wary of such stereotypical descriptions. That is to say, these struggles were not represented merely in the form of new work regulation but involved a fundamental restructuring of the relations between capital, the working class and the state, including not simply a shift in the balance of economic and political power, but a change in the form of the state and class relations, in which some elements of the working class gain at the expense of others (Clarke, 1988: 7). But this training solution, even with the extension of the franchise and increased distribution of welfare, could not contain what was now obvious: the emergence of the working class as a distinct dynamic force, not only within capital - this had been apparent since the mid 19th century - but as an autonomous force that was capable of stepping outside of the capital relation.

## **from inertia to motion: subject to object**

Although the full force of the seismic shock that 1917 generated was not felt in the western democracies until the late 1920s, expressing itself as the General Strike in Britain 1927 and the Wall Street crash of 1929, its 'delayed effect' was ferociously destructive. Capital was now faced with the recomposed, reconstituted and retrained working class, that now appeared in a massified form which could not be ignored. It demanded recognition not only as potential subversion but also as the motive power behind any future model of development (Negri, 1988:12). What had been regarded as inertia (resistance) in 1814 was now clearly the system's dynamic motive force. Formerly, since 1871, state intervention had been on the basis of the working class as the object of the process, now to accommodate this revealed subjectivity the working class would have to be accommodated in its own terms: as antagonistic subjectivity. This realisation marks a threat to the liberal state form (the separation of economic and political relations) and is the material basis for the emerging Welfare State (the closer integration of the political and economic relation) in all its forms. The form that I am interested in is the training form, subsumed within the policy of Full Employment and expressed in the Education and Training Act (ETA) 1948.

### **ETA 1948**

The ETA 1948 formed the culmination of a process that sought to reconcile the antagonistic subjectivity (the working class) within the process of capital accumulation within the liberal state form. What had been seen as resistance in 1814 had, since the 1930s, been regarded as the dynamic of accumulation, although that realisation did not make it any easier to control. Resistance was rationalised through a number of devices including insurance redefined as benefit, and the 'masses' reconstituted as the

'unemployed': the precondition for Keynesian policy of full employment (Kay and Mott, 1982: 142). But, while Keynes had self-consciously articulated the threat of class struggle in The General Theory 1936 by insisting that the antagonistic subjectivity of labour had become a fundamental fact of capitalist society, which could not be ignored and which had to be domesticated by regulating distribution of value between capital and labour and by stabilising the level of employment (Kay and Mott, 1982: 143), it would be wrong to see post-war policy simply as a way of preventing socialism through planned Keynesian prescriptions. While the Welfare State may have 'socialised consumption', although subsistence was still not guaranteed and still enforced through the wage-form, the system of war-time planned production was undermined as capital sought to overcome the barriers to intensify accumulation of value by resolving manpower problems, and increasing commodities for export. While the government had some control over demand [through wages, prices, social insurance etc] it had no direct control over production. And despite the rhetoric the first priority was not full employment, but the lubrication of the labour market in order to increase productivity (Clarke, 1988: 261-2).

The contradictory nature of capitalist production made this a far from straightforward exercise. This contradiction expressed itself as the need for capital to impose wage labour against the antagonistic subjectivity of labour. This antagonism took the concrete form of disputes over the formal administration of training policy. For example what was the legitimate basis for policy to be: what and who was training for? And what type of trainee was required? Did capital need a selected compliant worker, or should all labour power be reshaped to fill the spaces left vacant as a result of the immanent labour shortage? And if the working class did not conform how far should training be made compulsory or how



much should be left to labour's voluntary inclinations? Unsure of the nature of the problem to be addressed, policy fluctuated between a desire to moralise the demoralised or to skill (or multiskill) the unskilled for a degenerating labour process. That is to say there was a gap between the rhetoric of what the labour process required and what training was supposed or needed to deliver. While all of these dilemmas problematised the labour process, none were allowed to articulate a challenge against the rationality (for capital) of capitalist work. But the irrationality of this process (for labour) is evident in every provision of the legislative policy that was eventually enacted: ETA 1948, and, in particular, in the way in which that most precious resource for capital at that time, the young working class, was to be managed.

#### **the 1948 act: a revolution in social progress**

The 1948 Act lacked the spectacular provisions associated with the socialisation of consumption and the intoxicating wish-fulfillment of the policy of full employment. Although the ETA 48 was a significant moment in the history of vocational education and training in the UK, representing the first co-ordinated response by the state to the disequilibrium, as it was portrayed in the labour market. And as such, it did not lack passionate advocates. Lord Hewerson, the First Lord of the Admiralty, was in no doubt about the importance of the Act: "From the days of Kier Hardie", he said, "men of vision have had this ideal before them [forming part of] a revolution in social progress" (Notes from a speech in Min of Lab papers at National Record Office (NCR) Employment and Training Bill 8/1507 June 1948).

Training had become a dominant social activity: "The present fashion for

training is raging as violently as any mode in the Rue du Faubourg St. Honore. Training schemes exist for administrators and building operatives, doctors and domestic servants, ex-servicemen and the unemployed...with training all the rage those poor mortals who are neither trained nor in training are sometimes forced to wonder whether any importance is still attached to common sense, judgement and experience and what reasons lie behind this torrent of training schemes" (The Economist, 2nd Nov. 1946). There was a general agreement that training, together with education, was "the primary social activity of the day" and that post-war Britain was in a wholly new predicament that required innovative training solutions" (Tennyson, BACIE Conference, 3-6th October 1947 ). That predicament included an immanent shortage of labour.

Charles Tennyson, President of the British Association of Commercial and Industrial Education (BACIE), addressing its national conference in July 1948 articulated these sentiments: "The conditions confronting the country are so new, and so little original thought has been given in the past to the subject [training] that it is practically a new subject". The Economist recorded that "in nine years time the number of boys and girls available for employment will be approximately half the present number, because of a fall in the birth rate and a raising of the school leaving age". And, to make matters worse, " the really alarming feature is the low intake of those industries which are the most essential to the peace time economy, e.g., mining and textiles", so that "it is impossible to be anything other than extremely pessimistic about the trend revealed in the Ministry of Labour analysis...nor is it easy to supply remedies". Such remedies as might be devised were felt to lie in the increased automation of routine processes, the employment of over-age and part-time workers and, significantly, "a revolution in thought about the training of the young"

( The Economist, 29th November 1946).

The Unions were also in favour of a rationalised training process and at the Congress of 1947 welcomed the new ET bill as "an important advance in the industrial activities of the country" (TUC Report 1948 : 224).

Although there was some criticism, Miss F. Dean from the Shop Distribution and Allied Workers Union reminded Congress of the realities of the world of work, deflating some of the movement's more Utopian euphorisms: "We all know that before the war youngsters came into the distributive industry at 14 years of age and at 16 were thrown onto the labour market, in many areas particularly in the depressed areas, with no possibility of finding other employment. They were replaced in the industry by another batch of 14 year olds and the process went on continually. Today we are reaping the results. The young people who today ought to be in the mining industries and other basic industries are not there because in the pre-war years they saw their fathers, skilled men of all kinds, walking in the streets, looking for jobs, and that skill being wasted for as much as ten years...Arthur Horner told us yesterday that there were 215,000 miners over 50 years of age in the mining industry and the Ministry of Labour has issued some figures for July which I think are interesting. The proportion of juveniles between 14-17 in the mining industry was 4.25%; in the engineering the proportion of juvenile males to adults was 9.4%, and in the redistributive trades it was 16% which shows clearly that there needs to be a redistribution of our young workers in industry..."(TUC Report 1947: 358-361)

Mr. Ward, from the Amalgamation of Foundry Workers, objected to the way that young people were being used in manufacture: "I welcome the



opportunity of saying a few words on behalf of that much maligned and criticised section of our community: the youth of today. I think we are in danger of being overwhelmed by the tidal wave of current events and that the legitimate claims and grievances of youth are apt to be somewhat overlooked...the continued exploitation of the youth of this country for private profit and private monopolists cannot and must not be indefinitely tolerated...We are rapidly approaching the age of becoming a nation of button pushers, and we cannot regard with complacency this ever increasing tendency. It seems to me that the majority of the younger people of this country are being recruited simply for manning mechanical devices"( TUC Report 1947: 358-361) .

And yet, despite this opposition the future of socialism was still felt to be contained in the nobility of employment: "We find in the Foundry Industry, and no doubt it is found in other industries also, that there is no provision for practical and technical training for these people while they have the physical capacity of the machine. When their time is up they are thrown on the industrial scrap heap. We claim that there should be some provision for technical and practical training so that when these young sons pass the age of adolescence they shall have some industrial resources on which they can rely for the later years of their employment" (Ward). Therefore young people should be connected more intimately to the capitalist labour process. The device through which this could be achieved was "national training schemes which would be made compulsory in law in all industry", within the context of manpower planning and full employment (TUC Report 1947: 358-361).

#### **manpower planning and productivity**

It is within this context of labour market planning by the state, with its

emphasis on connecting the work force to the labour process at a time when supply, especially among young people, could not be taken for granted; and the specific role given to training within the context of full employment policy, that the ETA must be placed. The centrality of training within this restructuring is expressed in the 1944 White paper on employment: "It will be a fundamental principle that where re-training is required it shall be provided as soon as it is clear to the Minister of Labour that the worker is not likely to resume his former employment within a reasonable time: he will not be expected to wait until he has been unemployed for a long time before becoming eligible for training. This will enable the government to take steps to train the necessary labour for new and expanding trades in time to be available when the demand for its services matures. It will also prevent the training schemes from being discredited being confined to persons who have been unemployed over a long period and cannot be readily placed in new employment" (Min of Lab papers 8/1508 on White Paper para 33, May 1944).

As Beveridge explained there had been, "no previous requirement to manage labour market activity. Pre-World War 1 the adequacy of total demand for labour, except in time of recurrent depression through cyclical fluctuations, was generally taken for granted. The problem of unemployment presented itself as a problem on the one hand of organising the labour market so as to shorten the interval between jobs and to 'de-centralise' the casual occupations, and on the other hand the mitigating cyclical fluctuations; this was generally supposed to be a monetary phenomena susceptible of cure by banking policy. After World War 1, unemployment in Great Britain generally was materially greater than anything experienced before, probably on average two and a half times as severe as in the thirty years up to 1914. The adequacy of total demand could no longer be

taken for granted; the new economic theories taught that there was no automatic mechanism for keeping supply of labour and demand for labour painlessly in equilibrium" (Beveridge, 1944 : 27). In other words full employment was not a 'happy accident': the State must intervene.

#### **the importance of training**

The concept of training then lay at the core of manpower planning and the policy of full employment: "...as the resettlement of persons who have been uprooted by war service draws to a close, the government proposes to continue training on similar lines as a permanent move, so far as this is needed to assist the necessary transfers from one industry or occupation to another" (Min of Lab and National Service Training Department 'Future Training Policy' (FTP) 18/494). And so: "In order to set up training courses for the purpose of promoting employment in accordance with the requirements of the community, the Minister will have to determine, in the light of government policy from time to time, which industries should be regarded as essential and need additional manpower, and which industries should be regarded as those which ought to contract and give up some manpower. Information will then have to be collected as to the skilled occupations in the 'expanding' industries which are likely to show a constant unsatisfied demand for labour. It will then be necessary to consider with both sides of the 'expanding' industries the part which it will be necessary for training to play in respect of the required expansion" (Draft Memo from Holloway MP, to National Joint Advisory Committee, 29 July 1948 18/494). So that, within the context of the ETA 1948: "Ministry of Labour and National Service proposes to proceed with legislation to extend his powers in relation to training and employment to meet the requirements



of the full employment policy and the Ince report" (Letter from Dalton to Treasury, 6 Aug 1946, Min of Lab 9/152).

#### the act

The purpose of the Act was "to make fresh provision with respect to the functions of the Ministry of Labour and National Service relating to employment and training for employment, to provide for the establishment of a comprehensive youth employment service; to consolidate with amendments certain enactments relating to the matters aforesaid" (Employment and Training Act 1948, Public General Acts and Measures, Chapter 46: 1007 - 1022 ). The Economist, April 3, 1948, identified the Act as containing: "...two main parts both of very different character. The first part is almost entirely one of consolidation; existing legislation relating to employment and training services is tidied up [in particular the Exchange Act 1909 and the Employment Insurance Acts 1935 and 1939] and put in order, and legal sanction is given to the present arrangements for giving advice and training particularly for those already in employment". By which the Minister is empowered to "provide such facilities and services as he considers expedient for the purpose of assisting persons to select, fit themselves for and obtain and retain employment suitable to their age and capacity; of assisting employers to obtain suitable employees and generally for the purpose of promoting employment in accordance with the requirements of the community" (ETA Act 1948: 1007).

The draft ET Bill originally intended to exclude the unemployed. Policy makers were determined that "training should no longer be regarded as a 'palliative' for long unemployment, but as a positive instrument for the re-deployment of labour" (Min of Lab 8/1507 Lobby Press release, undated).

It was originally felt that "Specific problems arise in relation to training unemployed persons...it is submitted that training should not

automatically be given to a person because he or she is unemployed. Many unemployed persons - indeed most of them - will be subjects for placing rather than training. The unemployed persons selected for training should be those who are skilled workers or unskilled workers whose age and capacity renders them suitable and deserving of training" (Min of Lab, FTP, 18/494). And therefore: "It is particularly important that recruiting officers should take special steps to obtain suitable recruits from persons already in employment in declining industries rather than admit to training unemployed persons below the appropriate standards of suitability" (Min of Lab, FTP: 18/494).

But this was abandoned under pressure from the people who had to implement the scheme. At a conference of regional controllers, April 22, 1948, they felt that eligibility should be extended to include: "all suitable men, irrespective of whether they are disabled or able bodied or unemployed..." and to include "all interested persons who are unemployed, or engaged in work inferior to their general capacity, or are employed in a declining industry or less essential occupation". In this way it was hoped that training would lose the stigma attached to pre-war training regimes: "At one period we trained the unemployed. Training the unemployed came to be looked upon as something in the nature of a punishment for being unemployed. Now we not only want to train the unemployed to be fit for an industry or occupation, but we also want to train unskilled persons for skilled occupations" (Regional Controllers conference minutes, April 22 1948).

Therefore a good deal of attention was given as to how to involve the work-force in training, although they were not at all clear as to the best way to go about it: "Consideration must also be given to methods adopted to

attract skilled persons, or persons suitable for training in skilled work, for industries with too many workers into training for skilled work in the industries needing more workers. It may well be that, eventually, the scale of allowance to trainees will have to be increased. In the meantime the only course open to us would seem to be publicity and propaganda" (Min of Lab memo 18/494). Part of the 'propaganda' included the title to be given to the participants: "It is of paramount importance that the trainees who have satisfactorily completed government training schemes in skilled work should be recognised on both sides of industry as having the status of craftsmen" (Notes on second reading ET Bill, Min of Lab 18/494).

The second part of the Act, which the Economist, on the 3rd of April, described as much "more interesting" was designed along with other miscellaneous details, "to create a more effective organisation for giving young people advice and assistance in choosing their careers". Acting under the direction of the Ince Committee, a man regarded as having "shown how to make best use of our youth in their own interest, and the nation's need to make the greatest use of the latent ability of the citizens of the future" (Min of Lab 8/ 1508), the Act was intended to end the confusion between what "some regard as an education service and others more closely aligned to the world of employments" (Min of Lab 8/1508), and that this clarification would allow for better labour market planning, and make for higher quality and common standards. This would be achieved by centralising schemes for young people under a Central Juvenile Employment Executive staffed by the Minister of Labour and the Minister of Education; and that this executive should be advised by a National Juvenile Employment Council consisting of teachers, employers, Trade Union and Local Authority representatives and five independent persons (Min of Lab 8/1508).



The scheme was marketed as a structure to ease the transition from school to work for all "boys and girls", a vital component for "their future development and happiness" and a "sympathetic and practical guide" to those "boys and girls" who had ideas for work but "are too shy to talk about them" or for whom "their teachers were not experienced to deal with". With the provision, "where appropriate, for a grant to be given to young people with a special aptitude for a particular occupation, but with no local outlet, so as to be able to leave home and be placed with an employer in another area as an apprentice or learner" (Isaacs, notes on first reading of the ET Bill, 1948).

The actual detailed workings of the scheme proved to be controversial. The major portion of time in the debates in the Houses of Parliament was taken up, not by discussing the nature and type of training to be supplied, but rather the confidentiality of the reports to be written. The scheme demanded that schools should supply "certain particulars about pupils who are due to leave school and who, while still at school, have reached an age at which they are ready for advice about their particular career" (ETA 1948: 1015). These details were to include health information, ability and progress at school and interests and aptitude. It was resolved that the only other people to have access to the details other than the Employment Officer would be the parent or guardian of the young person, but that the particulars could only be examined in this [EOs] presence "but shall not be entitled to receive or take copies thereof" (ETA 1948: 1015).

The other major dispute had centred on the question of compulsion. Such was the shortage of young people, these "rare and precious creatures"

(Economist, 3rd April 1948), that the Ince committee had originally proposed that parents and children should be required to attend at Employment Exchanges in order that they might receive advice and be made aware of the opportunities available. This proposal was eventually dropped after pressure from, among others, the Trade Unions, who argued that, "compulsion is a very bad start for a young person's career in industry, and that persuasion is more appropriate to the circumstances of these cases" (TUC Report 1948: 224).

### **employment police**

While compulsion was removed the scheme was intended to be rigorously monitored and controlled by the Employment Officer. The scheme required that he/she keep in contact with each young person up until the age of 18 and those over that age still attending school (ETA 1948: 1012): "to find out whether they are in employment which is suitable to their capacities and happy in it" (Isaacs, notes on first reading ET Bill 1948). The importance of their role was emphasised by the Economist. "Whether this new service succeeds in finding the right kind of jobs for the boys and girls depends entirely on the quality and the insight of the advisees. This is the kind of work which should prove extremely attractive to the best type of social worker" (Economist 3rd April 1948). And by Members of Parliament who were anxious that they should employ the 'right sort': "Of primary importance is care not to let cranks into this service. Believe me, I am sure that a number of them will wish to; but we want people of normal common-sense to apply the scheme" (McCorquodale, notes on second reading of ET Bill 1948).

However, there was a problem. While employers supported the new concentration on training they were suspicious of state involvement and not

altogether certain that the new proposed scheme would have any effect on a part of the work-force with which they were interested and involved (the technical experts and management trainee), and while the Unions might support training, the working class was not so enthusiastic. Although the training schemes organised during the war had been regarded as successful, the training regimes of the period before the war had been discredited. Not only because of their association with unemployment, but also because of their fascistic tendencies, the defeat of which the war was supposed to have been all about. The problem was then to reconcile this with the new 'land fit for heroes'.

Training was discredited by the pre-war training programmes that had been concerned to rationalise the masses as the 'unemployed'. These rationalisations had been legitimised by mainstream intellectual currents dominant at that time. The basis for these ideas lay often in the work of Nietzschean inspired health and fitness fetishists based on a glorification of healthy pursuits over the activity of the mind. These ideas appeared in the form of the Eugenics Movement who could claim as devotees Yeats, Shaw, Wells, Huxley and DH Lawrence, Nietzsche's leading English disciple. It was Lawrence who in a Utopian vision advocated the type of provision that was eventually established. He suggested a purely physical life for young people: "boys would attend craft workshops, and it would be compulsory for them to learn 'primitive modes of fighting and gymnastics'; girls would study domestic science" (Lawrence 1971, quoted in Carey, 1992: 15). These oppositions to the intellectual activity of the working class undermined the increasing critical capacity of the working class following the progressive literacy movements following the Education Acts at the end of the previous century.



These reactionary devices were complimented by those whose ideas are regarded as more socially progressive, but who also advocated a "fanciful pastoralism": the simple healthy, organic life favoured by the Fabians, Eric Gill and the Arts and Crafts movement (Carey, 1992: 36).

The lean-healthy living "Boy Scout metaphysic" was characteristic of the fascist regimes of the period. The Germans were encouraged to develop health and vigour of mind and body, "with compulsory physical education at school, with plenty of boxing and gymnastics, and a corresponding let-up on purely mental education, so as to stem the weakness of the urban population, who are at present 'unfit for life's struggle'" (Hitler, *Mein Kampf* 1937: 296, 321; quoted in Carey 1992).

#### provision for the boys and girls

During the 30s a range of provision was introduced, all imbued in one way or another with this 'naturalistic' orthodoxy. Between 1918-1934 there were seven separate schemes introduced, involving over a million young people on 'courses' lasting from 5-12 weeks. In 1934 the system was reorganised with a compulsory condition attached to attendance. There were three main forms of provision: the Juvenile Instruction Centre ('the Dole School'), Juvenile Transfer Camps and the Juvenile Transfer Scheme. The aim of the Juvenile Instruction Centres was "by inculcating habits of discipline and self-respect and giving some instruction both of a practical and academic character, to increase their [the young's] adaptability and to make them capable of accepting any suitable employment which may be offered to them. At the same time, while this may not be ideal, it is held that attendance at a class which provides any form of organised instruction is better than loafing the streets" (Min of Lab, 1930: 18).

All aimed at: "the prevention of demoralisation...to give boys and girls a real interest in life, to keep their minds and fingers active and alert and their bodies fit to teach them something which may be of use to them whether at home or at work, and without trying to train them for specific occupations to give them the type of mental and manual instruction which will help them to become absorbed into employment as soon as an opportunity may occur" (Min of Lab, 1934: 4). So that the curriculum was practical, although not necessarily vocational. Boys learnt about woodwork, metal work and boot repair; girls about cooking, dress making and nursing. Physical activity was encouraged and the learning programme was later extended to include drama, civics, history and maths.

Juvenile Training Camps were constructed as a way of dealing with what was regarded as cyclical unemployment: "It was considered that many juveniles would benefit by a short course in a residential centre before taking up employment away from home...The course of instruction is arranged with a view to improving their prospects of taking employment in the new area and includes organised games, gardening and instruction in woodwork and metal work. They showed a marked increase in alertness of mind and body, as well as gaining considerable weight and physical fitness" (Min of Lab, 1935: 46).

And under the Juvenile Transfer Scheme young people were moved from areas of high unemployment to areas where work was more plentiful: from Scotland and the North East of England to the more prosperous South and Midlands. And, as the Minister of Labour had it, care was taken to ensure that wages and conditions were adequate and sufficient, that the work would be regular and progressive and that the juvenile would be self-supporting at 18. Where necessary increased facilities were provided for short courses of

vocational training in certain occupations in which some preliminary experience was required. The boys usually worked in hotels, catering establishments and clubs, while the girls, who were often very reluctant to leave home and whose parents were often reluctant to let them go worked as domestics (Min of Lab 1935:47).

### **inadequate**

The reality of these schemes was very different from government propaganda. The Carnegies Trust UK in 'Disinherited Youth 1936-39' was very critical: "Government Institutional Centres as at present conceived are quite inadequate to meet the needs of young unskilled workers. As they stand they make an attempt to perform a desperate piece of salvage work but they lack meaning and purpose" (Carnegie Trust UK 'Disinherited Youth 1936-1939'). Tawney felt that training for juveniles could not off-set the 'demoralisation' that the young unemployed felt; that the projected rising number of 14-18 year olds would increase the strain on an already 'creaky', insufficient and inefficient scheme, and that the influx of young workers when they found employment would add pressure on the adult wage rates and thus lead to a spiral of depression (quoted in Horne, Walker and Barton 1986: 18).

Bill Head, an inmate of a work-camp, presents a stark picture: "The sheer inhumanity and hopelessness of the camps was chilling. Inmates were dressed in government issued work clothes, and the work itself differed little to prison labour: breaking stones, tiding spoil heaps, road construction and such like...I remember someone being ill, he was only a young boy...and this particular night he went and slept with the medical officer, and in the morning, there he was, he's hung himself...He's been there 5-6 weeks maybe. The course was only 3 months but it felt like 3



yrs..." (The Miner Feb 1989 : 10). And the young people themselves: "I felt it was very boring...Because you were going down there they thought you were dirt. And they could just do what they liked and they could say what they liked and they could threaten what they liked" (Horne, in Walker and Barton, 1986).

#### private interest

Capital, as the private sector, proposed its own solution to the problem of young workers, both as workers and as the future managers of labour; although the solutions it proposed were always limited by its own private interests. The private sector was concerned with the problems of attracting young people into industry, although it was interested in a different sort of young person in a different sort of role (managers and supervisors), for which the state scheme was not intended. This is evident from the minutes of the debates within the Education Committee of the Federation of British Industry, which met twice a year "to consider all questions affecting the education of staff for industry, other than manual workers" (FBI minutes MSS/F/3/T2/1/2 ). These questions included the poor status of industry in the minds of public school boys and university chaps, and conversely the ignorance of industry about the product of the British public school at a time when young people were going to be more in demand than ever "...owing to the falling birth rate, the raising of the school leaving age, and compulsory part-time education to 18, it is officially estimated that in 10 years time the supply of juveniles will be only half the pre-war supply" (Federation of British Industry (FBI): MSS/F/3/T2/ 1/1, 2.8.45).

So that, even though, as Sir Charles Tennyson said, "Present trends towards

mechanisation may in certain directions reduce the need for skilled craftsmen, industry has to reckon with the effects in the near future of the government's education policy which will result in a considerably smaller intake of those aged 15-18 than it has been accustomed to in the past...[and therefore] the development of informal collaboration between industry and school would be of great help in persuading industry to set up proper training schemes where they did not previously exist" (FBI mins 1/1, 31.3.44).

To alleviate these problems the committee set up an unofficial body outside of the Ministry of Labour and the state scheme, which they argued had no remit for the Public School sector, in line with what was already in existence and co-ordinated through the Head Masters' Committee in the South East region. This new body would "bring the [public] schools and industry together in different regions for discussion, promote employment in industry for school leavers and also provide a clearing house between the various industries" (FBI mins 1/1, 19.11.47).

But it was not just the shortage of young labour that the committee was dealing with: "In the committee's view, the education of those entering industry at 14 or 15 is often inadequate. Much of any improvement compared with 10-20 years ago has been lost since the war. Inadequate knowledge of elementary arithmetic and inadequate powers of expression, written and oral, are too general. There is also some evidence of poor powers of memory and bad handwriting and lack of discipline and a sense of responsibility. The Committee adds, however, that children entering industry at 14 do not represent a true cross-section of the young population since the best tend to go to secondary or technical schools or take up office jobs" (FBI mins 1/1, 19.11.47 ).

The report explained these inadequacies by reference to poor home background, over-crowded curricula, large classes, too little individual attention. And "too much insistence is given to the memorising of facts at the expense of instruction in principles, and many areas lack facilities for recreation. There are too, many war-time difficulties: evacuation, air-raids, absence of parents in the forces or on war work and, owing to the current labour shortage, the getting of children to work at the earliest possible moment" ( FBI mins 1/1, 19.5.44).

It was accepted that certain things had to be done and that the private sector had a role to play: "Industry must make its own distinctive contribution to the training of its employees. Vocational training is already largely undertaken by individual firms, its principal form being the apprenticeship scheme...Apprenticeship schemes, however, generally cover only manual workers and some form of vocational training will be necessary for other employees. This too should be worked out in close collaboration with the educational authorities so as to make the most effective use of existing facilities in technical and commercial colleges, professional institutes and other similar bodies. The whole of the years up to 21 should be regarded as an educational period" (FBI mins 1/1, 19.5.44). Therefore, there should be less emphasis on the acquisition of facts and specialised knowledge and more on the desired understanding of general principles and trends. Some degree of training in social responsibility is also wanted... a reduction in class size...and an increased attention to physical training and greater opportunities for educative outdoor pursuits also seemed called for"(FBI mins 1/1, 31.3.44 ), although this suggestion lacked the naturalist obsession of the pre-war period and owed more to the Owenist notions of a balanced education and



training process.

**public school employment bureau**

While industry accepted the need to get involved, it was not prepared to join in with the government's plan for labour market intervention and training for young people. Several members of the committee thought that public schools should display their own private enterprise and not leave the work to a government service. They felt that there was something unique about their own brand of training, and that it needed to be protected: "Undoubtedly in the past great advantages from the point of view of training and development of character have been derived from the existence of a large range of independent schools, grant-aided and otherwise, particularly boarding schools. The new system of education should not be allowed to weaken these" (FBI mins 1/1, 31.3.44).

It was felt both in the Federation of British Industry and in the House of Commons that the new training scheme should not interfere with the current 'I know my place' arrangements. Isaacs, the Minister of Labour, at the end of the second reading of the Employment and Training Bill said: "We are most anxious to remove the idea from the minds of children they they have to aim at what is called 'a white collar job'. We have to get them to understand that there is as much dignity and usefulness and very often as much economic satisfaction to them if they take up a dirty overall job as there is in a white collar job" (Isaacs, notes to second reading of Employment and Training Bill 1948). But there was opposition to the idea of a separate system. Mr. Taylor, the Secretary to the Head Masters' Committee (HMC) said he understood that "there had been strong opposition from certain Juvenile Employment Committees to the establishment of a Joint Committee" (FBI mins 1/1, 19.11.47).

Sir George Schuster, a member of the committee and chair of the Committee for Industrial Productivity, was aware of the divisiveness of the proposed scheme but thought that there was a way around the problem, although he was later to change his mind: "An important point to consider was whether and in what way they should link up with the Ministry of Labour scheme for advising on careers and placing boys. His own view was that it would be wise to seek such a link rather than let it be thought public school boys claimed to be an elite, entitled to special privileges" (FBI mins 1/1, 19.11.47 ). The question was how? Especially as he admitted public school boys did see themselves as superior.

However, opposition to the scheme evaporated after meetings between Schuster and Mr. Parker from the Ministry of Labour: "During several discussions on the subject which Mr. Parker of the Ministry of Labour and he [Schuster] had judged that the Ministry was desirous that the scheme should be sponsored independently for the time being, as the new act could not yet provide machinery to cover the needs of the public school boys. While the Head Masters' Committee (HMC) were doing excellent work they could not cover adequately the public schools outside London and the Home Counties" (FBI mins MSS/F/3/TI/407, 17.2.49).

Although this account of the meeting does not coincide with Mr. Parker's reported views on the matter: "The Central Youth Employment Exchange are making provision by which information about careers, not only in the professions, but in industry and commerce may be made available through the Youth Employment Service (YES) locally. A service for older boys [a group the FBI had said the YES could not cater for] has been developed in several parts of the country in addition to the London area both by the education

authorities and by the Ministry of Labour. It will take some years before this can be expanded into a nation-wide service and in the interim period there might be a place for the Public School Employment Bureau (SEB). Even during the interim period schools using the PSEB might also wish to avail themselves of what the Youth Employment Service [the State scheme] can provide, especially as a number of schools which are represented on the HMC may be maintained by the Education Authorities who are running the YES" (FBI mins TI/407, 4.3.49).

Nevertheless, by the 16th of June 1949 a separate scheme ratified by the General Council of the FBI was established. Its aims were to place students in jobs, develop better links with employers and schools, make employers more aware of the particular benefits of the public school system on prospective employees, enable schools to more fully understand the needs of employers and the qualities looked for by employers in different types of careers. It was, in short, a duplicate Youth Employment Scheme. Its name was changed to the Public School Careers Advice Bureau and appeals were sent out to 150 leading industrialists who were thought to be likely to support the scheme with donations towards the £3000 to get the scheme going.

#### **good-bye boys and girls**

The training state with its claims to represent the universal interest suggested an altogether more formidable proposal to integrate the young working class into the systems of capitalist work. Young people needed to be persuaded about the possibilities that work could provide. The drafters of the Act paid a good deal of attention as to how the world of capitalist work could be made attractive to the young working class. Under the Act



school leavers had been given a separate classification because..."they provide an opportunity of securing recruits quickly for skilled occupations in essential industries. The suggestion that youth should be guided into industry via government training centres will, of course have to be discussed fully with the Juvenile Department, but such a course may well be found to be not only 'in accordance with the requirements of the community' but also in the interest of the individual youth" (FTP 18/494). Much of that discussion centred around what to call the new employment scheme for the young working class. The importance of this debate is central to my thesis. I am, therefore, going to represent it in full. The following verbatim account is taken from the discussions on the floor of the House of Commons (Hansard, Employment and Training Bill, 16th April 1948: 1379 - 1386) and in Committee (4 May 1948, Employment and Training Bill, Hansard 1948, Vol III :486-49).

**Mr Dumpleton:**

*"I have been privileged for some years now to be closely associated with the Juvenile Employment Service as chairman of a local committee. I have as a result of that experience become confirmed of the very great importance of this service to young people, whom we seek to serve...The Minister referred in his opening speech to the great importance of securing co-operation of the industrialists, the employers, the teachers and others engaged in the educational field. That is extremely important. What we find in our local committees - and it varies from area to area - is that though it is important to secure the co-operation of these people, it is also important to secure the good will and co-operation of the young people themselves.*

We find a considerable amount of difficulty in the after-care work that we do. Having found jobs for these young people, we are not always sure that they are the most suitable jobs for the young persons. However, we put them into jobs and give them a trial, offering them what advice and information we can. We also try to encourage them to come along periodically to the open evenings we organise, so they may tell us their experiences and their difficulties and also that we may give them advice. The Ministry of Labour tries to help local committees to do that kind of after-care service, and they send along from time to time supplies of leaflets and posters. These announce the facilities for the young people, encouraging them to come along to see the juvenile employment officer and regard him and the members of the committee as friends who are willing to help them.

The outstanding hinderance we have in the successful working of the scheme is the use of the word 'juvenile', and I would appeal to the Minister, before this bill is through to take that word out, or at any rate to remove it from the literature, leaflets and posters, which are issued and substitute a more appropriate word. I have here a poster which is issued by the Ministry of Labour to local committees with the advice to have it exhibited on the notice boards of the factories and workshops so that the young people may be invited to come along. It gives particulars about the advisory committee for juvenile employment, with the words 'Juvenile Employment' in large letters. We are dealing with young people from the ages of 15 to 18. They have left school and gone into work, and they consider themselves, rightly or wrongly, to have become adults. It does not help to to hang up a poster such as this in front of them and call them in bold letters 'juveniles'. There is nothing that will discourage them and repel them more from coming forward to make use of these services.

I would suggest that the Bill be amended and that the word 'juvenile' be eliminated altogether. If that cannot be done, then leave out the word from the literature issued in connection with this service.

**Mr Orr-Ewing:**

There will be general agreement with a great deal of what was said by the hon. Member for St. Albans (Mr. Dumbleton), though I must say that I am defeated in my effort to find any word to take the place of the word 'juvenile' which he finds so offensive.

**Mr Dumbleton:**

What about 'young people'?

**Mr Orr-Ewing:**

I remember that they were once described by an eminent Prime Minister who belonged to the party opposite as those who had not reached the age of 'adultry'. I am not sure whether the hon. Gentleman would accept that definition, but at least I put it forward.

The debate continued in committee...

**Mr Lindsay** (the Member for the Combined Universities) and an acknowledged expert on these matters had proposed the word 'youth'. **Dumbleton** on this suggestion:

I have no serious quarrel with my hon. Friend the hon Member for the Combined Universities in his preference for the word 'youth'. His main objection is to the word 'juvenile'. For example: Invitations are sent to



young people after they have been in their jobs for some time, to come along to open meetings which are held either at the employment exchange or some other suitable place. I have found from experience that it is sometimes better to hold them on neutral ground. We invite them to talk over with sympathetic people on the committee on the progress they are making. I am informed that the average response to those invitations over the whole country is only 25 per cent. I have been a little more successful in my committee's area because we have paid particular attention to this matter, and we have achieved a percentage of something like 45. In the last report, covering a period of three months, there were in my area 49 boys and 56 girls - a total of 105 juveniles invited. The number that personally attended was 10 boys and 12 girls - a very low percentage for that particular area.

One reason which we are quite convinced is responsible for the reluctance of young people to confide in the juvenile employment officer at the employment exchange and with members of the committee is the continued use of the word 'juvenile', which has a psychological effect in repelling these young people, aged 15 to 18, who, rightly or wrongly, imagine that they have reached adult status on leaving school to go to work.

The Ministry is insistent upon that word. I have here a very attractive booklet which they have issued, illustrating, explaining and describing the functions of the service in clear and simple language, but in eight pages of this pamphlet the word 'juvenile', of which the Ministry seem to be so fond is repeated no fewer than 27 times. I think that we can find something better than the word 'juvenile' to help us in gaining the confidence of these young people in order to make the service of benefit to them.

**Mr. Lindsay:**

I share the view of the hon. Member for St. Albans about the use of the word 'juvenile'. The only reasons that I put in the word 'youth' when we formed in 1939 the Service of Youth, as it was then called, was because we looked round to find a word to replace the word 'juvenile'. There were in the country about 30 or 40 juvenile organisation committees - J.O.C.s, which was not only an unfortunate name, but they were left over from the Home Office of the previous war, and were more connected with delinquency than with a positive approach to young people.

We searched around for hours and days and the only word that we could find was 'youth'. We know the objections even the objections of the young persons and young people we asked...People aged 15 and 16 do not wear a school cap. They wear something on the back of their heads. They are young men looking forward to adult life and they have got their own youth organisations, which in the war related to something in adult life. For this and for many other reasons I make the suggestion that the word 'youth' should be accepted. I know the objections: it is said that it is pompous and it might be related to certain continental ideas...I think it is much more convenient to pass a boy on from the 'youth' service' to the 'youth employment offices'. The phrase 'youth employment offices' goes quite well. I made a list of such phrases: youth employment office, youth advisory committee, national youth employment council. They all have a quite pleasant sound.

There are a good many reasons for getting rid of the word 'juvenile'. The school leaving age has been raised. The only question is, can anybody think of a more suitable word. After a great deal of thought in other

connections, I put the word 'youth' forward as it seemed to be the best compromise..I do not think this is an unimportant question, and I do not think the Minister regards it as unimportant.

After all is said and done, the word is to be written on pamphlets and it is to be put on the offices. We want the whole of the vocational guidance revolutionised in this country. It is nonsense to talk about boys choosing jobs; in 60 per cent of the cases jobs choose the boys. We must pay more attention to this problem. It will solve half the problems which go before Borstal if we tackle this matter in a more human way.

**Mr Langford-Holt:**

The hon. Member for St. Albans was inclined to lay emphasis on the fact that he disliked the word 'juvenile', rather than on his preference for any particular word...On the other hand the hon. Member for the Combined Universities plumped for one specific word- the word 'youth'. The hon. Member for the Combined Universities placed his emphasis on the word which is to take the place of 'juvenile' rather than on the word 'juvenile'. For myself I am not so worried, and I would not pretend to have the same knowledge or authority as the hon. Member to the Combined English Universities.

I am, therefore, rather on the side for the hon. Member for St. Albans in saying that my main point is that I dislike the word 'juvenile'. On the other hand there is a great tendency to call a spade anything else but a spade. I am waiting to hear somebody call it a 'hand excavating instrument'. We have rat-catchers called 'rodent operatives', and I presume will soon cease to be a spade. The whole point is largely psychological. The word 'juvenile' to me has always meant - and I have no



reason to suppose that I am anything other than average - somebody under the age of 10. A 'young person', on the other hand, is somebody up to the age of 35 to 40. Indeed, I like to think I am a 'young person', but I would hate to be called a 'juvenile'. That is the psychology the Minister should bear in mind. We want the right psychological approach to the whole system which we are setting up.

**Mr Sparks:**

I suggest it would be preferable to call this the 'Careers Advice Service', and to get right away from this designation of juvenile, young person, or youth, or what not. From the experience I have had in connection with these young people I would say not only do they hate to be called 'juvenile' but they also hate to be told they are young - that they are 'youth'.

In this particular case, we are dealing with young men and women between the ages of 15 and 18 and when the school leaving age becomes 16, between 16 and 18. At that age, young men and women, and quite rightly so, hate to be classed in the same category as a small child of five, as a 'juvenile' and therefore, psychologically, it is most important that we should try to call this service by a name which would attract interest and attention rather than repel it.

I believe there is a good deal to be said for the objections which have been raised to the designation 'juvenile', and I think if this were called the 'Careers Advice Service', it would appeal more strongly to young men and women between the ages of 16 and 18, because they really believe they are men and women. The last thing they believe is that they are 'youths' and 'juveniles'. If we call this the Careers Advice Service, in my view it would appeal much more to them because, after all, they are about to embark

on this course in their life and a career is much more important to them at this time of life than it would be to an older person.

At any rate, I think it would be most advisable to take away from these services the designation 'juvenile', because I am satisfied in my own mind that it is psychologically bad to use it in connection with these young people.

**Commander Maitland:**

It seems to me we are in some difficulty, first with the name of the service and secondly with the person who uses it. Personally I put my money on the suggestion of the hon. Member for Acton (Mr. Sparks) - The Careers Advice Service - but I do hope the hon. Gentleman does not propose to call a 'youth' a 'careerist advisee'. I cannot imagine anything more frightening than that.

We have rather laboriously - and those who have anything to do with it know it is extremely hard work - built up a youth service throughout this country without managing to introduce Hitler and his ideas into it. I think it is a growing thing and will have a great future, and I do not see why, in this question of getting advice for employment, we should not bring in the word 'youth' and keep the unpleasant word 'juvenile' for juvenile delinquency and other such unpleasant things.

I think these unpleasant things are reasons why people do not like being called 'juvenile'. There is another reason why it is an unpleasant word, and that is perhaps more academic - it is one of those unpleasant words which should be an adjective but somehow is used as a noun. All such words are unpleasant because nobody likes to be called an adjective.

**Mr. George Thomas:**

One of the most outstanding features - or indeed outstanding feature - of educational development in Britain over the past ten years is the rapid growth of the youth movement. It has sprung up all over the countryside, and has met with a tremendous response from young people in their teens. I disagree most cordially with the hon. Member for Acton (Mr. Sparks) when he says young people do not like to be called 'young people'. I think we attribute to the young many ideas of which they themselves have no cognisance whatsoever. Young people like young people's clubs. They call themselves young people and they call the clubs 'youth centres'...and it is quite clear that they have chosen the appellation which is suitable. They like the words 'youth' or 'young people'...

**Mr Astor:**

I am not sure how the Minister will reply to these three suggestions. I do not think it matters very much which we choose. I doubt whether the Committee are qualified to say which is the best, and whether the term should be 'youth' or 'career advisee'. Intelligent opinions have been put forward, I am quite unable to say which is the best. The term 'juvenile' is unpopular. It can be an offensive adjective. If I said to the hon. Member for Central Cardiff (Mr Thomas) 'Don't be juvenile', it would be offensive; whereas if I said to him, 'Don't be such a career advisee' it would make no sense at all. I do not agree with the hon. Member for Cardiff Central that the word 'youth' is a popular term. Young people are always trying to grow up and be recognised as adults...

**Mr Isaacs [the Minister]:**

I am not so sure myself that youngsters - there is a word we might use -



stay away from meetings because the term 'juvenile' is attached to them. I think they stay away because there are many other attractions.

What are we to do about this? Really, a rose by any other name would smell as sweet, and an onion by any other name would taste as good. I have been consulting about this in a friendly way with hon. Members on both sides of the Committee, and it is clear that many of them do not like the word 'juvenile'. There is a problem, however, that we cannot find a word in the English language that properly describes those between the ages of 15 and 18. So one suggestion is that we should describe the service instead of the people for whom it is intended. That suggestion is for the word 'careers'.

I have asked the National Juvenile Employment Service, set up to advise the Minister in running this service, about this question. They are all people very keen on seeing the service flourish. They have had the various suggestions before them. They reminded me that the expression 'young people' was rejected by the House of Commons when suggested in connection with the education service. That expression was then referred to as 'patronising and priggish'.

I do not know how much progress it is to say 'young persons' instead of 'young people'. The advisory committee thinks that is an unwise term to use. The term 'young persons' is associated with Home Office legislation, and defined boys and girls under 17. The word 'junior' is not liked very much because of the distinction between seniors and juniors in school. The word 'youth' is disliked for two reasons, one of which I cannot quite follow myself. That reason is that the Ministry of Education already has a 'Youth Service'. That has a capital 'Y'. I have listened very carefully to my hon. Friends, and it is clear that they do not like the word

'juvenile'. That seems to me unanimous. However, it is equally obvious that there is no agreement about what term should take its place. Therefore I should like to give the matter some consideration. There is a practical difficulty about dropping the word 'juvenile'. We have had Juvenile Employment Service for a number of years now, and the word 'juvenile' is written or carved on our employment exchanges all over the country, and is embodied in a tremendous amount of literature - not only in literature relating to the service. I do not mention this to score a bull point. To change the word would involve considerable expense. I should like to give the matter careful consideration to see if it is possible to find a term about which we could all agree...

**Mr Dumbleton:**

I hope he (the Minister) will not accept the term 'career advisory service.' It savours to my mind of bourgeois, middle-class snobbishness. People of that class go in for 'careers', whereas boys of the working class go out to do a job of work. After listening to the discussion that has taken place I feel that my suggestion is the best. The term 'young people' is much more human and applies to the individuals for whom the service is intended. The term 'youth' is rather abstract. It refers to young people en masse...From the psychological point of view I do not think there is any objection to calling this the 'Young People's Employment Service'.

**youth**

On 25th May 1948, a memo was sent from the Minister of Labour to the drafters of the legislation (Parliament Counsel Office) instructing that the word 'juvenile' be replaced by the word 'youth'. What was formerly the Juvenile Employment Service was now the Youth Employment Service. A whole new category was born.

The Keynesian training state ensured that the young working class was now recognised as motion; but, constrained within the modern science of training, it was a particular kind of motion: the mechanical motion of an inert mass: 'youth' as a sociological category: an abstraction. Yet the danger for this most modern science had not been removed. The possibility of young labour power recognising itself and therefore transforming itself into labour (the rational kernel of society: the unity of needs and capacities) remained a threat to this abstraction and to the modern science of training itself. This precise nature of this possibility will become apparent in the following chapters when I explore the ways in which 'youth' attempts to detonate the category with which it has been identified (objectified), and the attempts by capital to contain this subjectivity within ever more abstract forms.



## chapter 3

### Theory of Relativity

#### productivity

The class relations of the post-war period were formalised within the productivity drive as capital sought to reconstruct the conditions for sustained accumulation within an efficient and stable national regime (Clarke, 1988: 244 - 286). But productivity is not simply a techno-economic clockwork efficient based on the mutual recognition of natural advantage between workers and employers, regulated through market rationalities, as the training scientists would have it; but is, as Marx showed through his exposition of the law of value, an antagonistic and contradictory process derived from the fact that in modern society social reproduction (use value) is subordinate to the production, accumulation and appropriation of surplus value: a process which depends on the co-operation of the producers it subordinates. The social relations of capital are therefore the social relations of struggle between capital and the subordinate class: labour. Capital is class struggle.

In order to create surplus value it is necessary that the labour time objectified in the product of labour is greater than that which was present in the original components of capital. This is possible only if the labour

objectified in the value of labour-power, a value determined by labour's need to reproduce itself as labour, is smaller - not equivalent to - the living labour time actually consumed. While all other components of capital change their material forms of existence in the process they remain unchanged as values (constant capital). It is only through the consumption of objectified labour(variable capital) as living labour that a qualitative and quantitative change in the material existence of the substance occurs and is realised in (exchange) circulation. There is, however, no guarantee that value will be realised. As production is based on the creation of surplus value and not planned rationally to meet demand then, notwithstanding the limits of the market which exists as an institution for capital to subvert, but which it cannot exist without, there will be a tendency to overproduction. Overproduction confronts capital in the form of competition which forces the capitalist to transform the productive consumption and consumptive production of his workers. In order to create surplus value it is necessary that the labour time objectified in the product of labour is greater than that which was present in the original components of capital. Only more so.

#### **a brief history of time**

Labour time then is the essential determinate of all production and consumption in any form of society. The less time that a society takes to produce that which it needs to consume in order to reproduce itself, the more time it has to do more than produce itself: develop. So that all economy ultimately reduces itself to the economy of time. In capitalist society time takes on particular dynamic forms, i.e., as space: the commodity, as motion: value, as an independent material form: money (time

is money) and as regulation state time: the clock. Time is the determinate form, the measure, the expression and the regulation of itself as time. The discipline of time (punctuality) is therefore the most fundamental discipline for the modern science of training.

The most complete description of this process is E. P. Thompson's 'Time work-discipline and industrial capital'. In this work he traces the development of time as the development of the social relations of capital, the way in which time discipline was imposed and the way it was resisted. 'The first generation of factory workers were taught by their masters the importance of time; the second generation formed their short-time committees in the ten hour movement; the third generation struck for over-time and time and a half. They had accepted the categories of their employers and learned to fight back within them. They had learned their lesson that time is money, only too well'(Thompson, 19???: 85). He counterposes this against what he hopes will become a more progressive use of time and how this might be achieved: "If the purposive notation of time-use becomes less compulsive, then men might have to relearn some of the arts of living lost in the industrial revolution: how to fill the intersices of their days with enriched more leisurely, personal and social relations"( Thompson, 19???: 96). That is to say, he suggests an idealistic and reactionary vision of progress within the dynamic of commodity time.

#### **relative time**

Although Marx used the language and metaphors of absolute time, he theorised time, space and motion in a way that went beyond Newtonian physics and anticipated the Einsteinian theory of relativity. Marx was clear that revolution lay not in the past but in the future ( Marx, 1948:



11 - 12 ). By this he did not mean simply an alternative use of time: of the absolute Newtonian commodity-time defined by capital, but of a different conception of time. A time based in the present but motivated by the dynamic principle of the immediate future. But in order to conceptualise revolution in this way he had to reconstruct an alternative theory of time. Marx, following Hegel and anticipating Einstein, disrupted the traditional laws of (social) motion with its structural separations of energy (motion) and inertia (rest) (Kay and Mott, 1982: 77). He did this by reconceptualising the social form in which motion and energy appear: labour. Working directly from the most simple determination in modern society: the commodity form, Marx unpacked the contradictory value relations through which the commodity form was determined, as use-value and exchange value, to reveal the social form of labour in capitalist society. As commodities possess an objective character as values only insofar as they are expressions of an identical social substance - human labour - it follows that the labour that produces the commodity must also have a dual character. The use value of a commodity contains useful (concrete) labour, i.e productive activity of a definite kind, carried on with a definite aim; exchange value is an expression of the value of the commodity which represents "human labour pure and simple, the expenditure of human labour in general" (abstract labour) (Capital I : 126 - 137 ) measured as labour time and realised in exchange. Marx emphasises that abstract labour is social labour. This is important as the social labour of labour time does not refer to the amount of labour actually expended by a given individual, but a portion of that social labour that is given to that commodity.

It is difficult to overemphasise the importance that Marx attached to his discovery of the dual nature of labour. He regarded it as crucial to any

understanding of political economy (*Capital 1*: 132). In a letter to Engels he wrote: "...the best points in my book are: 1. the two-fold character of labour, according to whether it is expressed in use-value or exchange value (all understanding of the facts depend on this). It is emphasised immediately, in the *first* chapter". Within this arrangement Marx specifies what is 'new and peculiar' to the capitalist mode of production. It is not simply the two-fold nature of labour, as I will show bourgeois economists had their own binary conceptions of labour (Becker 1962); but the way in which through this formulation Marx shows how capital struggles to subsume useful labour into abstract labour and how through this process (productivity) capital reproduces not only itself, but itself as a barrier to itself. Productivity is not then simply a technical agreement between workers and their bosses; it is a social relation that reflects the contradiction between the dual forms of labour Marx identified and is the expression of capital's necessity to accumulate relative surplus value.

Using this discovery Marx formulated this transformation of time (existence) in terms of what he called 'socially necessary labour time' (snlt). Snlt is not-absolute: relative time. Or, more concretely, snlt is the labour-time required to produce any use value under the conditions of production normal for a given society and with the average degree of skill and intensity of labour prevalent in society. What exclusively determines the magnitude of the value of an article is therefore the amount of labour socially necessary, or the labour-time socially necessary for its production. Socially necessary labour-time is not simply a chronological measurement of time but the imposition of a particular form of reduced existence on labour (:abstract labour). By reducing the amount of socially necessary labour time required to produce labour's means of subsistence,



capital reduces the value of the commodities the working class receives to reproduce itself. This means that capital can pay workers less while not reducing the use-values they consume (they can consume more). This reduction in wages (variable capital) fused with the maintenance and intensification of work means that the relative share of the value which capital receives as surplus will rise.

But this process is paradoxical. The reduction in work time provides the possibility for more time away from work without a reduction in output. However, in modern society, productivity increases are transformed into more rather than less work or into unemployment. This paradox is rational only from the position of capital for whom the only means of expanding itself is through labour time (Cleaver, 1979: 82). But the rationality (formal) of capital is not-rational(concrete) for the working class for whom labour time is alienated time: time appropriated without equivalent by capital: "Capital is a moving contradiction in that it struggles to reduce labour time to a minimum (snlt), while it posits labour time, as the sole measure and source of wealth. Therefore it diminishes labour time in the necessary form so as to increase it in the superfluous form; hence posits the superfluous in growing measure as a condition - a question of life or death - for the necessary. On the one side, then, it calls to life all the powers of science and of nature, as of social combination and social intercourse, in order to make the creation of wealth independent (relatively) of the labour time employed on it. On the other side, it wants to use labour time as the measuring rod for the giant social forces thereby created, and to confine them within the limits required to maintain the already created value as value. Forces of production and social relations - two different sides of the development of the social individual - appear to capital as mere means, and are merely means for it to produce on its



limited foundation. In fact, however, they are the material conditions to blow this foundation sky-high" (*Grundrisse*, 1957-8: 706).

That is the process is progressive for labour. The imposition of commodity time (:clockwork time) through snlt creates the possibility of disposable time (:real time, i.e. communism). Snlt then is the transformation of the productive consumption and consumptive production of labour. In that way it leads to an expansion of needs, which results in a redefinition of the labour in terms of consumption (*Grundrisse*, 1957-8: 408-410), and an increase in the productivity of labour, which leads to a new concept of productive labour (Negri, 1988: 135). And therefore the emergence of a new social subject. It is through production that new social subjects emerge. That is the new subject emerges not only from an expansion of needs, but also from and expansion of productive labour: and the increase in the productivity of human labour, as an active force in production. The epitome of this is a process within which the measure of wealth is constituted not as labour (abstract) time but as disposable (real) time. Real time corresponds to: "the artistic, scientific etc. development of the individuals in time set free, and with the means created, for all of them" (*Grundrisse*, 1957-8: 706 ).

Although Marx was theorising the social world beyond the limits of the formal society out of which it was constituted, he was working within the limits, if at the edge of those limits, of the physical sciences. Marx lived in Newton's universe. Absolute time had not yet been displaced by Einstein's theory of relativity. Marx was theorising time as absolute time and could take his theory of time no further. In Reading Capital Politically (1979) Cleaver suggests that the reason that Marx failed to

develop his theory of time was due to a lack of foresight by Marx (Cleaver, 1979:21). This gives Cleaver the space to develop his autonomist notion of the 'social factory'. However this is not an adequate explanation for why Marx failed to proceed with his theory of time. Marx knew perfectly well that all time is subsumed by capital. He did not know and could not know, as Cleaver says, the extraordinary forms in which this subsumption would take. He was limited to time as absolute time and therefore could counterpose only an alternative disposable time. The alternative uses to which clockwork time is put outside of capital's imperative is of course important and provides the basis on which the working class movement can be constructed. But it is not enough to argue that the working class can simply recreate its own version of time through the space provided by the reduction of snlt (Negri, 1988: 219). There is no free time in capitalist society. Time not used directly in production is taken up in reproduction: in leisure time, or availability for work time. The reality of real-time is struggle in, through and against clockwork time.

### **concrete**

The concrete expression of this abstraction (:productivity) appeared at this time as increasing state intervention at the international level through currency adjustments, GATT, IMF and Marshall Aid; nationally through social insurance and administration, rising wages, credit, full employment and a system of industrial relations modelled around new 'americanised' methods of mass production which developed new models of work intensification. This 'americanisation' of production was much more than simply an intensification of the labour process in the workplace. It was also enforced systematically on every day life in all its forms. Insofar as the young working class was concerned, institutions were devised to create young people in the image of 'youth' devised in 1948, within

which the productivity drive was being marketed. These devices included the raising of the school leaving age, the provision of improved recreational facilities, state controlled Youth Service with a specific task for the social education of the 'pre-adult' to ensure the profitable use of 'leisure' time, a plethora of sporting initiatives and, of course, the provision of 'secondary education for all' through the expansion of secondary and higher education.

However, this provision was criticised from all sides. It fell far short of the utopian vision of the post-war training scientists. In order to find an explanation for this it is not enough to question the motives of the training scientists but to look more closely at the material process of production out of which these objectifying regimes were devised.

#### **productivity lag**

In the immediate post-war period British manufacture and unions had resisted 'americanisation', fearing that American 'fordist' techniques would undermine their own precarious labour relations and systems of work regulation. Protected by their historic imperial markets they were able to enjoy a relative growth output without a qualitative intensifying work programme or a need to increase investment. However, despite this productivity lag, booming markets and high profits sustained by and linked to productivity deals led to a growth in wages and increased consumption. This relative stability of production methods and corporate organisation meant that British companies still often relied on the most primitive methods of management, with little direct control of the production process. The labour process and initiation into that process was controlled by labour (TUs) through the apprenticeship system (Clarke, 1988: 260 ).

When competitive pressure finally forced managerial and technical



'rationalisation' on British industry involving the retooling of production lines and demoralisation of labour to a more intensive working regime the paltry and moribund nature of the training system was revealed.

Training programmes were inadequate and unpopular, especially with young people. "Boys are dissuaded from asking too many questions, because this cuts into the routine, smooth running of the production process - and can also adversely affect piece-rates and bonuses: so long as the apprentices can do the narrow range of tasks that the foreman sets them, that is all that the firm needs, or is bothered about. In consequence, large numbers of young workers are passed out as skilled men each year after receiving no more training than that involved in 'standing next to Nelly' for the five years that is ordained for apprenticeship" (Carter, 1966:183). And the reaction of the young is embittered, they feel they are getting nowhere. "To add to their disillusionment is the fact that they get low wages compared to boys and girls in avowedly semi - and unskilled jobs - and are, in effect, no more than cheap labour" (Carter, 1966:183)

And: "Some training is given on jobs that have been superceded by new machinery, so that boys simply tend machines, the pretence of training is maintained by employers and TUs; boys are relentlessly apprenticed to what are, in effect, non-existent skills and, ludicrously enough, spend five years 'aquiring' them. Employers permit such anomalies because they provide an opportunity for cheap labour, with only nominal demands for training, and in part because they are unable to budge Trade Unions from entrenched positions - the Unions seek to protect their older members, but in doing so render a disservice to young workers" (Carter, 1966: 184).

## elvis

While British productivity agreements resisted the modern working practices that had been installed in American factories, these labour process intensifications were already producing some surprising phenomena in the U.S. One of the most significant forms of these phenomena was the activity of young people, exemplified most completely in the person of Elvis Presley. By the beginning of the 1950's Elvis had become the symbolic form of the contradictory relationship of the young working class in capital: both a celebration and a refusal of their everyday life. Sociology and musicology and spent a good deal of time trying to explain Elvis and the process that he so dramatically represented. This is an important question for social science. To understand the Elvis phenomena is to begin to understand what 'youth' is, i.e. the secret of youth, and maybe of even of eternal life, or of social life anyway. The most recent attempt at explaining Elvis is Greil Marcus's Dead Elvis (1991). For Marcus, Elvis 'changed the contours of American life, changed the symbols by which we interpret our culture to ourselves, interpret what it means to be an American' (Marcus, 1991: 29). Taking his cue from Simon Frith, who suggests that the importance of Elvis was the way he sang, "the grain of his voice...dissolved the symbols that put adolescence together" (Marcus, 1991: 9), Marcus thinks he is more important than that. He did not just change the meaning of adolescence "he dissolved the symbols that put America together" (Marcus, 1991: 39). And, says Marcus, it was that America, once it had regained its shape, that destroyed him.

But Marcus does not get near an explanation for the Elvis phenomenon. Indeed, he is reduced to congratulating himself and other semioticians for asking the right question: "Every once in a while, though, someone gets it right. Someone pins it down - not the answer, but the reality of the

question. Someone reminds you that, no, it wasn't an illusion, it wasn't a trick. The insistence we've heard in Elvis music that nothing is settled, that nothing is final, that there are new things under the sun, comes home" (Marcus, 1991: 39). In order to get beyond the question it is necessary to get beyond the phenomena and the semiotics that examine the symbols of social life, to examine not just how these symbols are consumed, but how those symbols and the meanings and realities that they represent are produced in the first place. I will begin by drawing attention to the work of the training scientists of that moment whose work did so much to identify the 'Elvis' experience and to define its youthful support.

#### youth culture

The most significant of the training scientists of the immediate post-war period was Talcott Parsons. Parsons provided the rhetorical device through which social actors could be identified (structure) and the explanation for their behaviour through which they could be contained (function) (Clarke, 1991: 294-5). The device he used was culture. The notion of culture, like Keynes' notion of demand, is an attempt to recognise and reconcile individual aspirations (subjectivity), but in such a way that presents the possibility for social reproduction within the social relations of capitalism. Weber had previously established the notion of culture and cultural values as the mediating link between individual and society but failed to give an account of the processes by which the subjectivity of the social actor is reconciled with the objective constraints of social reproduction. For Parsons, values are constructed socially and articulated in cultural value systems which mediate between the subjectivity of the individuals and the objectivity of social structure. Social order is maintained through a process of socialisation and social control (training) based on a cultural system developed by the self-regulation of the



individual personality within the social community and not imposed by an authoritarian state (Clarke, 1991: 299-300).

Parsons was the first to identify the phenomena of youthful opposition within this theoretical framework. Like Keynes, he attempted to reconcile the irreconcilable: the antagonistic subjectivity of the young working class within its abstract forms. He identified youthful opposition as 'youth culture'. For him its dominant defining features were 'irresponsibility' and 'having a good time' in relation to which there is a particularly strong emphasis on social activities in company with the opposite sex. 'Youth culture' for Parsons was an expression of a period of strain and insecurity, but was functionally required to ease the transitions from the security of childhood in the family of orientation to that of full adult in marriage and occupational status. But precisely because the transition was a period of strain it was to be expected that it involved elements of unrealistic romanticism (Parsons, 1964:101). And, in what he admits is a highly schematic and simplified model: "Thus the compulsive independence of youth culture may, according to well established psychological principles, be interpreted as involving a reaction-formation against dependency needs, which is for understandable reasons particularly prominent among boys. The compulsive conformity, in turn, would seem to serve as an outlet for these dependency needs, but displaced from parental figures onto the peer group so that it does not interfere with independence. The element of romanticism finally seems to express the ambivalence and insecurity which are inherent in the emotional patterning of both sexes when faced with highly crucial decisions. It is a tonic stimulus to confidence and action in the face of potentially paralyzing conflicts" (Parsons, 1964: 345).

## the uses of training

There was no Elvis Presley in the UK in the early 1950s. It would take years before anything like Elvis appeared. And then it was definitely like-Elvis (Nuttall, 1968). The British 'youth' scene produced a plethora of Elvis impersonators, none of whom could capture completely the 'ex-centricness' of what it was to be Elvis. But the new Elvishood was an expression of something real, a British simulcra of the phenomena of youth opposition that Parsons had identified in the U.S.

A version of Parsons' analysis appeared to reflect the British experience. In 1957 Richard Hoggart published The Use of Literacy. The book celebrates the moribund condition of the working class and denounces its apparent mutation. What is significant is that the book defines a precise moment in the development of class relations, even if it is not wholly aware of that itself, and the importance it attaches to the influence of 'americanisation'. Its limits are that it concentrates on consumption, distribution and exchange, ignoring production and the intensification of work. Hoggart sentimentalises the "unsentimental ordinariness of the working week" (Hoggart, 1957: 166) which, he despairs, is being replaced by the modernisms, the future, vitality, vigour, independence of minor American mythologies (Hoggart, 1957: 193) and new style sex-novels spreading from America (Hoggart, 1957: 258) of whom the authors are either American or 'pseudo American. Juke box cafes and milk bars full of slouching girls and young men listening to doctored American vocals "wagging one shoulder and staring as desperately as Humphrey Bogart", which, compared even with the pub culture, "this is all a peculiarly thin and pallid form of dissipation, a sort of spiritual dry-rot amid the odour of boiled milk. Many of the customers - their clothes, their hair styles, their facial expressions all indicate - are living to a large extent in a

myth-world compounded of a few simple elements which they take to be American life" (Hoggart, 1957: 248).

#### overconsumption

This growing youthful antagonism - that expressed itself not only by slouching in coffee bars, but in the more disruptive exploding crime rate - was theorised in terms of excess consumption. Young people were spending their wages, £3 mill a day, on clothes, smokes, sweets, snacks, soft drinks, cosmetics, pop records and other status symbols; and yet crime among young people had more than doubled since 1939. This activity undermined the previous moralisms upon which reactions to this type of decadence had been based. It could no longer be attributed to poverty.

The Economist attributed this anti social behaviour to personal inadequacy: "they commit crimes because they cannot live up to the rest of teenage society. They rob because they cannot get jobs; they gang up in order to rough up other citizens in order to compensate for their failure to get the affluence, prestige and 'sense of belonging' which other teenagers achieve more normally. This group represents frustration. Unhappily it seems right to suppose both that this group is tending to grow in size and that this is a product of the more exacting standards of conformity imposed in an industrial, urbanised and educated society. These are young people who cannot make the grade in a world in which grades are being more widely enforced...[in this group the young people are] downright inadequate - substandard in intelligence, in moral training, in family background...[what they require is]... remedial treatment...A high proportion of the 'Teds' and their like come from families utterly incapable of bringing up children - spoiling them outrageously to the age of five, losing all control of them afterwards, and entirely incapable of



giving them fruitful affection...An affluent society can afford to study this problem, perhaps, with the urgency with which it studies cancer...Notwithstanding their 'mohawk' period, a high proportion of these youth settle down and become, if not model, at any rate quiescent citizens. They lose the ferocious mixture of childish savagery and instability which, allied to adult strength is so terrifying. Inevitably they tend to produce the same type of children in their turn. But they are still a relatively small group...The bulge in crime may be a return to the changing conditions of the 19th century; the problem is now the slum mind rather than the slum" (The Economist, March 5 1960).

The Home Secretary was certainly baffled : "The Home Secretary's decision to appoint a standing advisory committee on juvenile crime under his chairmanship, is probably a sign of his complete bafflement of the problem. Formerly thought to be associated with unemployment and poverty, then with the social upheaval of the war, then with shortage and rationing, and now with affluence, juvenile crime just goes on increasing and seems to make nonsense of any theory that is put forward..."(The Economist, September 28, 63)

#### **absolutely clockwork**

This youthful antagonism was reflected in a growing literature and cinematic treatments of what had become the youth problem. The various accounts reveal the deeply contradictory nature of 'youth'. It could be nothing else, such activity was derived from a profoundly contradictory and uneven process. The extent of this contradiction is best seen in two of the most provocative books of the period, both concentrating on youth, but both with radically different interpretations. Absolute Beginners (1959), and Clockwork Orange (1962) express the contradictory form of youth at this time. The emergence of a new social subject is not the emergence of a new

conformity. Rather a not conformity which expresses itself in the same and yet profoundly different ways.

While redolent with 'the teenage thing', Absolute Beginners still manages to express the powerful transformatory nature of young people: "It's been a two-way twist, this teenage party. Exploitation of the kiddos by the conscripts, and exploitation of themselves by the crafty little absolute beginners. The net result? 'Teenager' becomes a dirty word, or at any rate a square one" (MacInnes, 1959:10)...And "I think that he's (Wiz) found out at a very early age what most kids never know, and what it took me years myself to discover - in fact it didn't dawn on me until this year, when the knowledge of it's come too late to use - namely, that youth has power, a kind of divine power straight from mother nature...As for the boys and girls, the dear young absolute beginners, I sometimes feel that if they only knew this fact, namely how powerful they are, then they would rise up overnight and enslave the old taxpayers, the whole damn lot of them - toupets and falsies and rejuvenators and all - even though they number millions and sit in the seats of strength" (MacInnes, 1959: 13). And..."He (Vernon) glared at me. I could see that, if once he believed that what I said I really meant, and thousands of kiddos did the same as well, the bottom would fall out of this horrible little world"(MacInnes, 1959: 41).

Clockwork Orange describes a model of conformity through a spectacular non-conformity: a violently violent anti-youth work: a cartoon version of the caricatured anti-social cliché constructed on the pages of the Economist and elsewhere: 'youth' as a dangerous mutation that can be controlled and made quiescent.

productivity and new social subject (consumption/production)

The confusion among the training science shows that the emergence of a new social antagonist subject is inexplicable simply in terms of consumption. In order to theorise this new antagonism, it is necessary to look beyond consumption and to examine the way in which modern society was producing itself at that moment. The emergence of this new social subjectivity, evidenced in increasing social tension, is a direct result of the process of work intensification at this time as British capital sought to increase the rate of exploitation in response to the relative low rate of productivity. The increasingly rapid accumulation of this period (mid-50s) imposed great demands on the working class, the structural and technological changes demanded a high degree of flexibility, mobility, acceptance of intensification and destruction of community to which the working class was reconciled through social consumption and the satisfaction of raised expectations: the 'americanisation' of consumption, a new modernism. But, more than that, the low productivity created problems for the satisfaction of created demand (the working class) that appeared in the form of inflation which led to industrial and political unrest as the working class sought to defend their material gains in this period (Clarke, 1988: 272).

#### **the turn to planning**

Out of this struggle a new form of the training state was derived as capital struggled to contain youthful opposition within its youthful form. But it was not a straightforward process. Increasingly anachronistic administrative devices (:committees) were convened and discarded in this period. For example, in 1958 the Industrial Training Council was set up and quickly discarded. The previous state form based within the temporal configuration of the immediate present, manifest as demand, was not adequate to the task. The new training state, in order to maintain order,



would have to concern itself with the immediate future. In order to do that it would have to intervene, but, more than that, it would have to plan.

### **industrial training boards**

The outcome of this process was the Education and Training Act 1964. It was formulated as a device that would more directly intervene in the training process, and yet it was still not directly involved. As with its predecessor the Act was a culmination of intensification already in process since mid-1950s, the result of the decline in the Keynesian state began in 1957. The clauses of the Act recorded the new configuration of class formation. The Act empowered the Minister of Labour, after consultation with organisations representing employers and persons employed in an industry, to make an industrial training order establishing a Board for industry. Each Board was responsible and had the duty to provide or secure the provision of such training courses or facilities as might be necessary for the training of persons in its industry, and to make recommendations with regard to the nature, length and standard of training for occupations in industry. The Act empowered a Board to approve training courses provided by other persons, to apply tests, to undertake research, and to carry out related functions. It also enabled a board to make grants or loans to persons providing courses approved by the Board. And it required that a Board impose a levy on employers in its industry in accordance with an order made by the Minister pursuant to proposal submitted by the Board. There was an information gathering function, a duty to recruit and train training officers and that a Central Training Council be set up. Its function was to advise the Secretary of State for Employment and Productivity on the exercise of his functions under the Act, and on any

other matter relating to industrial or commercial training which he may refer to it. This included, in particular, the training of trainers, commercial and clerical training, management development, the operation of a levy-grant system and its effect on small firms, research, manpower planning and the relationship between educational and vocational training. It was supported by a plethora of committees (Perry 1976: 183).

The first Board set up was the Wool, Jute and Flax Industry Training Board, followed by the Iron and Steel and Engineering ITBs. Five more created in 1965, seven in 1966, five in 1967, five in 1968. So that, by 1969 "there were 27 statutory training boards, one hybrid - the Joint Committee for Training in the Foundry Industry...and the three voluntary boards (e.g. Local Government Training Board). Between them they covered over 15.5 million employees out of a working population of 25 million, and over 1 million establishments. The levies raised (based mainly on a per centage of wage bill or less commonly per capita basis) by the Boards totalled nearly £195 million for that financial year" (Perry, 1976:175). The order of establishment had been first the traditional manufacturing industry with some training experience, next the public utilities, then textiles, later the modern technology based industries, ending in 1968 with paper, printing, distributive trades and finally hairdressing.

The task confronting each Board was to ask, and find reasonable answers to some difficult questions. They had to look at their industry and decide its future size, technological development and shape; and from this they had to derive a manpower profile projected some five or ten years hence. They had to compare this guess-work pattern with the industry's present shape and judge whether the current training effort was adequate for its future needs. If, as was the case in most industries, the answer was in

the negative, the Board had to evaluate the cost of meeting the shortfall in the training need and, in the longer term, to raise a levy which would finance the necessary training - and they were to provide experienced trainers who were in "exceedingly short supply" (Perry, 1976:180).

#### **political economy of training**

This planning strategy was supported by developments in economics where training scientists, e.g. Howard Becker, were rediscovering and contemporising Marshall's theory of Human Capital and developing Keynes' notion of working class subjectivity. For Becker, the working class was not just demand, but also supply. That is they provided a way by which value could be added through the process of production. Becker's theory did not determine the form of state intervention - it was not the blue print for state strategy - but it did provide a theoretical legitimacy for training policy at that time. This more complex analysis of working class subjectivity attracted support from TU training scientists in whose interests it was to preserve the working class as labour power.

Becker created a dual theory of labour. Unlike Marx's total system, Becker's vision is reduced to a technical binary rationality that, following the marginalist account, had as its dynamic the rationality of 'rational' individuals. The theory, suggests that, people's capabilities, and the way in which they are developed can "alter radically the usual measure of the amount of savings and capital formation" and so be used as a measure to explain "economic growth which has been so puzzling." That is, to regard "the quality of human resources as one of the major sources of economic growth...No doubt the growth in investment in man has improved markedly the quality of work entering into economic endeavour and these improvements in quality have been a major source of economic growth".



Previous labour theories of value had proved inadequate to the task: "the concept of a labour force, or of man-hours worked fails to take into account the improvements in the capabilities of man." So that, the project of the adherents to the theory was to examine the role "that investments in man play as a source of economic growth", and in so doing "search for a conception of economic growth that would explain past growth and indicate future growth." (Shultz, 1962: 2-3)

Becker's work forms part of a growing awareness, at that time, of the economic importance of human capital and the fact that: "few if any countries have achieved a sustained period of economic development without having invested substantial amounts in their labour force" (Becker, 1964: 2)

Becker moved from the original aim of his work, to estimate the money rate of return to college and high school education in the U.S., to study the more general and broader economic implications that arose from a systematic investigation into the theory of investment in human capital. He attempted to do this through an analysis of the other than tangible resources which people possess or are capable of possessing, e.g. knowledge. This led him to an analysis of training at work: on the job; and in so doing, to make up for the gap, as he saw it, in "the effect of the productive process itself on worker productivity by formalising it, incorporating it into economic analysis and working out its implications" (Becker, 1962: 11).

His argument, without the 'benefit' of formulae, is that workers increase their productivity by learning new skills and perfecting old ones while at work. This raises their future income potential and the company's productivity. But this learning process costs, depending on the type of

training. These costs could be offset by raising future receipts or lowering future expenditures, but better still if the workers could pay for training themselves through a decrease in wages, which they would accept, in the certain rational understanding that training raises their future earning potential.

#### **general training**

Becker developed his ideas on training with an analysis based on a two-fold nature of labour described as general and specific. General training is defined as training that is useful in many firms in addition to the firm providing it. He gives the example of the type of training given to soldiers which is often very generalisable, e.g. driving, mechanical maintenance (Becker's empirical evidence is often vague, limited to the armed services or astronauts). However, the likelihood of firms providing general training is constrained by the fact that increases in marginal productivity would be taken up by extra training costs, and that, in competitive labour markets, firms not providing training and who 'poached' staff would be likely to gain an advantage. Becker says that this problem can be offset by allowing the rational individual actor to invest in their future. "Completely general training increases the marginal productivity of trainees by exactly the same amount in firms providing the training as in other firms... [so that general training] would also increase the marginal product in firms not providing training. But as wage rates would increase by the same amount as the marginal product returned, why would rational firms in competitive labour markets provide general training ...firms would provide general training only if they did not have to pay any of the costs. Persons receiving general training would be willing to pay these costs since training raises their future wages. Hence the cost as well as the return would be borne by trainees, not by firms".

That is "employees would pay for general training by receiving wages below their current (opportunity) productivity". Becker's world of work is populated by motivated employees inspired by their employers managerial skills: "Instead of only benefiting from activities by others, the average earner is made a prime mover of development through the investment in himself" (Becker, 1962: 44).

### **specific training**

Specific training is defined as "training that has no effect on the productivity of the trainees that would be useful in other firms". It includes: familiarisation, hiring costs and the instruction of a skill specific to a particular firm. However, if training was completely specific, the employer could collect the returns from raised productivity but the firm would have to pay for training costs as employees would not pay for training that did not benefit them in the labour market. Another problem for the employer providing the training is that they are particularly vulnerable to labour 'turnover' even though, as he argues, a specifically trained worker is less likely to quit and firms are less likely to sack them. He suggests that the firms providing specific training can counter whatever 'turnover' problems there might be by paying higher wages, and/or pass on training costs to workers by paying lower wages, and/or by offering pension plans and long term contracts, although the courts are against them because of the implication of 'involuntary servitude'.

What is obvious from these brief descriptions is that Becker's dual model of training is crude and simplistic, lacking the sophistication and complexity of Marx's analysis of the two-fold nature of labour. Becker's



categories, unlike Marx's, are purely differences of technique. That is, they are both specific, concrete, material, useful forms of labour: one is more generalisable than the other, e.g. driving, or cooking. That is to say, there is no fundamental significant difference, as Becker himself admits: "Much on-the-job training is neither completely specific nor completely general but increases productivity more in firms providing it and falls within the definition of specific training. The rest increases productivity by at least as much in other firms and falls within a definition of general training" (Becker, 1962: 17). It is a technical, not a social difference.

#### the state

Following the preoccupation of the marginalist project with understanding the possibilities and limits of State intervention in the regulation of economic relations, Becker proposed a specific form of state intervention that could facilitate this process of training. He suggested that: "Some training may be useful neither in most nor only in a single firm but in a set of firms defined by product, type of work, or geographical location. For example, carpentry training would raise productivity primarily in the construction industry...". And while he maintains that "Such training would tend to be paid by trainees, since a single firm could not readily collect the return and in this respect would be the same as general training", he does present a model, by way of example from the U.S.: Industrial Training in Mercer County N.J., Washington Bureau for Apprenticeship and Training, where: "sometimes firms co-operate in paying training costs, especially when training apprentices" (Becker, 1962: 25). This framework for generalised training contains within it the prototype for the training levy that was to become a central feature of the Industrial Training Boards.

## industrial training boards failure

The formation of the Industrial Training Boards (ITBs) like the Education and Training Act (ETA) 1948 before it, and indeed the history of training legislation, was not the initiator of a new regime of accumulation; but, rather the culmination of a process of recomposition and demoralisation of the working class through the intensification of work. The ITBs were a response to a problem that began not in 1964 but the mid-1950s as working class aspirations began to outstrip the level of expectation within which capital sought to contain it. The ITBs were not then simply a restatement of ETA 1948. Where the ITBs differed from the Keynesian ETA was its recognition, inspired by Becker's crude and yet more sophisticated model, not just of the working class as demand, but more particularly as supply and a way in which, through the enhancement of that supply, surplus value could be increased. But the state was no more able to contain that subjectivity than it had been before. The result was to recreate the struggle over 'Youth' at a greater level of intensity (abstraction). The attempt to impose an accelerated clockwork time computed by the new technologies - that were themselves an attempt to destabilise the real-time rhythms of the working class, and in particular the young working class - provided a regime where young people called into question not simply the amount of time that should be spent at work but the nature of work and of time itself.

Young people had not been reconciled to the vision of 'Youth' devised by the training scientists and eugenisists. The dream of the training scientists was not as attractive as they had imagined. But the repression and coercion which was employed by training scientists to impose their

system of production on the [young] working class did not simply represent the degradation of a utopian vision under the pressure of the economic constraints of capital, but the failure of that vision to respond to the needs and aspirations of real human beings. The limits of the Industrial Training Boards lay not in the hypocrisy and exploitation which marked its capitalist implementation, or problems over the levy, or over the bureaucracy etc, but in the vision itself, as a vision of the reduction of the worker to an appendage of the industrial and social machine. This vision may have appealed to training scientists of the 1950s, but it had little appeal to the young workers who proved to have a far more instrumental attitude to work. Their co-operation had to be induced; numbed into submission by the oblivious consumption of drugs and alcohol as the training scientists in co-operation with market and culture conscious sociologists provided the space for young people to love, drink, smoke, swallow and sniff their servitude. Addiction is not a threat to capitalism but is a condition of its realisation (Clarke, 1990).

No sooner had the ITBs been created than they were overcome by the process from which they had been derived and which they could not therefore contain. The increasingly sophisticated training regimes produced an increasingly sophisticated young person. It is, therefore, not surprising that such a powerful opposition of this period should arise in the student movement whose most articulate expression was the SI, and which itself was to culminate in the extraordinary moment of 1968, when the clockwork time of capital came into direct confrontation with the real-time of the young working class, and when for a brief moment it appeared in parts of the capitalist world (e.g. the General Strike in France) as if time itself had stopped.



## theories of time

The SI, through the work of Guy Debord in Society of the Spectacle(1967), developed a theory of time through a combination of the work of Hegel and Marx and the condition of the class struggle at that time. For Debord, history had always existed, but not always in an historical form. The present historical condition had reduced time as a necessary alienation - where the subject realised himself by losing himself, where he became other in order to become truly himself - to commodity-time; where the subject was separated from the product of his activity and, therefore, from his own time. Pre-history time remained immobile, like an enclosed space. More complex societies had become more conscious of time and noticed not simply what passes, but what returns, and had organised themselves within this notion of cyclical time. Originally nomadic they localised themselves as agriculture: the end of lazy liberty without content and the beginning of labour dominated by the rhythm of the seasons. This rhythm was the basis for fully constituted cyclical time: eternity was internal to it. But this eternity was alienated through the power that rose above the penury of the society of cyclical time: the class which organised the social labour and appropriated the surplus value. They did this through an appropriation of the time of the living, which they could then squander at the surface of society through the knowledge and enjoyment of lived events, separated from the collective organisation of time which predominated the repetitive production of social life. And so time became detached as history: the adventures of other men in another place outside of an unchanging order within which the timeless prevail. The timed were frozen into conformity for fear of falling back into formless animality through the institutionalising of time: as myth, legend, commandments and the chronicle by which time as history was not only appropriated but given meaning, i.e. in order to remain human, men must remain the same. But this petrification

was dissolved by the bourgeoisie who, through their preoccupation with labour-time, liberated and destroyed cyclical time. Work became labour, which transformed historical conditions and nature by unleashing the productive power of labour which is now the dynamic of history, but which can only be contained by denying it that history. There was history, but there is no more. But the demand to live historical time makes the proletariat find the simple unforgettable centre of its revolutionary project.

The revolutionary project is the crisis of modern society. It is not just a crisis of youth, although it may appear that way: "In reality if there is a problem of youth in modern capitalism it is part of the total crisis of that society. It is just that youth feels the crisis most acutely. [not only feels it but tries to give it expression]. Youth and its mock freedom are the purest products of modern society. Their modernity consists in the choice they are offered and are already making: total integration to neo-capitalism, or the most radical refusal. What is surprising is not that youth is in revolt, but that its elders are so soporific. But the reason is history, not biology - the privision? generation lived through the defeats and were sold the lies of the long shameful disintegration of the revolutionary movement. In itself, Youth is a publicity myth and as a part of the new 'social dynamism' it is the potential ally of the capitalist mode of production. The illusory primacy of youth began with the economic recovery after the second world war. Capital was able to strike a new bargain with labour: in return for the mass production of a new class of manipulable consumers, the worker was offered a role which gave him full membership of the spectacular society. This at least was the ideal social model, though as usual it bore little relation to socio-economic reality



(which lagged behind the consumer ideology). The revolt of youth was the first burst of anger at the persistent realities of the new world - the boredom of everyday existence, the dead life which is still the essential product of modern capitalism, in spite of all its modernizations. A small section of youth is able to refuse that society and its products, but without any idea that this society can be superceded. They opt for a nihilist present. Yet the destruction of capitalism is once again a real issue, an event in history, a process which has already begun...At the most primitive level, the 'delinquents' of the work use violence to express their rejection of society and its sterile options. But their refusal is an abstract one: it gives them no chance of actually escaping the contradictions of the system. They are its products - negative, spontaneous, but nonetheless exploitable. All the experiments of the new social order produce them: they are the first side-effects of the new urbanism; of the disintegration of all values; of the extension of an increasingly boring consumer leisure; of the growing control of every aspect of everyday life by the psycho-humanist police force; and of the economic survival of a family unit which has lost all significance...The 'young thug' despises work but accepts the goods. He wants what the spectacle offers him - but now, with no down-payment. This is the essential contradiction of the delinquent's existence. He may try for a real freedom in the use of his time, in an individual assertiveness, even in the construction of a kind of community. But the contradiction remains, and kills..In the end the contradiction proves unbearable. Either the lure of the product world proves too strong, and the hooligan decides to do his honest day's work: to this end a whole sector of production is devoted specifically to his recuperation. Clothes, discs, guitars, scooters, transistors, purple hearts beckon him to the land of the consumer. Or else he is forced to attack the laws of the market itself - either in the



primary sense by stealing, or by a move towards a conscious revolutionary critique of commodity society. For the delinquent only two futures are possible: revolutionary consciousness, or blind obedience on the shop floor (The Poverty of Student Life, Knabb, 1981).

It was a powerful critique. But it had weaknesses. Despite the understanding of time as production there is the sense that the working class is produced by capital rather than the working class producing itself within capital. That is to say there is a preoccupation with consumption: with labour consuming itself as labour power, and therefore a tendency to associate the contradiction of capital as some form of dissatisfied consumption. There is then an essential passivity implied for the working class which creates the room for elitist theorists of revolutionary consciousness to detach theory from practice and therefore the space for their own glorification. The SI, to their credit, were aware of this problem and struggled with it. In Britain it was a very different matter.

#### **training state: msc**

The training state responded to this crisis in a manner appropriate to its form. However, as with previous training legislation, the state was unable to reconcile the underlying contradiction of the capitalist mode of production (between use value and value) on which its own existence as the training state was also based. The modernisation process, of which the Industrial Training Boards were an expression, redefined the notion of skill to such an extent that through the introduction of increasing automation, in response to working class antagonism, young people were no longer required to be economically productive. In this case capital was faced not only with the increasingly intensifying problems of inflation,

but also an increasing problem of unemployment that was expressing itself as increasing disaffection in ever more dangerous forms. Young people were now creating alternative and subversive forms of existence that failed to respond to the increasingly repressive legislation and criminalising of such alternatives that the police state attempted to impose. Faced with this situation the training state adopted a consensual policy of containment that appeared in its most complete form as the Manpower Services Commission in 1974.

Utilising an already existing instrument of employment research inherited from the Heath Government, the training scientists devised an intervening institution; but no sooner had this device been created than it was overtaken by the crisis of youth unemployment which was to problematise still further the crisis of youth, and which expressed itself in the as yet most dramatic form of youth antagonism: punk. The machinations of how it began, or whether it was a rip off or whatever are important and interesting and are well documented in John Savage's Englands Dreaming(1991) and Greil Marcus's Lipstick Traces (1990). But despite there endless fascination for some journalists they are not the point. Punk could only credibly exist in the way that it did because of the material conditions within which and through which it flourished. And, through the nihilistic form through which it expressed this contradictory relation, it called into question not only the end of work-time, and of work and of time, but also life itself.

The state had to reform in a shape that was appropriate to this new crisis. In order to contain this crisis of youth it developed one of the most pervasive policy instruments ever seen in the capitalist world. And, in order to contain the crisis of youth intellectually, it took on the most

appropriate ideology to its form, which was itself the expression of the crisis - if from another angle - that is, it took up the hegemonising tendencies of the radical left. It was this recuperation of leftist recuperations that were to make training policy so acceptable to the radical training scientists who acted on behalf of 'youth' as defined in 1948 as capitalist work. The most pervasive form of this ideology came to be known as Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies(BCCCS).

### **super-culture**

Launched in 1972, self consciously within the Cultural traditions of Hoggart, the idealisms of Weber, social history, various avant-garde Marxisms for whom culture was the defining preoccupation and ethnographic methodologies: interactionism, the Birmingham School set out to problematise the notion of culture and thereby provide some insight into the everyday lives of young people. They were to construct an ideology that was to be massively influential in the perception, treatment, regulation and administration of the young.

Their analysis was deeply flawed even from within its own paradigm. For example the invisibility of women, the inability to explain conformity etc. But also, more significantly, without an understanding of the contradiction of capitalist society, these sociological analyses examine these phenomena simply in the form in which they appear: as life-style, or of experience of individual liberation or specious populism and subculturism. This type of analysis has been revealed by Negri as precisely what it is: "In positions such as these, the antagonistic specificity of the emerging proletarian subject is lost: they take an idealist view of the emergence of this wealth of productive forces - as an already existing, organic realisation and



not...as a powerful, antagonistic potential...In fact such positions tend to imply the possibility of an individual liberation struggle - the revolutionary struggle as easy and joyful, a matter of choice - which only shows their ignorance of the real dialectical dimensions of the project...and are necessarily accompanied by opportunism; and smug confidence in the continued organic growth of the mass movement as sufficient for the self development of the new historical subject, leads necessarily into reformism. Once again, as is so often in the history of Marxist thought, we find society being given precedence over the state, the sociological over the political, and the ideal over the real" (Negri, 1988: 136-8).

But my criticism is more than that. What I am suggesting is that rather than get it wrong, the BCCCS like the training scientists of the 19th and the 20th century, with their perceptions of virtual reality, provided a virtual theory through which the capitalist state could virtually contain the youthful antagonism that had plagued it since its inception, and yet whose energy it could not survive without. Through the cultural notations of the BCCCS, the real possibility of youthful life was reduced to the virtual opportunities of capitalist work.

chapter 4

**Excessive Reality - a film**

THE OPENING SHOTS ARE OF THE INSIDE OF A JOB CENTRE ..[MUSIC: 'FOREVER YOUNG' BY SFK]... THE INTERIOR IS HEAVILY STYLISED. VERY LUXURIOUS. THE PREDOMINANT COLOUR IS ORANGE. LONG BILLOWING CURTAINS AND LARGE BOLD INITIALS: JC. THE OPENING SHOT IS OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN VARIOUS FORMS OF YOUTH SUB-CULTURE STANDING AROUND IN GROUPS. SITTING ON COMFORTABLE CHAIRS GROUPED AROUND A TABLE ARE THE SOCIOLOGISTS WHO CREATED THEM. SITTING BEHIND THE TABLE IS MICHELANGELO'S DAVID, WEARING 3-D GLASSES. THE CAMERA PANS AROUND AND SLOWLY ZOOMS IN ON HIM. HE BEGINS TO SPEAK...

**DAVID:** In 1975 the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies published Resistance through Rituals [HE HOLDS UP A COPY OF THE BOOK FOR THE CAMERA]. The book was an attempt to explain the spectacular post war phenomena of 'youth culture'. To get behind the spectacular form in which it appeared. And to deconstruct the term 'youth culture' in favour of a more complex

set of categories, subsumed within the notion of sub-culture and reconstructed with relation to class and the productive relations of society [1].

**HALLETALL:** In the 1950s, 'youth' came to symbolise the most advanced point of social change: youth was employed as a metaphor for social change. The most extreme trends in a changing society by the society taking its bearings from what youth was 'up to': youth was the vanguard party - of the classless, post protestant, consumer society to come. This displacement of the tensions provoked by social change on to 'youth' was an ambiguous manoeuvre. Social change was seen as generally beneficial ('you've never had it so good'); but also as eroding the traditional landmarks and undermining the sacred order and institutions of traditional society. It was therefore, from the first, accompanied by feelings of diffused and dispersed social anxiety...This is the origin of the 'moral panic' - a spiral in which the social groups who perceive their world and position as threatened, identify a 'responsible enemy', and emerge as the vociferous guardians of traditional values: moral entrepreneurs. It is not suprising then, that youth became the focus of this social anxiety - its displaced object. In the 1950s and again the the early 60s, the most visible and identifiable youth groups were involved in dramatic events which triggered off 'moral panics', focusing in displaced form society's 'quarrel with itself'...The tightly organised sub-cultures - Teds,



**Mods etc - represented only the most visible targets of this reaction...The wave of moral panics reached new heights with the appearance of the territorial-based Skinheads, the football riots and destruction of railway property...To this was added in the mid 60s, a set of 'moral panics' of a new kind, this time focusing around middle class youth and 'permissiveness'..Here youth was cast not simply as the conscious agents of change, but as deliberately pushing society into anarchy: youth as subversive minority [2].**

**COHEN:** Moral panics will be generated and other, as yet nameless folk devils will be created. This is not because such developments have an inexorable inner logic, but because our society as presently structured will continue to generate problems for some of its members - like working class adolescents - and then condemn whatever solutions these groups find, most delinquency is numbingly the same and has never had much to do with those historical 'moments' and, conjunctures which today's students of working class youth cultures are so ingeniously trying to find [3].

**RAZERHEAD:** *an eclectic Punk in a group of eclectic punks containing distorted reflections of all the major post war subcultures. All are of dubious parentage, displaying a whole range of heterogeneous styles: glitter rock, american proto-punk, pub-rock, mods, r & b northern soul and reggae; reproducing the entire sartorial history of post war working class youth cultures in cut-up form, combining elements which had*

*originally belonged to different epochs. They provide a chaos of quiffs and leather jackets, brothel creepers and winkle pickers, plimsolls and paka macs, moddy crops and skinhead strides, drainpipes and vivid socks, bum freezers and bovver boots (PVC, lurex, plastic, mock leopard skin, make up worn to be seen, hair dyed, yellow, orange, green, zips) - all kept in place and out of time by the spectacular adhesives: safety pins and plastic clothes pegs, bondage straps and bits of string. Including Rasta styles, for example, one of the punk hair styles consists of a petrified mane held in a state of vertical extension by means of vaseline, lacquer and soap, approximated to the black natty or dreadlock style*

**[4]: [TO COHEN] *Was it you who said: 'It is better to adopt the simplest explanation, even if it is not simple, even if it does not explain very much'. [5] Could you explain that, simply? .***

**COHEN:** I do not want to suppress the considerable theoretical differences within this literature: in no way can the language and concepts of functionalism, interactionism, Marxism, structuralism, cybernetics and semiotics simply be jumbled together. But at no important point in this heterogeneous material is there much doubt about what delinquent and troublesome youth subcultures signify: a reaction (with more or less degrees of commitment, consciousness and symbolic weight) to growing up in a class society. The rest is just commentary - a little baroque and far-fetched for some tastes, but not an area for major dispute [6].

**RAZERHEAD: *Zombie youth studied by zombie sociologists***

**PW:** These individuals are currently far from walking corpses , but are actually bringing the whole system into crisis [ 7 ].

**DAVID:** But you say that the crisis is resolvable on its own terms, and that this resolution occurs partially as a result of the activity of the young people themselves. In Learning to Labour, on page 178 you say: Indeed far from helping to cause the present 'crisis' in education, the counter-school culture and the process it sponsors has helped to prevent a real crisis.

**PW:** You have missed the point of my insight into their insight, or 'penetration', as I call it. Their insight into their exploitation is constrained by certain limitations, e.g . masculine inspired attitudes to work, rascism, sexism, so that rather than leading to liberation these penetrations actually work against young people and through their willingness to perform various work which they regard as macho they become the more willing servants of capital. That is to say, and this is an astonishing thing, that there is a moment - and it only needs to be this for the gates to shut on the future - in working class culture when the manual giving of labour power (represents both a freedom, election and transcendence, and a precise insertion into a system of exploitation and oppression for working class people. The former promises the future, the latter shows the present. It is the future in the present which hammers freedom to inequality in the reality of contemporary capitalism [ 8 ].

**THE YOUNG MARX: Communism is the act of positing as the negation of the negation, and is therefore a real phase,**



necessary for the next period of historical development, in the emancipation and recovery of mankind. Communism is the necessary form and dynamic principle of the immediate future, but communism is not as such the goal of human development - the form of human society [9].

**JOEY:** *Even communists laff* [10].

**RAZERHEAD [to PW]:** *These are your fantasies, not ours. The penetrations you afford us are limited by the weakness of your own insights and by the theoretical inadequacy of your own critique. You afford us penetrations but make us impotent at the same time. If you do not understand that capital is contradictory and limited how will we? For example, you completely misread Marx's discovery of the dual nature of labour. [THE YOUNG MARX NODS HIS HEAD IN AGREEMENT] There is no space between concrete and abstract labour, therefore you are wrong to say that 'The whole thrust of modern techniques of organisation and method such as time and motion study is, in one important sense, to narrow the gap between concrete and abstract labour'; nor that abstract labour means 'the one best way of doing things'; nor can concrete labour be removed*

*entirely from the process. I may become machine-like but I can never be a machine. I am constrained not by my own mental capacities as you would have it but by my position within the social relations of capitalism.*

**PW:** Without this clinching inversion of the ideological order at its lowest reach in relation to the giving of labour power the system could not be stable. No amount of conditioning in state agencies could provide a fully human identity for those at the bottom of the class structure: coercion or permanent struggle, not free consent in submission, would be the basis of the social order [11].

**DAVID:** It isn't...The system, as you call it, is not stable...nor can we be so dogmatic about the certainty of what we mean by identity. I suggest that what you refer to as a 'fully human identity' is no more than your own rather elaborate sexual fantasy.

**DIASPORA:** *a rasta. He is wearing a roughly woven tam, cotton, wool and denim, army surplus in the style of 'sinister guerrilla chic'. His hair an ethnic afro frizz explosion, plaited into knots or locks notty or knotty style [12]. He looks 'happy go lucky' and lazy, hedonistic and dangerous:What's the difference between all this and Talcot Parsons?*

**PARSONS:** I was looking at American college kids who were not conforming. But the Birmingham Centre are looking at not conforming based on a model of conflict. It was an ambitious project but it was limited from the outset by the

fact that as somebody said 'While youth are the metaphor for social change they are still less important than what most young people do most of the time'. The Birmingham Centre's problem is that they cannot handle conformity, except as a model of conflict: hence sub-culture. But it's not conformity and it's not real conflict.

**PANIC** :a teenager. She is standing in a juke box slouch, expressing a bottomless chasm of vacuity. Her huge face is bloated with cheap confectionary and smeared with chain store make-up, her mouth is sagging open and her eyes are glazed, her hand is mindlessly drumming in time to the music. She is wearing, the shoddy stereotyped, 'with it' clothes with broken stiletto heels [13]: *But more than that the sub-culturists attempted to situate us within relations of production. Like Marx said: 'As individuals express their life, so they are. What they are, therefore, coincides with their production, both with what they produce and with how they produce'. [ THE YOUNG MARX LOOKS WORRIED ]*

**HALLETAL**: Quite, in modern societies the most fundamental groups are the social classes, and the major cultural configurations will be, in a fundamental though often mediated way, class cultures. Relative to these cultural class configurations, sub-cultures are sub-sets: smaller, more localised and differentiated structures, within one or other of the larger cultural networks. We must, first, see sub-cultures in terms of their relation to the wider class cultural networks of



which they form a distinctive part... The dominant culture of a complex society is never a homogeneous structure. It is layered, reflecting different interests within the dominant class... Subordinate cultures will not always be in open conflict with it. However, it is crucial to replace the notion of culture with the more concrete historical concept of 'cultures'; a redefinition which brings out more clearly the fact that cultures always stand in relations of domination - and subordination - to one another, are always, in some sense, in struggle with one another. The singular term, 'culture' can only indicate, in the most general and abstract way, the large cultural configurations at play in a society at any historical moment. We must move at once to the determining relationships of domination and subordination in which these configurations stand; to the processes of incorporation and resistance which define the cultural dialectic between them and to the institutions which transmit and reproduce 'the culture' in its dominant and hegemonic form [14].

DAVID: What has this got to do with production?

HALLETAL: The wider economic forces throw out of gear a particular working class complex: they dismantle a set of particular internal balances and stabilities. They reshape and restructure the productive basis, which forms the material and social conditions of life, the 'givens' around which a particular local working class

culture was developed...These productive relations also form the basis of the everyday life and culture of the working class. Changes in housing and in the ecology of the working class neighbourhood are part of the same pattern; and the different facets of change react on and reverberate through each other [15].

DAVID: So the dynamic of change is not class, but reactions to these structural reverberations. What is class for you?

HALLETAL: Class broadly structures the young individual's life chances. It determines, in terms of the statistics of class probability, the distribution of 'achievement' and 'failure'. It establishes certain crucial orientations towards careers in education and work - it produces the notoriously 'realistic' expectations of working-class kids about future opportunities. It teaches ways of relating to and negotiating with authority [16].

SPANKER: *a lad. He has longish well-groomed hair, platform type shoes, wide collared shirt turned over waisted coat or denim jerkin, flared trousers. He is smoking and drinking a tin of beer. He is a bit drunk [17]. Yes, its back to Structural*

*Functionalism.*

DAVID: The notion of sub-culture itself is structural and functionalist. The function for sub-cultures is to try to

resolve the post-war problems of youth: unemployment, educational disadvantage, compulsory miseducation, parents, dead-end jobs, low pay, loss of skills. Although the level at which this resolution is attempted: 'the ideological', you [HALLETAL] suggest that they are fated to fail.

**HALLETAL:** They solve, but in an imaginary way, problems which at the concrete material level remain unresolved. Thus the 'Teddy Boy' expropriation of an upper class style of dress 'covers' the gap between largely manual, unskilled near lumpen real careers and life chances, and the 'all dressed up and nowhere to go' experience of Saturday evening. Thus in the expropriation and fetishism of consumption and style itself, the Mods cover the gap between the never-ending-weekend and Monday's resumption of boring dead-end work. Thus in the resurrection of an archetypal and 'symbolic' (but in fact anachronistic) form of working class dress, in the displaced focusing on the football match and the 'occupation' of the football ends, Skinheads reassert, but imaginarily, the values of a class, the essence of a style, a kind of fan-ship, to which few working class adults any longer subscribe [18].

**ALTHUSSER:** In ideology, men do indeed express not the real relation between them and their conditions of existence, but the way they live the relation between them and the



conditions of their existence; this presupposes both a real and an 'imaginary', 'lived' relation [19].

**SCOOTER:** a mod, leaning on a scooter. He has turned what was originally an ultra respectable means of transport into a menacing symbol of group solidarity. In the same improvisatory manner, he plays with a metal comb, honed to a razor-like sharpness, turning narcissism into an offensive weapon. He has a Union jack emblazoned on the back of a grubby parka anorak that he wears over the conventional insignia of the business world - the suit, collar and tie, short hair, etc - which he has stripped of their original connotations - efficiency, ambition, compliance with authority - transforming them into 'empty' fetishes, objects to be desired, fondled and valued in their own right [20]: *But it's not our imagination that is the problem.*

*I am a figment of your imagination. You have imposed a cultural meaning on my life by fetishising the world of commodity fetishism in which I produce, consume and define myself. Youth culture is a kind of separation. It is an abstract theory. I am condemned forever as a cultural object: a sub-culture unable to express my subjectivity. As a 'youth' I am separated from my sense of my self, from my youngness. I exist only as an appendage to a sociological discourse that has no logic other than its own structural and functionalist dynamic. That is, not the logic of life but the logic of the*

*machine.*

**UTOPIA** :a skinhead. His style and culture, of boots, cropped hair and braces, express an exaggerated machismo and intense territoriality. He is also aggressively proletarian, puritanical and chauvinist...a 'kind of caricature of the model worker', a 'lumpen' identity; cropped hair, braces, short wide Levi jeans or functional sta-prest trousers, plain or stripped button-down Ben Sherman shirts, and highly polished Doctor Marten boots. His whole skinhead ensemble represents a metastatement about the whole process of social mobility produced by the systematic exaggeration of those elements within the mod style which were self-evidently proletarian, and a complementary suppression of any imagined bourgeois influences (suits, ties, laquer, 'prettiness') [21]: *All culture is training to be a machine. In a training state no training is required* [22].

THE CAMERA PULLS OUT OF THE INTERIOR OF THE JC TO AN EXTERNAL SHOT. DAVID IS NOW OUTSIDE PRESENTING TO CAMERA. HE IS WEARING AN OVERCOAT, TRILBY AND DARK GLASSES.

**DAVID:** Job Centres were introduced in the early 1970s in an attempt by the DoE to 'modernise' the dole queue image of the Employment Exchange by administratively and physically separating employment and unemployment benefit work. In the

years to come the JCs with their fitted carpets and self-service boards were to become a feature of the High Street along with the Post Office and Banks, familiar to the public, accessible to job-hunters and a central feature of our urban areas.

[PULL OUT OF THE CLOSE UP SHOT ON DAVID TO REVEAL A FULL SHOT OF THE STREET. THE CAMERA CONCENTRATES ON A FIGURE WALKING UP THE STREET IN THE DIRECTION OF THE JC. AS THE CAMERA FOCUSES ON THE MAN THE SOUND PICKS UP HIS VOICE]

LR: My name is Lawrie Robinson. It was my job to design the JCs. I had to match the bricks and mortar with the philosophy of what we were trying to achieve.

Today I suppose the two most emotive words in constant use by the media are 'dole queue'. I wonder what images these words conjure up in your minds? If you are of my generation you may remember the depressed 30's with pathetic, sullen, groups of muffled unshaven men huddled listlessly at street corners, whilst waiting to 'sign on'.

[SHOTS OF IMAGES OF SUITABLE 'PATHETIC, SULLEN GROUPS' IN A 'DOLE QUEUE' OUTSIDE AN EMPLOYMENT EXCHANGE]

If you are somewhat younger you may think of the hippies of the 1960s who were alleged to prefer the feather bedding of welfare state social security to gainful employment [SHOTS OF HIPPIES HAVING A GOOD TIME].



If you are the parents of recent school-leavers you may already have faced the reality and disillusionment of 'no suitable vacancy situation' [SHOTS OF PARENTS WITH KIDS OUTSIDE FACTORIES WITH 'NO JOBS' BOARDS LOOKING DEPRESSED].

The words 'dole queue' have always haunted and handicapped the public employment service. The government decided in 1971, following studies carried out in the late 60s, that revolutionary changes were needed in the public employment service. The first was the complete physical and administrative separation of employment and unemployment benefit functions. The second was to rehouse employment offices in modern, well-sited premises, and in a style which would demonstrate that the service within was itself being transformed. In 1971 I was required to initiate and produce a specification for a new style employment office, soon to be known as a JobCentre.

My brief was that the office must be non-governmental, non-institutional; it should not be tucked away in back streets, like the old red brick 'Works Georgian Exchanges' with vast flagged-floor benefit halls and glazed tiled walls reminiscent of public conveniences [SHOT OF AN OLD EMPLOYMENT EXCHANGE AND A PUBLIC CONVENIENCE - INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL - THEN CUT TO THE INSIDE OF A COMPLETED JOBCENTRE. THE STATUE OF DAVID IS GLIMPSED TUCKED AWAY IN AN ALCOVE], but should be prominently sited in town centres and should not have counters or cubicles.

With the help of the Office Design Group of PSA a Design Guide

was produced [CUT TO SHOT OF DESIGNERS DESIGNING] which, for the first time, applied landscaping techniques to public offices, using close carpeting, acoustic treatment and commercial style furniture. A distinctive external appearance was developed by COI and ESA Marketing specialists using the latest shopfitting techniques, including illuminated fascias and window display units, flag signs, house colour and modern logo types. Nowhere in the corporate design images was it suggested that this was a government agency. This radical rehousing has certainly been unsurpassed anywhere else in the public sector.

[CUT AWAY TO FOCUS ON ANOTHER MAN IN THE STREET: ROGER HARDMAN FROM THE 'ESTATE TIMES']

RH : The MSC is well on the way to becoming one of the largest retail chains in the country [CUT IN IMAGES OF RETAIL CHAINS FROM THE STREET WITH EXTERIOR SHOTS OF THE JC. AND THEN CUT BACK TO LR]

LR: Such an achievement, however, is not realised without problems to be overcome. At the outset, because of our 'dole queue' image, developers and lessors were highly suspicious of the impact we may have in existing retail areas, and we had to persuade them that our clientele did not consist of drop-outs, but were keen jobseekers. [CUT IN IMAGES OF THE DESIGNERS PERSUADING CLIENTS AT MEETINGS AND VISUAL PRESENTATIONS] This marketing approach was given priority...supported by brochures and audiovisual aids to show how JobCentres could provide a

compatible community service in a retail area. Although an easily recognisable corporate image was a primary design aim, from the outset we accepted the need to comply with the special environmental requirements of conservation areas.

The principal aim of the Employment Service is to help people choose, train for and obtain the right jobs, and to help employers recruit the right people as quickly as possible. More generally the new style employment service sought to improve labour market intelligence, not only by matching people and jobs, but also by providing and disseminating information about jobs and careers. The Employment Service sought to help all jobseekers unemployed and employed because in any year there are between 8/10 million new jobs engagements and it wanted to fill those vacancies quickly. Why? [CUT TO GRAPHS AND CHARTS] It has been estimated that if the Service could reduce by one day on average the time taken by an unemployed jobseeker to find a new job it would increase the number of man-days worked by more than 3 million a year and save over £2m in Social Security benefits.

To ensure that all jobseekers are aware of this new service, and of the ESDs ability to fill a larger share of employers' vacancies, the Jobcentre needed to be in the public eye and, as all the marketing experts know, the most effective and economical form of continuous advertising is an easily recognisable corporate identity on a good site...using self-selection, self-service methods which have proved so successful in the retail trade by putting all current vacancies



on open display - giving a quick, informal service in a shop unit with easy public access at street level...[And] through individual employment advice, by specialist employment advisers trained in interviewing and marketing skills, to assist both job seekers and employers.

[CUT TO SHOT OF LIVELY BUSY AND EFFICIENT OFFICE]

Experience of self service has far exceeded our expectations and in certain large JobCentres no less than 8 receptionists are needed to deal with peak traffic, and traffic flows throughout the week have dispelled any idea that our offices would be a 'dead-end' in a predominantly retail area.

My brief was to produce a non-governmental, non-institutional-style office promoting a more commercial image, using modern open plan techniques, carpetings and furnishings. Concurrent with the JobCentre programme there was an increased requirement in social security offices to provide greater safety for staff including totally enclosed counters, fixed chairs in interviewing cubicles, and shatter proof glass in protective screens.

[CUT TO THE INSIDES OF A BENEFIT OFFICE AND CONTRAST THE OPPRESSIVE ATMOSPHERE WITH THE PREVIOUS IMAGE OF THE JC]

Despite pessimistic forecasts from some quarters, ESD's experience has been that the public greatly appreciated and respected the improved facilities.

Whereas 'New Look' attempts to improve public offices in the past were merely cosmetic, the JobCentre concept was a revolutionary return to fundamentals, to the Beveridge idea of a market-place in employment [CUT TO SHOT OF BEVERIDGE EXPLAINING HIS FUNDAMENTALS], but using the most modern retailing and communication techniques [23].

[CUT BACK TO DAVID NOW BACK INSIDE THE STYLISED JC]

**David:** By 1977-78 the total number of JobCentres in the network was 434. The majority of the new JobCentres replaced existing Employment Offices, although the programme also sought to extend the service to new locations and to improve the accessibility of MSC services in the major conurbations. In May 1978 the results of a major evaluation of JobCentres were published. The evaluations showed that the Employment Service filled jobs more quickly than other formal recruitment methods and provided greater help to the jobless than other market mechanisms, and that JobCentres performed better and were more cost effective than other types of employment service offered.

The JobCentres' programme was found to have improved the Employment Service in two ways. JobCentres attracted and fill more vacancies than the old style offices they replaced and they filled them more quickly. A survey in 1978 showed that unemployed people were helped into work by JobCentres on average 2.4 days sooner than the old style Employment Offices. This represented a considerable advantage to the unemployed, to employers in reducing the loss of output from unfilled

vacancies, and to the Exchequer in terms of unemployment benefit savings, payments of income tax, and national insurance contributions that would otherwise have been foregone. It was estimated that the aggregate effect of this higher speed of vacancy filling had been to reduce the stock of unemployment at any one time by some 1,000 and that a saving in the order of £40m a year on the Public Sector Borrowing Requirement could be offset against the cost of the programme. But all was not sweetness and light...

[CUT TO AN INTERVIEW WITH AN EMPLOYEE, X, OF A JC. SHE IS SHOWN ANONIMOUSLY, IN SHADOW, SO AS NOT TO REVEAL HER IDENTITY]

X: The official position of the ESA is that it has an equal responsibility to both its groups of clients: employers and job-seekers. However, as placements can only be made if vacancies are secured, and partly because JobCentre managers often meet only employers, their deepest commitment very often belongs to the needs of that group.

Pressure is put on JobCentres to get high placement rates. This means JobCentres compete with one another, and internally between offices. This internal competition is often implicitly encouraged, rather like the rivalry between houses at a public school. Competitive pressure is increased by the setting of unofficial targets from the upper echelons of management, which is frowned on by the unions. These targets are often met by unorthodox practices. For example, job offers are recorded as



job take-ups, never mind that the employee refused it or left after one day; or claiming a placement that had nothing to do with the intervention of the JobCentre. And difficult clients are banded out of circulation: One large office uses 'bands' to identify its unofficial category of 'unemployables'. The bands here are the coloured tapes which are used to tie clients' records together. A red band is used to identify all those who, in the opinion of JobCentre personnel, are not worth submitting for jobs.

The ultimate weapon to be used against clients who are difficult to place - or even sometimes those who simply antagonise officers - is the formal 'work shy' process. Clients can be sent for vacancies which officers know they won't be able, or will not want, to accept. On their refusal, they can be referred to the DHSS for prosecution. This kind of manipulation is frowned on, but some officers still do it [24].

**David:** The Government's own research backs up some of these problems: [HOLD UP PAGE OF DEPARTMENT OF EMPLOYMENT GAZETTE JULY 78: EVALUATION REPORT]

Although the new-style offices were seen by some as evidence of a fresh initiative by government to help the unemployed with a genuine attempt at new thinking. The government was perceived as only looking after people and industries who had difficulty in looking after themselves. There was a suspicion among people looking for work that JobCentres handled low grade and low paid jobs and the employers used them for cheap labour. Consequently

the overall view to emerge was that JobCentres were seen as a real advance on employment offices, but that judgement was suspended on their role within the engagement market as a whole, and in particular about the range and quality of vacancies which they handle.

And [CUT TO PICTURES OF PSYCHOLOGISTS WORKING ON A SURVEY OF STAFF ATTITUDES] from a government report on Staff Attitudes from Psychological Services published in October 1975, staff in JobCentres were, on the whole less satisfied than staff in employment offices. However, this dissatisfaction did not arise from their interaction with jobseekers. JobCentre staff felt that they are doing a 'respected job'. The implication is that the sources of the relative dissatisfaction of JobCentre staff lies in the internal structure of the organisation. The JobCentre programme had entailed fundamental organisational change on a large scale; it was perhaps inevitable that it should produce additional stresses on those staff most affected by the changes...The report said: 'Nevertheless there is a clear necessity to mitigate the effects of these stresses by bringing them out into the open. Both management and staff need to recognise that their differing roles in the organisation lead to differing points of view; neither is right nor wrong.

The device they suggest to tackle this problem was training: 'Clearly staff training can contribute to this process and the introduction of regular staff/management meetings should help. The gulf that exists between the priorities 'as they are' and as staff feel they 'should be' points the way towards giving staff

a greater participation in working out the implications of change in determining priorities.

[CUT BACK TO SHADOW INTERVIEWEE]

X: Although we are now providing a better service to jobseekers, job satisfaction is diminishing. Changes in the Employment Service can only be seen as an improvement, but if staff attitudes change because of lack of satisfaction then the service may well suffer as a result.

David: By 1979-80 there were signs of a cutback. During that year, planned expenditure in the programme was reduced by £1mill to £5.4 mill as a contribution towards the Governments cuts in public spending, and only 90 new JobCentres were opened compared with 121 openings in 1978/79. The total number of JobCentres in operation at the end of March 1980 was 645 and the majority of these replaced existing Employment Offices, using the same premises in 140 cases. The difficulty of finding suitable sites in certain locations, together with the need for economy meant that in some cases existing office premises were adapted for use as JobCentres which, hitherto, would not have been considered suitable for this purpose.

By 1980-81 the JobCentre programme did not even feature as a specific item in the MSC Annual Report. In fact, the JobCentres were now targeted for deep cuts. Developments in the Public Employment Service in the past year had been strongly influenced by increased demands for its services as a



consequence of rising unemployment and by substantial cuts in staffing and expenditure. The Commission reduced its total staff by 1,643 during the year and the number of Employment Service staff fell by 1,404. In allocating the required cuts the Commission took the view that it should protect front-line services to the public as far as possible, by making cuts in support services and in those specialist services which cater for a minority of clients. Nevertheless some 370 posts were cut in JobCentres and Employment Offices and there was some reduction in the ability of the Employment Service to help jobseekers in an increasingly difficult labour market.

The number of vacancies notified was markedly lower than the previous year reflecting the depressed state of the labour market. The number of placings also fell. To counter these developments, JobCentres had increased their efforts to obtain vacancies, primarily through direct telephone canvassing [CUT TO PICTURES OF JOBCENTRE STAFF ON THE PHONE].

One of the placing services principal activities had been helping to overcome problems of mismatch where these involved skill shortages which constrain production [CUT TO PICTURES OF SKILLED PRODUCTION]. However, the economic situation by 1980-81 meant that skill shortages became very much less acute and the need for action in this field was considerably reduced.

To cope with higher unemployment and fewer staff resources JobCentres relied increasingly in 1980-81 on asking jobseekers to record their own personal details on self-registration forms.

This freed staff for more pressing work, although it inevitably involved some reduction in personal interviewing by staff.

However by 1981, following remarks made by Jim Prior, the Minister for Employment in the House of Commons, it was obvious that the Government was contemplating a greatly reduced role for the JobCentre.

[CUT TO SHOT OF JIM PRIOR SPEAKING IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS]

JP: I think that JobCentres have a part to play in improving the uptake of jobs, but I think that the organisation has been a bit too extravagant in recent years, and we shall be looking at that problem. I am deeply dissatisfied with the amount of money we are spending as a nation - not just the government - on training, and yet we have more vacancies for skilled people at a time of recession than ever before. Something is not right with our training exercise. A review is needed and is taking place. In due course we shall present proposals to the House [25].

[CUT TO SHOT OF DAVID OUTSIDE AN EMPTY OFFICE BUILDING IN PICCADILLY]

David: The heyday of the JobCentre as a central part of the State's strategy was over. An obvious example of this was seen in the closing down of its most prestigious sites. The public expenditure axe, wielded with such gusto by Tory ministers, robbed the MSC of its favourite JobCentre at 215 Piccadilly. Its opening in January 1977 was meant to set the seal on the campaign to transform the tawdry image of the old down-town

employment exchanges. The cost of the lease on the very undrabb building in Piccadilly was so high no one would admit what it was. It is now up for renewal, and the MSC will say only that a substantial increase in the rent is being demanded - 'enough for it not to be cost effective'. Until cheaper premises can be found, those out of work in the heart of the capital must choose between the JobCentre in Soho and the other by St Paul's Cathedral [26].

But it was now more than a question of cost. There were those who felt that the JobCentre programme actually caused unemployment [CUT TO TALKING HEAD IN AN OFFICE WITH BOOKS AND COMPUTER SCREEN IN SHOT].

**Layard:** Unemployed workers have become more choosy about taking such jobs as are available...The long-term unemployed have become demoralised and do less job search than those who have recently lost their jobs. They have also lost skills and become unattractive to employers.

Unemployment is affected by how hard people are expected to look for work, and what kind of work they can be expected to take. In addition, long term unemployment would be much less if, as Beveridge proposed, normal benefits had a limited duration [CUT TO BEVERIDGE ARGUING THE IMPORTANCE OF LIMITED DURATION].

Until 1973, benefit was paid out in the same office where people were found jobs (i.e. the employment exchange). The two operations were seen as part of the same process - to maintain a



person's living standard while trying to get back to work. Between 1973-77 these functions were split, with separate JobCentres (for job placement) and benefit offices (for paying benefit). The payout of benefit became more automatic, with less effort made to find a job for those who had been receiving benefit for too long. Until 1982 benefit recipients had to register at JobCentres, but even then this requirement was abolished. At about the same time signing on at the benefit office was changed from once a week to once a fortnight. The erosion of the work test has gone away....There is clear evidence that the long-term unemployed are less actively searching for work than those who lost their job more recently [27].

**DAVID:** [STANDING NEXT TO A CARDBOARD CUT-OUT OF RAYNOR IN PICCADILLY] Much of this problem was put at the door of The Raynor Report (1981) which had suggested these changes in the service provision. In 1980 a team of officials (from the Department of Employment and the Department of Health and Social Security), working in consultation with Sir Derek Rayner, reviewed the system of paying benefits to unemployed people as part of the Government's policy of reducing wastage and increasing efficiency in the Civil Service. The report was published on March 20, 1981 and it contained a number of recommendations affecting the employment service, including making registration at JobCentres voluntary for unemployed people claiming benefits.

But, for others, the significance of Rayner was more sinister

[CUT TO ANOTHER FIGURE IN STREET - WWDaniel. HE IS STANDING NEXT TO DAVID]

**WWDaniel:** The Rayner scrutiny raises profound questions about the way that government decisions are taken, and, indeed, about the quality of the information and analysis on which they are based. For example, the report quotes our recent Policy Studies Institute study on Unemployment and Racial Minority Groups as finding 'that 30% of unemployed white men and 21% of ethnic minority unemployed men did not intend to work. In fact, our study found that only 10% of white men, and 8% of their black counterparts had given up work or not started looking for work. The report inflates these figures. This treatment of the findings is either a cynical distortion, designed to exaggerate how many of the unemployed are not looking for work; or else the investigators were so keen to give a particular impression that they allowed themselves to be misled. In fact it has long been recognised that a minority of the registered unemployed are effectively inactive- it is generally around 10%. They are chiefly people who have become reconciled to being out of work as a consequence of their very poor chances of finding a job. They are often old, and often unskilled and in poor health. They are one of the most wretched groups in our society. To exaggerate their number and imply that they are 'work-shy' betrays a lack of respect for the facts, and a poverty of imaginative sympathy that is frightening.

**DAVID:** The report recommended that the statutory requirement of registration at JobCentres should be dropped and become voluntary. This would have meant that only half the unemployed would register and, as a result, 2000 fewer staff would be required in JobCentres. While at the same time more staff and procedures should be introduced into unemployment benefit offices and supplementary offices to combat fraud and malingering.

**WWDaniel:** We reckon that only a quarter would not register and they would include many who need the service most. The vulnerable would be punished. And the ideas of extra officials then being appointed to check on their availability for work, at a time of record and rising unemployment, would be a scandalous waste of public money, as well as adding insult to the very considerable injury they already experience. The alternative policy advocated by the report is that the hard to employ should be dealt with by officers within the benefit system, by enlarged anti-fraud squads and increased numbers of review officers. These would be officers whose primary aim was to police the benefit system, rather than to help the deprived [28].

[AS WWD WAS SPEAKING THE CAMERA PANS AWAY FROM DAVID TO THE END OF THE QUEUE THAT IS LOCKED OUT OF THE NOW EMPTY AND DESERTED JC. THE CAMERA FOLLOWS THE QUEUE TO THE DOOR OF THE JC. LEAVING THE QUEUE BEHIND IT MOVES INSIDE. INSIDE THE EMPTY JC, THE SHOT IS AS AT THE OPENING OF THE FILM EXCEPT THAT NOW ALL IS RUN



DOWN. THERE IS A GENERAL AIR OF NEGLECT. THE ORANGE BILLOWING CURTAINS ARE ALL THAT IS LEFT, THEY ARE TORN. THE C OF JC IS HANGING FROM THE WALL. ALL THE OTHER COLOURS ARE WASHED OUT. THERE ARE ONLY TWO PEOPLE LEFT IN THE ROOM: DIASPORA, SITTING BEHIND THE DESK, AND DH IN A HARD BACKED CHAIR IN FRONT OF HIM]

**DIASPORA:** *You created me, as youth style, but I don't recognise myself.*

**DH:** We should be foolish to think that by tackling a subject so manifestly popular as youth style, we have resolved any of the contradictions which underlie contemporary studies. Such a resolution would be, as Cohen puts it, purely 'magical'. It is highly unlikely, for instance, that the members of any of the subcultures described in this book would recognise themselves here. They are still less likely to welcome any efforts on our part to understand them.

**DIASPORA:** *I don't recognise and I can't understand myself.*

**DH:** After all, we, the sociologists and interested straights, threaten to *kill* with kindness the forms which we seek to elucidate. When the first impulse of Fanon's black man is to say no to all who attempt to build a definition of him we should hardly be surprised to find our 'sympathetic' readings of subordinate

culture are regarded by the members of a subculture with just as much indifference and contempt as the hostile labels imposed by the courts and the press. In this respect to get the point is to miss the point .

**DIASPORA:** *So what is the point Dick? Is it to reify yourself as 'the sociologist' ? Your inability to understand leads you to transfer your uncertainty onto young people. Your study of sub-culture is an expression of your own existential angst.*

**DH:** We must live an uneasy cerebral relation to the bric-a-brac of life - the mundane rituals whose function it is to make us feel at home, to reassure us, to fill up the gap between desire and fulfilment. Instead they summon up for us the very fears which they alleviate for others. Their arbitrary nature stands revealed: the apparent can no longer be taken for granted. The cord has been cut: we are cast in a marginal role .

**DIASPORA:** *But the margins are at the centre.*

**DH:** We are in society but not outside it, producing analyses of popular culture which are in themselves anything but popular. We are condemned to, as Barthes would say, a 'theoretical sociality'...[so that]...the study of cultural style which seemed at the outset to draw us back towards the real world, to reunite us with 'the people', ends up merely confirming the distance between the reader and the 'text', between everyday life and the 'mythologist' whom it surrounds, fascinates

and finally excludes. It would seem that we are still, like Barthes [says],  
'condemned for some time yet to speak excessively about reality' [29].

[THE CAMERA PULLS OUT OF THE JC AND INTO THE STREET. CUT TO  
DAVID IN THE STREET. THERE IS A RIOT GOING ON...]

**DAVID:** No one knew what started it off...The simmering  
undercurrent of tension long known in this stronghold of the  
black community was illustrated by an impassioned unsigned plea  
placarded on a lamp-post: 'We want dignity, we want work'  
[30].

The tension on the Front-line finally snapped at the week-end  
but nobody was prepared for the ferocity of the scenes that  
followed. The city was turned into a battleground which gave a  
graphic object lesson when race hatred, unemployment, poor  
housing, police brutality - and just plain frustration became  
unbearable. The police will say the trouble started at 5 pm on  
Saturday. The black community knows that it has been brewing  
for years [31].

There was a worrying sign on Friday evening, when a mob of black  
youths attacked two policemen who they thought were trying to  
arrest a stabbed blackman. The police say they were trying to  
get the man to hospital and there was a tragic misunderstanding  
of motive. But throughout the night black youths talked about  
the event and anger mounted. About 5pm on Saturday a group of  
black youths and some white started jeering and insulting police



formations in *Pacific Road, Warmharbour Lane and Trackton Road*. What happened then is unclear. The police say the youths attacked them with petrol bombs, eye witnesses say the police charged the youths, the police retreated, cars and vans were overturned, buildings were set alight and the fire brigade were attacked. A fire officer from East Norwood was detained in hospital overnight with badly bruised ribs. But for some the violence and disorder represented a kind of freedom. Reggae music blarred from some windows above the wail of police, fire and ambulance sirens, shedding an incongruous if not grotesque light on how bitterness leads to callousness. And no-go areas emerged, although the police deny it.

The feeling of war was increased after an electricity sub-station near a burning building was knocked out. Street lights and traffic lights stopped working and the police station at one time under siege had to use emergency generators for electricity. The looting continued. The police tried to contain it, with no time to make arrests [32].

**PC:** 'It was like war' [33].

**DAVID:** Make no mistake, this place is at war. Not since the blitz has the city seen such devastation. Scenes of looting were repeated in street after street as the flames and violence reached their height in the riot-torn city. Mothers and young children stuffed bags full of clothes. And strolling couples joined gangs of jubilant teenagers in stripping shops and stores

around the *Pacific Road* [34].

**PC:** They've got the taste of blood and there's not a damn thing we can do about it. It was the sort of thing you see on the telly. There were about 200 of them. More whites than blacks, and they just hurled everything at us. To think this is England....I got hit by a chunk of coping stone and I don't remember anything after that [35].

**DAVID:** More than seventy policemen were injured as mobs of rampaging youth - black and white - hurled petrol bombs, bricks and iron bars at them...A large part of the city was under mob rule throughout Saturday night and well into yesterday. Cars were overturned and set alight to form barricades, shops were looted, houses were stoned...

Fighting had flared briefly on Friday night when a black youth on a motor-cycle was stopped by a police patrol, several police cars were stoned but the trouble died down early on Saturday morning. Then shortly after 10pm on Saturday a mob of youths started stoning cars and a police van in *Democracy Street*. They set fire to derelict buildings and built barricades. At midnight a large detachment of police with riot shields formed a cordon across the street. But their presence seemed to inflame the situation as the mob grew - hurling stones and petrol bombs at the police lines as they advanced towards them. Several police ran from the lines with their uniforms on fire. People in the area said it was police harrassment that sparked off the rioting' [36].

**CHIEF CONSTABLE:** What some people call harrassment the police regard as their basic duty - to keep law and order [37].

**Eye:** It was seige city. Police were lined up all along the road. The tension was mounting all day and they just stood there. Last night there were about 20 kids on the street corners and they started jeering and shouting. Then the riots shields came out and the police began to march down the road. I ask you, 200 police to 20 kids. The children started slinging stones and that's when the trouble started [38].

**INFORMER:** There is no racist trouble in this area but the police have been the main root of the majority of the problems. The trouble is not racists and its not skinheads. It's just the police attitude' [39].

**CHIEF CONSTABLE:** This was not a race riot. It was a crowd of black hooligans intent on criminal activity [40].

**THE PRESS:** *If we are to win we must marshal now all the resources of civilisation* [41].

**Eye:** I saw teenagers, some as young as 12 - hurling a barrage of bricks, petrol bombs, iron bars and anything they could lay their hands on at one target - the police. The rioters were predominantly black or coloured, but there were more than a handful of white youngsters in the fray. And they were both



united against the police. 70 police were injured, 11 seriously and an appalled city. At first the police seemed to have the situation under control. Shoulder to shoulder they shuffled forward behind their shields, replacing their casualties, felled by stones as they went. Then the mob broke the police lines and forced a retreat. Dozens of policemen were led away with blood streaming from gashes to the head. Others were carried away semi-conscious. Some police uniforms caught fire for a few seconds before they were extinguished [42].

**EYE:** What happend was downright disgusting and totally out of order. I am married to a blackman and I don't believe this was a racial riot. Both black and white youths were involved [43].

**INFORMER:** The youngsters have taken to the streets because they have nothing to lose..no jobs..no money...no future. The facts vary but at the end of the day they all add up to the same thing. Despair [44].

**DAVID:** A survey from the Closed University showed that white unemployment in the area was 43%, and black 47%. Yesterday the JC had 12 jobs on offer for young people [45].

**EYE:** Parts of the city are nothing more than a human hell-hole. I hope they burn down our houses they would be doing us a favour [46].

**DAVID:** Punks are hitting at the system by joining the riots: 'There's got to be a change. Punks and other kids are being put

down. Another Punk, Badger, 19, said the riots were nothing to do with race 'They're to do with authority and police harrassment'. But another punk, dressed in a jagged black outfit, thought the riots were 'awful. I wouldn't take part in a riot. I don't see the point' [47].

**DAVID:** 400 rioters continued to fight a fierce hand to hand battle with the police. All roads into the area were sealed off and the police rushed in hundreds of reinforcements. Gangs of thugs, some as young as 10, set police cars alight. Terrified shoppers ran for their lives. Trouble began in *Pacific Road* when police tried to arrest two rasta youths. As the police radioed for assistance one bobby fell to the ground having been hit in the head by a flying bottle. Within seconds gangs of black youths were attacking the two officers [48].

Black and white youths are rioting and looting side by side..no longer worried about race hatred...they are too busy looting and thieving to care about the colour of the next man's skin. A Scotland Yard spokesman said: 'They are getting on very well together, racial differences have faded into the background. It may have started as a race issue but now it is mob violence' [49].

In Westhampton, even Asians and skinheads usually mortal enemies, joined forces to rampage through the city centre. In Yessingham, the Chief Constable said 'It could not be described as racial - it was pure vandalism'.

By the 13th of July trouble broke out everywhere: Breadsea, Mortarton, Walthame, Northwark, Elves, Blackingham, Fleetburn, Barnwood, Newham, Bolport, Stickton, Digbury, Richdale, Weeds, Nietby, Looton, Morchester, Crushton, Boxer, Oldcastle. Over 2000 arrests with nearly 1,000 police injured [50].

**MARGARET THATCHER:** The last 10 days have been the most worrying since I took office [51].

**DAVID:** City magistrates were told that policemen who had been on standby during the three days of rioting were too tired to give evidence. Magistrates were forced to put off cases by remanding dozens of people charged with being involved in Whittingham's orgy of violence while the officers got some rest [52].

**THE QUEEN:** I am more concerned about the riots than anything in the past decade [53]

**DAVID:** So busy was the Ambulance Service that all attempts to monitor calls and keep a tally of patients moved had to be abandoned as empty beds in the hospital began to be filled up by the evening's casualties 'It was bloody terrible, there is no other way to describe it', said the Chief Ambulance Officer [54].

People stood frozen with fear as looters stripped shop after shop. Looters - mostly white - moved down *Dodge Lane* like a



swarm of locusts. They devoured their targets, picked at random, in a savage orgy. There was no police presence in *Dodge Lane* at the time of the riot. All the locals agreed, it was not black versus white, it was young versus authority [55].

There were gangs of young girls and children sitting on walls watching the violence like something out of the French Revolution [56].

**DAVID:** In *City Farm* 300 white teenagers looted the shopping precinct. They were joined by housewives equipped with shopping baskets and trolleys, who filled them with goods strewn over the floor from the wrecked shops. Angry residents formed on the spot vigilante groups and rushed to try to clear the pillaging groups. But they came away - defeated and openly weeping: 'What are these kids doing to England' sobbed a burly father [57].

Police regained control after 7 hours of bloody battles during which they were under constant attack by mobs of rampaging youth and at one stage were forced to use CS gas to fight back the rioters [58].

**DEPUTY CHIEF CONSTABLE:** I have no knowledge of CS gas being used before on the mainland in a public order situation' [59].

**DAVID:** By 9.30 the fighting died down from exhaustion. Next day the city was cordoned off [60].

**THE NEWS:** Foreign exchange dealers were today blaming the riots

as partly responsible for a new fall in the pound on international markets. It lost almost 2.5 cents against the dollar in early dealings, dipping to 1.8575 dollars against last night's close of 1.8820 in the City [61].

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## Science Fiction

### rituals ritualised

Hall had located the resistances of youth in the material experience of working class culture. His importance was that he identified these oppositions as symbolic deconstructions of middle class values and norms that made up the dominant ideology. His weakness was that he did not problematise the notion of youth. He took it at face value, as a natural generic term rather than an abstract form derived from the social relations of post-war capitalist accumulation, and specifically designed in 1948 for that purpose. In this way he condemned youth to their youthfulness, either in the form of sub-cultural dissatisfaction or as a metaphor for social change. Even so, Hall's metaphorical symbolism gave youthful antagonisms a radical edge that had previously been denied in the sociology of youth. His appeal lay in the fact that he took the explanations for youthful resistances beyond the dysfunctions of a functional society and formulated it in terms of a political threat to a political order, i.e. as part of a political crisis.

Therefore the 1980's spawned a rash of sub-cultural and cultural studies of young people as the political crisis deepened and the 'problem of youth' refused to go away - indeed, intensified after the 1981 riots. While the new work was not uncritical of Hall's early studies or the theoretical



assumptions that underpinned it, the criticism was contained within the framework of Hall's cultural paradigm. The effect was to consolidate the position of the work as a radical alternative and to ritualise Hall's rituals as the basis for alternative policy.

The studies took a number of different but linked approaches. There were some attempts to integrate Hall's theory with a more materialist account (Cole and Skelton, 1980) and to fill in the methodological gaps in his analysis (Hollands, 1990) or to include Hall's account within a more complete framework of stratification (G Clarke, 1990 ). But no-one questioned the concept of youth, other than as a social construct based within a naturalistic vision of society, or the authority or ability of the state to initiate policy (Ben and Fairly, 1986; Rees and Atkinson, 1982). The state was the mechanism by which training as a specific concrete device, linked with the general policy for full employment, could restore the potential rationality of the 'economy', thereby restoring the position and the interests of young people. The role of the training scientists was to provide policy makers with information about young people so that training could be more rationally designed to suit their needs and capacities [Cohen P 1984, Hollands 1990], and also to convince and persuade 'radical' training scientists of the progressive nature of their enterprise. These instrumental and functional theories of the state combined with an over-reliance on the methodologies of ethnography, and a tendency towards separatism (Gilroy 1987) meant that suggestions for training policy suggested at worst a form of state capitalism (Ben and Fairley 1986) and at 'best' a liberal-humanist idealism (Finn 1987).

These 'radical' training scientists concentrated on the formal contradictions of training and training policy: the difference between what

training claimed to be and what it delivered: between rhetoric and reality, promises and fulfillment (Finn 1987, Goldstein, 1983; Stafford, 1981). But these are not real contradictions - they are purely formal and devoid of content, as are their proposed policy solutions. They tend, therefore, towards idealism. For example "training for social advance" (Finn, 1987:198), or the attempts to redesign the labour process to improve the quality of work (Tipton, 1983: 48-61), or job creation schemes (Short 1986: 40-51) or the proposed utilisation of training programmes to improve equal opportunities, including issues of anti-racism and anti-sexism (Cockburn, 1987). And real substantive social processes, e.g., class struggle, are described merely on the basis of how they appear as, e.g., "new vocationalism" (Finn, 1987; Cohen P 1984).

The real substantive contradiction at the core of training - the relationship between alienated labour and private property, between use-value and value, between capital and labour - means that any attempt to promote training can only further the separations and apartness, the individualisation and atomisation that are the living expression of the concrete materiality of the social relations of capitalism. Any attempt to preserve these social relations, which is what the 'radical' training literature attempts to do, can only ensure that society is less social and more private. Some of the more unpleasant manifestations of this privatisation express themselves in the forms of racism and sexism. Because of the way in which I am able to exist in the world, my relationship with nature is limited to owning, having and possessing, my neighbour really is a threat to me. She can take my property. She can successfully compete for jobs against me, earning enough money to reproduce herself while I 'starve'. It is not hard to see how people coming to live from elsewhere, or who appear 'different' in some way, can be turned into



scapegoats for this privatising process, as if they were the problem. They can then be used by opportunist politicians and employers to further divide and fragment, and therefore weaken opposition to the law of property by the property-less and those whose interests lie in transforming society. It is therefore ironic that radical sociologists and youth trainers should spend so much time challenging the racist and sexist nature of their trainees' behaviour, and monitoring their own meetings for racist and sexist contamination, when their own practical activity, in protecting the institution on which such privatising is materially based, ensures that it survives. While, in the meantime, the antagonistic activity of young people, e.g., 'crime', refusal of work, joy-riding etc., undermines the law of property and the social processes of apartness from which it is derived, and which it supports.

However, with its cocktail of 'feminism', racial awareness, criticism of the government and its concern for the interest of 'youth', the approach the sociologists of youth culture advocated exerted a powerful and influential impact on organisations that presented themselves as radical policy-makers acting in the interests of 'youth'. One of the most significant youth organisations of this time, and one which self-consciously followed the logic of sub-cultural analysis, was Youthaid. As they said in their commissioned literature: "The youth cultures of the 60's and 70's are seen to have been closely linked to young people's relatively high wages and therefore their roles as consumers. It has been argued that current conditions may significantly change the character of youth cultures. In particular, concern has been voiced about the development of 'dole cultures', related to attitudes to the work ethic and, more generally, the ability to 'cope' with life without employment" (Pilcher and Wilkinson, 1981:6). Youthaid's role was to intervene in these



'dole cultures' to attempt a real resolution of the 'imaginary' solutions of young people, within the terms of the crisis itself.

### **youthaid**

Established in 1978 as a research-based organisation focusing on the growing problem of youth unemployment, it was transformed under the directorship of Clare Short, into a left-wing 'radical' campaigning organisation that claimed to act on behalf of young people (Jobs for Youth Campaign: July 81). Inspired by the 'radical' literature of the time the work of Youthaid developed to include other issues: black, lesbian and gay issues, the politics of identity, housing, homelessness, the problems of young single mothers; and in response to specific anti-youth government legislation, e.g., social security. Its most recent work has concentrated on providing information about government legislation and its implications. Its policy and its politics were encapsulated, in the absence of any coherent critique, within the rationality and moralities of liberal-humanism and the concept of social justice (Youthaid Annual Report 1979).

### **critic**

Having been instrumental in the creation of the Youth Opportunities Programme, Youthaid never lost its enthusiasm for training, although it did become ever more critical of government training policy, in particular after the appointment of Norman Tebbit to the Department of Employment in 1983. But its criticisms were limited to questions of quality, availability of work at the end of programmes, issues around access and equality of opportunity. These criticisms were formulated into policy proposals for job creation schemes, initiatives that looked at more

innovative responses to unemployment and post-Youth Training Scheme provision.

Its critique was always within the limits of the debate set out by the logic of capital, the government and/or its loyal opposition, the Labour party. Although it makes great claims for its apolitical position and its political independence, its position was compromised by the umbilical nature of its relationship with the Labour Party and the fact that its publications were often sponsored by government departments. As Paul Lewis, Clare Short's successor, put it: "This independence from government is hard to maintain. But it brings with it the political freedom on which intellectual independence depends. That independence is essential if a campaigning organisation is to be effective...Of course, such freedom is not a licence to do or say whatever our fancy turns to. Our concern is with unemployed young people. And our freedom is used unequivocally and absolutely on their side. To that end we take teachers to task as effectively as we unmask the MSC. We criticise the Conservatives as willingly as we lay into Labour... Organisations like Youthaid are the government's quality control. It ignores us at its peril" (Youthaid Bulletin No. 31 March/April 1987: 12). If Youthaid did not exist then the government would have had to invent it.

Youthaid, with its radical veneer, proved to be very useful in persuading the voluntary sector to get involved with the new training initiatives. They accepted and urged others to accept the government's domineering *fait accompli*: "We believe it is important that everyone concerned with the scheme should see its flaws and not mislead young people about what is on offer. We do not believe however that it is realistic or useful to seek to oppose or boycott the scheme. It will be launched and the young unemployed

will be on it, because there is nothing better available for them...We must get away from the situation we had with YOP where the critics washed their hands of the programme, and those who were involved were its apologists. We would like to see the critics organising YTS placements and ensuring that those who want to use it to destroy all jobs for 16 year olds and to cut their wages are thwarted" (Youthaid Buletin No. 9 April 1983). And YA was used to soothe any misunderstandings that voluntary organisations might have about the motive of the business sector and to be more critical of their own programmes. That is, voluntary organisations should appreciate "the genuine concern for and willingness to help young people among private sector employers, and that there are improvements to be made to some of the voluntary sector provision" (Post YTS Provision: a review and recommendations for action 1984: 39).

#### new times

But while the sub-cultural training scientists were wrestling with the problem of youth unemployment and the restoration of full employment, the initiators of this analysis were moving ahead to theorise a new reality, defined by Hall and others congregated around the journal Marxism Today as New Times. Hall's concept of New Times reflected, but on a much grander scale, the analysis of social change that sub-cultural sociology had attempted to explain through their analysis of 'youth'. Where before 'youth' had been the metaphor for social change, it was now displaced by the metaphor New Times. Whereas before sub-cultural rituals had been youth's solution to 'youths' problems, now the new times of New Times presented the possibility for the solution to the problems of modern society.

Through the metaphorical New Times, Hall examined the dangers and



possibilities of contemporary existence and the consequence for modern life. The metaphor is an appropriate literary convention for the description of the fetishised and reified nature of capitalist society, in that it describes the world in a way other than it is. However, unlike fetishism, the reified form of real social processes, the metaphor has no connection with reality other than in the imagination of the author - the metaphoric world that she creates is a figment of her imagination.

Drawing inspiration from the work of Gramsci his project was to define a space: "a time-zone" (Hall, 1989 :123) enclosed by the concepts of post-Fordism and post-Modernism, within which a socialist hegemony could be established to compete with the dominant ideologies of the New Right that he claimed had overwhelmed the dogmatics and exclusions of the traditional Left. He attempted to create this space through a new concept of time and an inclusive cultural analysis of 'civil society' that sought a more complete account of modern subjectivity defined by the including radical abstractions of, in particular, ethnicity and feminism .

For Hall the individual subject had become more important, as collective social subjects - like that of class or nation or ethnic group - had become more segmented and 'pluralised'. Subjectivity was then more fragmented and incomplete, composed of multiple 'selves' or identities in relation to the different social worlds we inhabit. For Hall, the 'subject' was now differently placed or positioned by different discourses and practices: "New Times are both 'out there', changing our conditions of life, and 'in here', working on us. In part, it is us who are being remade" (Hall, 1989:122). The similarity of this and his sub-cultural analysis is obvious. But New Times is a more complex, more articulated, more layered and more abstract concept. The difference is the way in which he attempts to use

this metaphor as part of an oppositional project to undermine the New Right.

Through a particular sturcturation of time, based on an Althusserian model of determined levels, Hall constructs a series of time bands that specify economic, sociological, political and cultural time. It is the way in which these time bands conjunct that is the fundamental principle of New Times - of this moment or a series of moments (:history) which make up the present time. He used this temporal analysis to undermine what he has constructed as the dominant ideology of the New Right, Thatcherism. Thatcherism, he argued, was relatively autonomous from the historical process, there was a gap between Thatcherite time and the New Times time. Nevertheless, Thatcherism was an attempt to hegemonise the deeper tendencies within its process of anti-history ('regressive modernism') by harnessing and bending to its politcal project circumstances which were not of its making, which have a much longer history and trajectory, and which did not necessarily have a New Right political agenda inscribed in them. By theorising a gap between Thatcherism and New Times he provided the space to insert his own 'progressive' modernist socialistic hegemonic agenda, or as he put it "to restage the broken dialogue between socialism and modernity" (Hall, 1989:127).

Although redolent with the language of Marxism, Hall's theory of time is very different from Marx's theory of relative time that I described in the third chapter of this work. Although Marx used the language and metaphors of absolute time, he theorised time, space and motion in a way that went beyond Newtonian physics and anticipated the Einsteinian theory of relativity. Marx, following Hegel and anticipating Einstein, disrupted the

traditional laws of motion with its structural separations of energy (motion) and inertia (rest). Hall's time existed within a development of Newtonian time; quantum mechanics with its particular sub-atomic positions, motions and relativist interpretations of reality. His science fiction contains no dynamic principle other than that of 'hegemony'. Hegemony: the ideological position of training scientists, is the motivating force that drives his new universe. This universe is not expanding or exploding but is limited by its very definition to the ideology which inspired it; and as such, Hall's universe was defined by an unanswered question of a series of unanswered questions: "Could there be new times without new subjects? Could the world be transformed while its subjects stay exactly the same. Have the forces remaking the world left the subjects of the process untouched? Is change possible while we remain untransformed?" (Hall, 1989: 133).

The practical limitations of the New Times scenario have been well described elsewhere (Clarke 1990, Murray F. 1987, Pollert 1987). It is not my intention to repeat these criticisms; but, rather, to draw attention to the way in which the deficiencies in the sub-cultural analysis are repeated in solutions proposed by 'radical' training scientists. In order to do that, I intend to examine a particular training policy; but more than that, I intend to question the notion of policy and the rationalities on which policy debate is generally constructed.

### **rationality**

Training policy is not simply a detached ideological exercise as Hall suggests, but is the culmination of a process already in existence. Policy is, in fact, the formal expression of the contradiction out of which the state is derived. Policy formation cannot be, therefore, a rational



process; rather, it constitutes a key element in the continuing struggle between capital and labour, each of which constitute their own rationality, corresponding to their own subjectivities (use value and value). The rationality of labour - the rational kernel of society - is the unity of needs and capacity (:the rationality of life). The rationality of capital is the creation of surplus value which involves the imposition of absolute poverty and the creation of labour power which involves the detachment of labour from its means of subsistence which involves the separation of needs and capacities which is irrational (: the rationality of death).

In order to rationalise an irrational process of production and reproduction (capitalism) an individual capable of rationality has to be created, so that the deficiencies of that system can be attributed to their personal not-rationality. But that rational individual cannot exist within that system because the basis of her potential rationality, the unity of her needs and capacities, are forcibly kept apart by the institutions on which that system is based (e.g. private property, the state, money). Logically, the rationality of that individual cannot be restored by the imposition of education or training programmes as the ideology which informs them is that of the dominant system, which is irrational. Rationality can only be restored by the transformation of that system.

The problem for Hall and bourgeois social science generally, is that the abstractions on which their science fictions are constructed are real. The world really does appear to be composed of isolated 'irrational' individuals; society really does exist in the abstract and not in any particular case. But by taking the isolated individual as their starting point they are reproducing the inversion/abstraction of the real world. That is, they start with the result of the social process, and think it is

the starting point of social life. In this way they further obfuscate and confuse the reality of capitalist social forms and, in so doing, obscure the simple reality that is the possibility of progressive social transformation.

### **enterprise**

The most formal expression of capitalist individual rationality is the concept of enterprise. It is no accident that during this protracted period of neo-liberal restructuring, in the context of the capital relation manifest as a generalised crisis of accumulation, attempts were made to restructure social relations through the reconstitution of the abstract enterprising individual (:among other abstract individualities e.g. consumer, citizen) via the depoliticization of the economy (Reaganism, Thatcherism, etc.). Premised on the naturalism of private property and capitalist social relations, liberal social theory, faced with the increasing decomposition of its idealised social order, retreated even further into the abstract. The problem for the training scientists was to make these abstractions concrete. The impossibility of such an activity is well illustrated from an investigation of an attempt to create rational enterprising individuals through the imposition of an enterprise training programme into the Youth Training Scheme (YTS).

### **enterprise on YTS**

On August 22 1986, the Manpower Services Commission (MSC) sent out invitations to tender for a development project to introduce enterprise modules into two year YTS schemes. Enterprise modules were broadly defined as the creation of real or simulated businesses as part of a learning experience, providing the opportunity for enterprising people to create and

take opportunities, and by so doing to display enterprise characteristics: initiative, the ability to make decisions, manage resources, influence others, and monitor progress. These modules should raise the business awareness of participants through their involvement in an enterprise project and should be introduced at the beginning of the first year of a YTS trainees course. The enterprise programme should then continue through intermediate modules to help to identify self-employment potential among trainees who otherwise might not consider this an option. The enterprise programme should be completed by advising trainees who wish to explore self-employment, co-operatives and the small business option, and by providing a certification module which could be used as a reference for trainees who wish to take advantage of the Enterprise Allowance Scheme. The project, which was to run for three years, would be organised nationally and piloted in 116 schemes. Initial funding would be 100%, but the intention was that the programme would eventually be self-financing. And it was to start as soon as possible. Tenders to be submitted by 29 Sept 1986.

**c.e.i.**

Colin Ball had been a civil servant in the MSC and an advisor to the Director of the Commission, Geoffrey Holland. In 1986 Colin Ball was a Director of the Centre for Employment Initiatives (CEI), an organisation that carried out research and consultancy work on matters to do with employment. He had already been involved in two research and development contracts on enterprise training with the MSC department which had issued this tender and had, in the process, some influence on this emerging strand of MSC policy. His organisation was approached to submit a tender. He was not keen to get involved with the MSC, which he had just left, and he was disappointed that the definition of enterprise as presented in the tender



invitations was limited to the notion of self-employment. His view was that enterprise was about something more empowering and potentially liberating for the individual. His view of enterprise and the suggested meaning by the MSC reflected the debate that was going on in the training science community at that time.

At a hurried meeting at Gatwick Airport while he waited for a plane to New York where he was working on a contract for the OECD he was persuaded by his colleague that they should submit a tender. "It was a job and CEI needed the money" (Ball). He was, however, adamant that CEI should not go into this alone and that they should seek partners to set up a consortium. Not only would this mean that he and the CEI would be less exposed, but also he was convinced that the MSC would be most attracted to a tender that came from an organisation which could demonstrate academic credibility, practical know-how, administrative and managerial competence, experience in educational development, the ability to negotiate and deliver 'the goods' through some kind of existing network, clout, good names and good connections, especially to the private sector, and a simple and uncomplicated structure that the MSC could do business with. It was his view that there was no single organisation in the UK that possessed all of these qualities and that therefore a consortium would need to be established. He thought it could include Project North East, NICEC, Young Enterprise, Durham University Business School (replaced later by Cranfield), Shell UK and CEI. As he said later it was a decision that he came to regret: "Not only was the consortium a bad idea. I didn't enjoy one moment of the experience" [from an interview with Colin Ball, November 93 at Charing Cross Hotel, London].

entrain ltd

On 11 Sept 1986 Colin Ball proposed as a basis for discussion that the following suggested organisations and individuals form a consortium of a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee, to be known as Entrain and to design and develop, through the management of full-time staff, enterprise on YTS. He arranged a meeting to outline the proposals to establish Entrain, to set out an implementation and operational plan and define a first year budget. Because of the shortage of time he felt that they should state clearly and honestly that many details and issues could only be worked out and resolved by Entrain, in collaboration with the MSC, after they were selected.

All those invited attended the meeting. Some had written back with their comments. Shell UK were in agreement with the general approach and were comfortable with the natural linkage that already existed between themselves and other organisations in the consortium, although they were concerned with the revenue situation, and that the time allowed to prepare such a proposal led them to think that 'the MSC are totally unaware of the realities of life', but they felt that the exercise was not as difficult as the MSC approach indicated: "There are a number of modules that already exist among the proposed consortium to deliver those asked for..[and they saw]... positive benefit to the enterprise movement if we can harmonise this within the outlined consortium. It also fulfills a need to bring together the many enterprise initiatives that make the whole greater than the part. There are areas of opportunities that can be further developed from the draft proposal and I say 'go for it'".

Young Enterprise enthusiastically endorsed the proposals in the paper. Derek Jackson, its Director, saw: "a logical progression in terms of a

spectrum of provision which embraces theoretical learning, practical action and training the trainers. It may be that Durham University Business School packages can be used for an 'in-class' experience supplemented by material from CRAC followed by the setting up and running of an enterprise with the Young Enterprise network, with Livewire and possibly CRAC/NICEC training the trainers. Involving Livewire would also have the advantage of having an inbuilt mechanism to help a successful YTS group set up in business through direct participation in the Livewire scheme now that it has changed somewhat in its policy. There is also the possibility for successful YTS to be passed in to the Youth Enterprises Scheme and also local enterprise agencies. We would be only too delighted if YTS groups were able to set up in business for real. What I do think is important is that the theoretical side of the package should be compulsory whilst the practical element should if absolutely necessary be compulsory but there are considerable advantages in it being voluntary. Enterprise is not everyone's cup of tea in the business sense but enterprise attitudes, the maximisation of resources and the promotion of economic and social self sufficiency are common to all."

#### **distinction**

The proposal they formulated was a broad basis on which to develop Enterprise in YTS and to bring into YTS the many enterprise training, enterprise support, management, personal development and skill practices which have been developed for adults and young people in a wide variety of contexts over the past several years. It was the firm view of the consortium that while all the accumulated experience and expertise represented a considerable fund of know-how on which to draw, the major task was to deduce from it what 'Enterprise in YTS' should best mean in practice. They wanted it to be much more than taking one particular



'model' developed in another context and applying it into YTS provisions and activities. 'Enterprise in YTS' should be distinctive, an innovative blend of existing experience and new thinking. The processes of blending and thinking could not and should not, in the view of the consortium, be regarded as completed and finished during these past few weeks, with a view to operationalising the resulting ideas during the immediate future. Instead, the consortium proposed an intensive development phase for the period immediately following the selection by the MSC of the organisation/consortium with which it wishes to work.

In line with the MSC tender proposals, Entrain originally suggested a three modular programme: Module 1 would be an introduction to Enterprise. This would include an intensive 2 or 3 day full-time programme involving participation in 'simulations' as part of awareness raising process. This should take place at a time no later than three months from the beginning of the first year. This was to be followed up by regular discussions (2 hours per week) between trainees, supervisors and business advisers. Module 2: enterprise in action, would focus on the establishment and management of real enterprise projects either on a part-time or full-time basis depending on the nature of the project over a minimum of 1 month and a maximum of 4 month period. This module would include an 'exit route', i.e., the possibility of some of the enterprises established in this module continuing either as part-time or spare-time activities. Also, an option to repeat the exercise should be allowed for. Module 3 would involve certification and profile assessment 2-3 months before the end of the 2 year YTS. These modules should allow for the inclusion of a range of variations from which the pilot schemes and project staff would select the approach most appropriate to the local circumstances and conditions. These thoughts were worked up into a proposal for submission.

### **a preparatory contract**

The presentation of these proposals by Entrain to the MSC on 10th October 1986 was successful, but this did not guarantee that the project would be approved. It had to pass through a long and complex process involving various levels of the MSC, the Department of Employment and the Treasury, although the MSC officials, Whyte and Chapman, seemed confident. The main contract would not commence until April 1987. It would last for 3 years and be worth £1.5m. In the meantime a preparatory contract was prepared to resolve a number of outstanding matters, both to inform the main contract provision and to give the project a flying start. The contract would specify that 116 schemes were to be established in the first instance. These were schemes, not pilots, charged at the full commercial rate, growing to a number of 500 in the first year. The contract also specified that Entrain would look for other sources of financing e.g. franchising, that there would be no compulsion to use Entrain, although the MSC would encourage it and not introduce competitors into the field, and that the regional conferences would represent a major marketing opportunity to get managing agents signed on with a view to the delivery of the first modules in June-August 1987. But the most striking announcement was that the enterprise training modules should not favour the self-employment model and that there was to be no bias towards business start-up practice. Indeed, the MSC at this point, expressed strong doubts as to the value of entrepreneurial role models as a means of motivating YTS trainees lacking self-confidence and motivation.

### **change**

On 21st October 1986 the implications of this contract were discussed. The tender document had concentrated on the narrow business aspects of

enterprise within a broad definition of taking and making opportunities. It was now obvious that the nature of the project had changed, expanded to include community enterprises. This sent a shock wave through the consortium who were concerned as to what extent the interest and expertise of the consortium coincided with the requirements of the project. The Entrain proposal had reflected this 'schizophrenia' (:the dual nature of the enterprise concept, i.e., business or the emancipation of the individual) and was obvious in the presentation made to MSC on the 10th of October where the point about 'schizophrenia' was raised. It was only after Entrain's 'selection' that it was made quite clear that the MSC wished enterprise training in YTS to be broad-based. As Colin Ball said when heard of the MSC's intention to pursue this, his favoured, broad-based approach to enterprise training "If only we had known...". But it was also evident at this post-'selection' Entrain inaugural meeting on 21st October that a number of Entrain members felt uneasy, not only because of the broadness of the definition - Entrain was in favour of a broad-based approach - but the fact that the practical experience and know-how of the consortium was largely in the narrow field of business development and therefore some members felt they were involved in something to which they could not contribute.

But this was not the only concern expressed at that meeting. Doubts were raised about the nature of the task to be completed in the light of raised MSC expectations and demands coupled with suggestions about less secure funding arrangements. For example, was the number of schemes (:500) to be worked with absolute? Could the Managing Agents even afford to pay for Entrain? Was there even a market for the Entrain product? Could the regional conferences be more realistically timetabled? And how did Entrain fit with the MSCs intention to provide business training in YTS? All of



this in what Colin Ball described as a 'murky' atmosphere surrounding the way in which the project was going forward. Entrain was yet to sign a contract, there was no preparatory contract even. Entrain did not even formally exist at this point. It was recognised that these issues would have to be resolved through the preparatory contract, although the fundamental nature of some of these points was enough to raise doubts as to the wisdom of continued participation in the project. It was eventually decided (31st October 1986) to proceed as Entrain Ltd by guarantee, and for Colin Ball to prepare a concept paper for circulation, as well as a seminar to be organised for the consortium to discuss and develop concepts and delivery.

### **enterprise**

The first task was to be certain just what the word enterprise was to mean. In collaboration with David Turner, a consultant who had set up an Enterprise programme in Australia: the Community Involvement Through Youth programme, Colin Ball drew up some ideas. They started by clearing their heads about modules and to ask some basic questions. They decided that to be enterprising meant 'to do something off one's own bat', in pedagogical jargon 'to act in an autodidactic manner'. They put this question in the following context: imagine people grouped as some kind of 'unit' - a company, or family, or school, or YTS. All these units, whether economic, social, kinship, educational, whatever, have the tendency to 'de-enterprise' individuals and sub-groups of individuals within them, because of the hierarchies they contain or because of, for example, principles of divided labour. So they asked the specific question: "what prompts people to be enterprising in such largely 'de-enterprising' units?" They decided by giving people responsibility, involving people in decision-making, looking beyond the unit, receiving stimulus from outside the unit, encouraging or requiring risk taking, encouraging or requiring

people to experience the demands of different roles and responsibilities, building on existing or creating new units within the overall unit, having a person or facility which responds to this activity and facilitates it. This list was not complete but it began to suggest ideas about the variety of activity that could be contained in module 1 and 2, and about specific enterprise skills to be developed and credited.

#### **new enterprise**

By November 1986 these ideas had been worked up into a proposal that had been seen and approved by George Whyte. The new definition of enterprise stressed the wider meaning of enterprise. Being enterprising does not just mean being entrepreneurial in business. People can be considered to be enterprising when they have the self-confidence and initiative to create ideas in a wide variety of circumstances and the judgement and determination to carry them through, similarly various forms of action. Being enterprising means being adaptable, flexible, creative and active in environments such as the work place or the community, within the context of employment or unemployment, with others or on ones own, in response to needs or opportunities, for the benefit of others or oneself.

And there are particular tangible skills involved in creating and taking initiatives, defined as: identifying and initiating ideas for enterprise projects; the skills of planning and preparing, of scheduling and doing what needs to be done; the skills of communicating and negotiating with others and of influencing them to secure what is needed; the skills of organising, managing and decision-making, of allocating and agreeing responsibilities, of ensuring that tasks are carried out and of managing resources; the ability to resolve the problems and conflicts and tensions

designing and making special aids for handicapped people; a training enterprise: establish 'quality circles' to determine and implement new training programmes or negotiate and undertake a 'personal skill programme', i.e. periods of time in several activities never tried before. The emphasis on this training enterprise is on the trainee - self-determination and self-action, with trainers and advisers giving support. As Entrain's literature says: "The success of the programme depends very much upon the trainee, like most things in this world you get out of something that which you are prepared to put in and the success of your YTS training could change the shape of your future to come"; or a business enterprise, e.g., setting up small companies or co-operatives to design, manufacture, market or sell any goods or services such as clothes, food, computer programmes, fabricated products, etc., or individually setting up a small 'self -employment' venture; or negotiating an attachment or secondment to a local craftsman or small business in order to provide a consultancy input or develop a new product or market; or an adventure enterprise: undertaking a long- distance walk and producing an illustrated walker's/tourist guide, or organising a trip to Europe.

Phase 2 involved planning and preparation. The purpose of this would be to split up the trainees individually or in groups to identify an enterprise project and to undertake all aspects of planning and preparation for its operation. The trainees would identify and distribute responsibilities, create an organisation and management structure, formulate and implement schedules, identify resources and expertise needed, negotiate and communicate, carry out feasibility studies, surveys, test and monitor their progress. This would last for a period of up to 6 months. Supporting the process, Entrain advisers would come in and out and more staff training would be provided, including debriefing.



which arise, whether anticipated or expected, and to show determined action towards project completion; the ability to be able to monitor and evaluate progress against objectives. But enterprise training was also about fostering attributes and attitudes, states of mind, characteristics. In essence, therefore the content and method of enterprise training would be to be concerned with helping trainees to develop through action, learning those personal attributes which enable them to be enterprising.

The modules were further developed around the basic tender document proposal under the four main headings as outlined by George Whyte: community enterprise project, business projects, adventure projects and development projects, to be done individually or in groups. Entrain would provide all resource materials, course content, structure and leadership, tutors and external advisers. The scheme would provide space, basic equipment and support tutors.

The four phases of the Entrain process were divided into Phase 1 - the introduction. The purpose of this was to raise awareness of enterprise, work out personal profiles and identify ideas. The content involved such activities as role-play and simulation to stimulate trainees' interest and awareness, personal profile building and assessment, examples and case study, and activities to begin identifying enterprise project possibilities. This would last for 2-3, days ideally at the beginning of their traineeship. The trainees would be encouraged to organise an activity around four areas: community business, e.g., in a group running a car boot sale to raise money for a local charity, or undertaking environmental improvements, or putting on a series of musical/theatrical events at local residential homes and hospitals, or individually: running classes in elementary computer literacy in a local primary school, or identifying,

Phase 3 intended that the trainees would carry out their enterprise projects which would be assessed and certificated. The final process, phase 4 would be an intensive review and reflection on how they might use this experience in the future. The trainee would be awarded a certificate which profiled his or her enterprise skills which would be nationally validated in conjunction with the MSC.

All of this was put into the context not simply of employment: it was not just a vocational experience or learning craft skills, but what they called 'the skills of action' not only as a vital part of their working lives, but also an important element within their personal life too. And as such enterprise learning was centred on a real (not simulated) enterprise project, which meets a need, solves a problem, or exploits an idea or opportunity in a way that gives responsibility to trainees. Enterprise training was training for life. It was relevant to everyone.

#### **full and frank**

On 20th November 1986 the Shadow Board had its first meeting. Colin Ball said he was suprised by the amount of enthusiasm for the project among regional office representatives and he was pleased about planned MSC publicity drive in YT News and optimistic about the press conference scheduled for 15th December: "All of this will certainly get us on the map - I cannot see how the MSC can avoid going forward into the main contract with Entrain". However, whatever optimism he felt was soon to be tested by the increasingly difficult relationship with the MSC.

#### **disagreement**

On 1st December 1986 the Entrain consortium met the MSC. Colin Ball described the discussion as 'full and frank'. The two groups agreed to have separate sessions over lunch so they could review their negotiating positions. The meeting then resumed on a more amicable basis. Entrain's major concerns about the main contract centred on the pace of development envisaged by the MSC and the implications for quality, the immediate pressures created by the press launch and the proposed programme of regional conferences, and the need for Entrain to be linked in with the 'family' of other MSC enterprise training initiatives.

Peter Menzies, George Whyte's boss, said that the press launch was an immovable commitment, but that the conferences might be rescheduled. George Whyte argued that the press launch would create a demand for information which would be satisfied by the conferences and any postponement would generate bad feeling among the regional directors. Colin Ball countered by saying that Entrain had already made considerable commitments in advance of any formal contract or income from the MSC, and that without a contract the consortium was unwilling to commit itself to conference expenditure. But George Whyte argued that the regional conferences were an essential marketing event for Entrain, providing an opportunity to sign up Managing Agents which could not be repeated, and that Entrain was being paid under the terms of the preparatory contract to meet deadlines.

Tony Watts, the Chair of Entrain, disagreed. He saw the regional conferences not as a selling mechanism but as a way of creating awareness of a new policy. Peter Rimmer from the MSC confirmed this view saying that an item in YTS News reflected this approach. But George Whyte strongly disagreed. He saw the conferences as a means of selling Entrain, and rejected suggestions that the 116 pilots should be regarded as a



development phase to ensure quality standards. Entrain would be buying trouble if it was not possible to respond to interest and demand expressed by the managing agents. "Just what was Entrain offering?", he asked. He laid out the bottom line of Entrain: enterprise was to be a part of trainees' induction, the first year target was 500, the second year 1000, the MSC would encourage Managing Agencies to participate but there would be no discouragement by the MSC if agencies wanted to do their own thing. Entrain must therefore be sufficiently attractive for agencies to want to pay, and Entrain should explore other forms of raising revenue, e.g., through licensing and franchising its product.

Colin Ball said that Entrain's consorting partners were expressing grave reservations about the proposed pace of development, particularly as the MSC were not placing any requirement on Managing Agents to participate, nor to accept Entrain's high standards. It could well be that there was no market. It was important therefore to make prudent assumptions about demand.

Compromise was eventually reached. Two of the conferences could be rescheduled and the pilot programme would proceed in two phases: 116 followed by 384. The main contract was to be signed March 1st 1987, with a signing of the preparatory contract on December 1st 1986.

#### **launched**

15 December Entrain was officially launched by Lord Young, at that time the Minister of Employment. He had no doubt what enterprise meant. As he said in his speech "In a nutshell it [enterprise] is the ability to take a concept and translate it into a working reality. It is the combination of imagination, skills and determination which makes something out of nothing.

Across all sectors of industry and employment, jobs are becoming more complex. Individuals are taking on more responsibility and there is a constant need for more skills, more training, and more retraining. Given this situation there is less room for the person who 'gets on and does what they're told'. The days of the unthinking worker, who merely follows a prescribed routine, are over. Automation and computerisation are rapidly getting rid of those jobs. The trend everywhere is in favour of the person who is skilled, adaptable and with the ability to learn".

Geoffrey Holland, the Director of the MSC and the man responsible for initiating enterprise training in youth training, was in no doubt as to its importance: "An enterprising young person is one who makes and takes opportunities. YTS aim to develop just such skills and we want all young people to be enterprising in whatever setting they find themselves. This means using their imagination, taking responsibility for ideas and seeing them through to reality. Enterprise training is a natural part of the personal development of young people on YTS. It is also an economic imperative. British industry needs more enterprising, risk taking and adventurous people if we are to compete effectively with our trading rivals".

#### **cracks begin to show**

At the next board meeting on 19th December 1986, Entrain was incorporated. There was a good feeling about the project, the press launch had gone well, even if it had been thinly attended. But there were still very serious doubts about how Managing Agents would pay for the service. The task was now obviously much bigger task than anticipated. By 26th February 1987 the pressure was beginning to mount. Matters had come to a head as a result of

the regional conferences and Entrain publicity leaflets. The cause of this new crisis was the fact that the MSC had asked that two of the five publicity leaflets be deleted and to significantly amend two of the others. This had meant that Entrain would have had no publicity material. Moreover, Entrain had reservations about the format and duration of the conferences which had been reduced to half-day presentations. While committed to the project, Entrain still required assurances about its relationship with the MSC. Entrain threatened that without those assurances it would not wish to sign the main contract. Entrain saw its role as being to develop and implement a new concept, and not merely be a delivery mechanism for the MSC. All this compounded Entrain's anxieties about the pace of development envisaged; and Entrain could not proceed with the appointment of its Chief Executive until all this had been sorted out.

#### **misunderstanding**

The MSC thought the first conference in Torquay had gone very well. Everyone had been very impressed and was optimistic about the remaining events. But John Fuller felt that there had been a serious misunderstanding between Entrain and themselves over the publicity material, which apparently ran counter to MSC philosophy and to principles that had been carefully negotiated with other organisations who were also working in the enterprise area. They were anxious to avoid a confrontation and reasserted their desire to work as a partnership through developing a common approach. Nor did they want Entrain to be just a delivery mechanism; but Entrain had to work with the overall MSC policy framework.

George Whyte was more specific. The difficulties arose because of the vagueness of the Entrain material on the one hand, but also because Entrain had identified a different number of enterprise skills. Entrain had seven,



the MSC had six! A compromise was reached by Entrain agreeing to emphasise the developmental nature of their work.

### **criticism**

Despite the behind-the-scenes disagreements, there was a very positive reaction to Entrain and the process it was trying to initiate, although there was some criticism. Karen Ross, writing in the Youthaid Bulletin July/August 1987 complained: "The fundamental theme which characterises Entrain and sets it apart from other elements within YTS is this notion of empowerment, and it is on this that my doubts rest. It is all very well to tell 16 and 17 year olds how powerful they are (YOU CAN DO IT, as the Entrain publicity repeatedly says!), what good initiators they are, to listen to their ideas and help them develop a real life project, but what about tomorrow? Having spent a few hours using their minds and feeling responsible and adult, are they then to return to their work placement to be given non-negotiable instructions, to make the tea, or type other people's letters?...For enterprise training to work, I would argue that trainees would have to feel that they have a recognised voice for the remaining weeks of their course, and that they have an asked for and appreciated input into other aspects of their training. If Entrain can foster that sort of spirit, then more power to its elbow. But without that Entrain may end up as little more than wishful thinking".

### **chief executive**

However the fact that Entrain was attracting approval created its own problems. Entrain would have to decide how it would select and support the pilot schemes, and how to involve schemes not selected as pilots. It was at

this moment (March 87) that Entrain appointed its Chief Executive, Stuart Plant. It was his view (June 17) that for a scheme to qualify as a pilot they must commit themselves to the development of an 'enterprise culture' throughout their schemes and to use Entrain on an ongoing basis. But he argued that problems of Entrain were compounded by the poor quality YTS itself. He doubted that schemes were of a sufficient quality to pilot the Entrain programme. Of the pilots now in operation it was debatable as to whether enterprise training modules via Entrain would serve any useful purpose unless there was a significant improvement in the standard of training offered to scheme supervisors and, more importantly, scheme managers. He reported: "The general physical environment for many young people in YTS is dire - it does seem highly inappropriate to ask young people to be enterprising in surroundings that project austerity, lack of enterprise and a general feeling of being second class". He felt all of this was compounded by bad management attitudes and perceptions which has led to Entrain staff having to take corrective action. It was agreed that Entrain should develop the management training provision and that this should be translated into a training opportunity (money earner) for Entrain.

#### **reorganise the board**

Stuart Plant set about reorganising the Entrain board more in his own image, to limit its control and to reconvene it as a support mechanism for him and his staff (11 November). He felt that Entrain needed to broaden its support at a senior level with industry, education and commerce, Trade Unions as well as gaining support from the voluntary and statutory sector through organisations that would inevitably 'interface' with Entrain. And he proposed a change in the Board to get rid of Project North East, Young Enterprise and Fairbridge and extending it to private sector, e.g., British

Airways, the Confederation of British Industry, the Industrial Society, the TUC and other enterprise organisations.

#### **revise plan**

By the end of October 1987 Entrain was working in 75 pilot schemes with 25 fee payers, but only 4 contracts signed and paid for. The huge market foreseen for enterprise training was now being revised. The optimistic forecasts which the MSC had thought that Entrain alone could not supply, and therefore had encouraged the growth of other forms of enterprise training, could not now be sustained. This led Entrain to think of revising the targets. This situation was not helped by the fact that an Accredited Training Centre (ATCs) in East Midlands was providing enterprise training free of charge. In some areas Entrain [Northants] was asked not to contact schemes as they are to be offered a choice between Entrain and ATCs. This seemed in 'serious conflict' with the Entrain initiative. But as the MSC said, ATC work mainly with staff and Entrain with trainees - and anyway the MSC never said that Entrain would be the only enterprise provider. But Entrain, under the direction of Stuart Plant, had made a significant shift towards management training and it wanted this acknowledged by the MSC. It also asked for the relationships between various parties had to be more precisely defined.

#### **evangelical**

On 30th November 1986, Stuart Plant presented his strategy paper : Preparing the Ground for Enterprise - to address the problem of creating the right environment in which enterprise training could take place, particularly with reference to the attitude of YTS management. The paper was evangelical in tone, and devoid of any real substance. It encouraged managers to "become visionary, to lift their sights above the day to day



and see what might be possible if creative and imaginative thought is given the opportunity to develop...to be visionary we must enter what seems like a paradox, for on the one hand, one requires a thorough and confident understanding of the present situation (implying satisfaction with) coupled to the desire, courage and ability to change (starting with self) where this will effect improvement". This is a management training proposal to encourage enterprising management away from the traditional mechanistic and technical approaches favoured by traditional management techniques.

These papers were discussed 8th December at an Entrain Board meeting.

Despite Stuart Plant's enthusiasm for management training, it was felt that Entrain should avoid turning into a management training scheme organisation at the expense of delivering enterprise skills to young people. The way forward was to treat each scheme on its own merits with the main emphasis on young people.

### **staffing**

Entrain's problems were further compounded by the fact that it was having difficulty recruiting staff of a sufficiently high quality. Stuart Plant said that this recruitment problem was made worse by the fact that once staff were appointed they had to be inducted and trained to a level that would enable them to deliver high quality enterprise training. Staffing was to be a constant problem for the organisation. There was a high turnover of staff, and a series of contested dismissals.

**no demand, no product**

By October 1987 only 4 schemes had signed up, although it was working in 72 pilots (75 target). Schemes were not signing contracts because they did not see a perceived need for enterprise training, there was a lack of clarity as to what the MSC actually meant by including enterprise in a scheme, and even when it was clear schemes could not afford it. The situation was not improved by the fact that Entrain had no track record and no product. This lack of product was very damaging, especially after the way in which expectations had been raised by the regional conferences. Also Entrain was not helped by some MSC staff. As Stuart Plant said (18 February 1988) in a report to the Entrain Board: "It is true to say that many of the local MSC staff are supportive and provide assistance in approaching schemes. It is also true that, through ignorance or prejudice, some MSC officers have openly criticised Entrain and suggested that schemes ought to obtain their support from ATCs, free, rather than pay Entrain".

#### **threat**

All of this meant that Entrain was in danger of exhausting MSC funding before generating sufficient income. In order to survive, the MSC would have to provide additional funding, renegotiate the package to take account of realities and revise the targets and pricing structure, make enterprise skills a core part of the YTS experience and give Entrain more time. If this was not agreed Entrain threatened to immediately withdraw from pilot schemes and seek only commercial business, much of which would be in the more lucrative private sector, and diversify into other types of training.

The MSC agreed (18 February 1988) that the original theory about the size of the market may no longer be valid. They could not give any indication of further funding, but could say that flexibility would be allowed within

the budget. They recognised that a number of issues had not been thought through when Entrain was established.

#### **enterprise as management system**

Stuart Plant was determined to recreate the company as an all-purpose training organisation. None of the original plans, he argued, were capable of being implemented. None of the targets were possible. The modular approach on which the whole programme had been constructed was not flexible enough to accommodate all the different schemes, and therefore a range of products had to be designed for each scheme. The abandonment of the modular approach meant that income generation was less predictable. The notion of the pilots was flawed because the pilots saw themselves as getting something for nothing, rather than partners in a painful process of development. The original model, Plant argued, had led to many difficulties, changes in direction and some acrimony. Entrain had had to become more flexible and to operate a philosophy of response to agreed needs; but, he said, "damage had already been done which may haunt us for some time". It was simply not possible to impose an enterprise culture.

He suggested, therefore that Entrain move to an Enterprise Resource Management System: a different kind of service from that originally envisaged with a defined product. This product would be based on a basic level of provision, built around material being developed, with minimum Entrain staff input to raise awareness and start the process. This basic level would be funded by MSC. A second level of training the trainers would be funded by the scheme.



nothing to do with the commercial world

On 18th February 1988 the representative from Shell UK reported on a visit to three Entrain schemes in the North West. One of the schemes praised the quality of the training given to their staff, but complained that the Entrain people had not been good with the trainees. At another scheme, a garage in Bolton, the owner had complained about the quality of Entrain's input on the basis that "it had nothing to do with the commercial world".

#### rumours

By now rumours about Entrain's problems were circulating. The journal Training Tomorrow put them on the record: "Despite the excitement generated by the concept that young people should learn to become makers and takers of opportunity the initial round of conferences launching the Entrain approach were poorly received by Managing Agents who saw little to convince them that it was much more than the latest flavour of the month. However, as 1987 progressed more and more people jumped on the bandwagon - urged on by the visionary Chief Executive, Stuart Plant. Pilot projects were set up and all concerned looked forward to a brighter future. And then came 1988. Dogged by internal problems, contractual problems with the MSC, over-zealous staff and high expectations, the organisation then began to creak a little. There has recently been a high turnover of staff. Some pilots have pulled out and MSC staff have moved on. The question is how much of this is the inevitable teething problem of a new organisation trying to establish itself in the highly political world of youth training or is there a more serious problem."

the end

On 3rd June 1988, the MSC without warning terminated Entrain's contract. The main reason given was Entrain's failure to comply with the terms of the original agreement which had formed the basis on which the contract had been made. The MSC also cited as reasons for termination the fact that direct trainee training had not proved effective, the delay in producing material which when it appeared was not sufficiently hard-edged, and the MSC had not been convinced that Entrain could become self-sufficient, a condition required by the terms of the contract. Entrain had been in existence for almost exactly a year.

why did it fail?

The failure is attributed by the participants of the Entrain experiment to a number of factors. These include the bureaucracy and intransience of the MSC, the fact that the systems by which the MSC worked were unable to cope with such a flexible concept, the uncertainty about what enterprise meant, the personalities involved, the make-up and concept of the consortium, the weakness of the Board, the personality and capability of Stuart Plant, the inability of Managing Agents and schemes to adapt to a changing role: i.e. from authoritarian managers to enabling facilitators, and the over-optimism of the original contract whose demands the Entrain board were never able to meet.

These factors were significant, but they avoid the central issue and

distract attention from the assumption upon which the whole programme was based. Quite apart from the ever present necessity of capital to produce the labour power that it requires, the central issue for the training scientists at that moment was how to rationalise the redundant nature of youthful labour power in a way that was compelling for the young people themselves, and in a manner that would induce a commitment to a process for which they were no longer required. That is to instil a sense of responsibility (capitalist order) at a time when there appeared to be no escape from the conceptual order of 'youth' that capital had created for young people in 1948. That is there was no future for young people in the youthful form determined by capital, by which I mean there was no work, and without work no development, and without development no adulthood, and without adulthood no responsibility and without responsibility only not-responsibility (i.e. capitalist disorder: e.g., crime). Whereas the notion of 'youth' in 1948 had been designed to attract young people into the notion of capitalist work, the notion of youth enterprise in the mid-1980s was a device to attract 'youth' to the notion of not-work. But not only of not-work, also of not-money. The introduction of enterprise training coincided with a number of initiatives to reduce the amount of money made available to young people through the benefit system, restricting eligibility through training endorsements and the establishing of meagre grant-aid programmes to support this marginal existence. But, as with all the earlier training schemes, the policy was an abject failure, blown away in the boom years when for a brief moment the illusion of 'youth' associated with a shortage of youth labour re-emerged as a 'demographic time-bomb' and the increasingly outrageous expression of capitalist not-responsibility among young people: youth crime and urban unrest.



But in the meantime the training scientists fought over the problematic nature of youth labour power, in the space between the real and the apparently real. It was impossible for training scientists to endorse concrete reality, since their very existence depended on the avoidance of that reality. As the whole history, as we have seen, of the modern science of training has been to escape that concrete reality - their argument concentrated on the nature of how that apparent formal reality (abstraction) should be defined and enforced. Those who took the side of 'youth' saw it as a condition that could be facilitated by a broad concept of enterprise (: empowerment), those who more directly represented the interests of capital focused on the notion of enterprise as self-employment. And while much is made of this disagreement among the training scientists themselves, what is ignored is the basic agreement about the basic assumption upon which these two positions were based. The point is not how different the various interpretations of enterprise were, but how they were all constructed on the same presupposition: that they were dealing with a rational process that is capable of rational solutions. Much is made of the difference of opinion. Some of the protagonists, e.g., Tony Watts, the Entrain Chair, saw it as a positive aspect of the project, allowing for a healthy pluralism of ideas, while for others it made for confusion and a sense of disempowerment. Colin Ball had been initially frustrated by the MSC's original narrow definition of the concept, and then exasperated over the failure of the MSC to communicate their broader intentions. The narrowness of the original concept originally attracted self-employment initiatives (e.g. Young Enterprise, Shell), but then the broader definition caused them to reconsider their position.

Ironically, because of the scientifically fictitious nature of what they

were discussing: the not really real concept of youth enterprise, it could never be completely enforced, no matter how it was defined. It could only exist as policy: the institutionalisation of contradiction. Each new policy indicates the failure of policy. Policy is failure, or policy is the inability of capital to control the working class, presented as control of the working class. And, therefore, an attempt to confine the demands of the working class to the level of the political, to a particular confined space, between needs and capacities ( Kay and Mott, 1982: 156), between the real and the apparently real. Rationality is not therefore an apolitical category - it must either attempt to maintain the separation between the needs and capacities of 'youth' (i.e. maintain the structures of private property) or constitute a revolutionary project for the abolition of private property, and its derivatives, money and the State. The rationality of Entrain clearly falls into the former category. The absolute rationalism of enterprise training clearly mask an underlying concern to maintain a system so rational that it attempts to condemn 'youth' to the contradiction of an abstract existence: to be lived out as the unemployed trainee in an increasingly vocal quiet despair. But the rationalisms upon which this formal abstraction were based were once again exploded by the very subjectivity it sought to define, not through any conscious intellectual activity of 'youth' or those supported them, but through the concrete activity of young people in pursuit of their concrete aspirations.

#### **the training police**

This case study also highlights the virtually real world which the employees of the training state (: the training police) inhabit, and how this virtual reality provides the space within which they attempt to

rationalise their own positions through a creation of their own partial reality. But this partial reality is purely formal and is, therefore, constantly undermined by the concrete reality, the potential unification of needs and capacities of the young working class, that the training police attempt to avoid.

The interesting point about Entrain's failure, insofar as its Chief Executive is concerned, is not a question of Stuart Plant's personality, but the space he had within which to formalise his own concept of Entrain, and how irrelevant that was to how things turned out. This is not to say that Stuart Plant was not a determining factor in the debacle, but his position needs to be contextualised within the central issue of what Entrain was and the various assumptions upon which the programme was based.

The issue then is not about the psychology of Stuart Plant or any other Entrain employee, but the space that workers get in these organisations and the way in which they rationalise it to themselves and to others. It is not at all clear that Stuart Plant ever grasped the notion of enterprise in the way in which it was formulated by Entrain's ideological inspiration, Dave Turner. Nor, significantly, was it very important. Stuart Plant constructed his notions of enterprise largely around the 'science' of managements that were then and now infused with the dynamic principles of intrapreneurialship. And, insofar as they went, those notions were as valid as the empowering principles within which the notion of youth enterprise was constructed. The important point here is not just the detail of how these people rationalise their various positions, but the fact that they were and are able to construct their own realities. The variety and type of these realities are not controversial so long as they do not threaten to deconstruct the abstraction upon which their social being as



training police is constructed. To do that would not only undermine the abstraction, it would also mean their own self-destruction.

### **ideology as policy**

It is significant how abstract theory appears as real policy initiatives. This is not an altogether conscious process. It does not have to be. Policy and abstract theory (ideology) are the expression of a real process that is not itself apparent. It has been the purpose of this thesis to draw attention to this real process and to make the connections. The connections between the concept of youth culture and Youthaid, and Entrain's 'brave new world' of 'new times' capitalism are striking. Youthaid assumed the radical possibilities that appeared to present themselves from within the sub-cultural analysis of youth. Hall's initial youthful formulations imposed more completely the concept of youth on young people by appearing to provide a way in which young people could reinvent themselves as youth. The radical opportunity that this theory appeared to present made it intoxicating for radical training scientists and appeared concretely in the form of voluntary organisations who acted on behalf of youth: Youthaid. But as the limitations of this ideology became more apparent, as the crisis of youth deepened, Hall's metaphors broadened to include not just the identity of youth, but all identity and the notion that identity could be invented and reinvented. Hall's new thesis, conceptualised as New Times, supported the empowering thesis that convinced many of the radical training scientists on the left about the validity and possibility that this new form of capitalist regulation offered to the working class in general and young people in particular. It was the existence of this new opportunity for personal re-creation that gave Entrain its 'radical' appeal to the employees of the training state: the training police.

In the next chapter I investigate, through their own self-defined realities, the position of the training police. This will form part of an attempt to make sense of my own position as an employee within the training state.

## Training Scientology

### scientology

Training scientists construct their own scientology, ideological systems based on a desire to develop the potentialities of their trainees. Each system is valid insofar as it is made accountable to its own limits which are expressed in the range of choices within which that potential is constrained. This scientology, in all its various forms, expresses the reified way in which the most modern training scientists explain and respond to the problems and pressures that confront them in their working lives. These pressures are real, but they are dealt with as if they were the starting point of social life and not the result of social processes. What is problematised then is limited resources, not private property; youth, not adulthood; land, labour and capital, not value; low skill equilibriums, not abstract labour; raw material for capital, not young concrete social individuals; the national interest, not exploitation; technological determinism, not historical materialism; life experience, not class; logical progress, not rupture nor even restructuring; evolutionary change, not class struggle; funding models, not the rule of money; social democratic alternatives, not negation; review, not critique; special needs, not needs and capacities; civil servants, TECs and the government, not the state; ; anxiety, integrity, loneliness and despair, not alienated labour; abstract theories, not a theory of abstraction.



These abstract theories (:scientologies) form the particular paradigms through which the training scientists explain their predicament to themselves. They form the ideological legitimation through which these training scientists detach themselves from any sense of mutual interest between themselves and the people with whom they are working, and are used to provide a justification for the extraordinary control they hold over their charges. Some of these explanations were recorded by me in a series of conversations with a number practitioners of this most modern science. What is remarkable about these remarks made in these interviews is the extent to which the training scientists are formally able to create and recreate themselves in a multitude of different guises, provided they deny the concrete reality of their own existence. The expressions of that concrete denial are experienced negatively as frustration and inadequacy, i.e. their inability to do something that would really improve the lives of the young people with whom they are working, and positively as the production and reproduction of young people committed to the notion of not-work or not-disorder formally recognised in controlled conditions as the accredited trainee, e.g., through the acquisition of NVQs; or after the completion of a period of administered time: as the client of the Probation Service.

#### in conversation

Duncan works at the **Insight** project. He helped to set it up. He describes its aims as involving an attempt to resolve the problems of everyday life by forcing young people 'to get into themselves' and acquire what he calls 'insight' about their situation. The psychological influences of this programme are obvious. He does not deny them, rather revels in them. The term 'insight' (*krankheitseinsicht*) was first used in German psychiatry and refers to a patient's recognition of their illness. Through recognition and

self-awareness comes cure. But the definition of being ill is provided by the doctor. It is only when the patient accepts the power of the doctor that they can then begin to get well, or be healthy: a state which is also defined by the doctor. This is the philosophy that underpins the Insight project.

As Duncan explains: "The reason why it is called Insight is that we aren't a vocational course as such, we aren't a jobs course as such. What we actually do is try to get people to look at their past in terms of filling out job applications and to look at how it affects them now. For example, if someone never actually had a job and are slagging off the values of work, we want to look at where that comes from. Some of them may have had a father or someone as a poor role model, so that all their values about work came from their father but not actually from their own experiences... So what we try to do is to get people to work with that, to get them to own experiences for their own self, because what we are trying to do is tear away things that influence them, things they are exposed to, things that they are aware of or not aware of and look at: 'are you happy with the way your life is going, are you happy with the way that people view you, and how is that going to affect your present and how is that going to affect your future'? So it's about going back to look at the past in a way that is not like psychotherapy or Freud or something... ; it's about trying to get them take ownership for themselves by looking at each other in a group setting and then it's about letting them have the option to choose to move forward.

And that's the whole thing about the Insight course, you come in and you expose yourself to a bit more of yourself so that when you leave you might have some insight about your past, present and hopefully where you might go

in the future. So that we try to get people onto work experience or college placement or a job at the end of the 10 weeks, those are what our outcomes are but really it's more of a qualitative thing with regard to the *insight.*"

While he denied the Freudian basis of his work, he does not deny its psychological basis: "I think I might be contradicting myself now because our course is actually heavily based in TA, Transactional Analysis, and that actually came from Freud. Eric Berne was unhappy with the way that Freud used the id, ego and super ego. What he actually did was to break it down into terms of being either a parent personality, or an adult personality, or a child personality and how we actually use that...TA is about certain transactions...I give you £5 and you give me back a jumper, that's a transaction. With TA it's about transactions in a personal regard to communications, in regard to views of yourself. Most of our clients... society sees them as children that needs to be looked after. Society takes a parent role, and what we are trying to do is to get them to look at why are you in this childhood role. Sometimes it's nice to be looked after and nourished and all those other things, but what we are trying to get people on the course to look at is how they can be more of an adult without oppressing anyone at all, to take an adult position in their relationships so that society will eventually, possibly, might see them as an adult. Being an ex-offender, why is it that society labels you with all these negative things, while at the same time you might be feeding into that by acting like a child? That needs to be looked at with your probation officer, with your college, job, family, whatever...We are heavily TA based.

We actually start from the parent role ourselves. We clearly say we are



the parent, the adults that hold the limits and provide the experiences. The whole course is based on what do you like to do, why do you like to do it, what do you think about this, what do you think about that. You be in charge today. Some people, it takes a while to get used to respond to that, some people haven't actually valued their experiences. Sometimes they don't even value it themselves.

We have lots of carrots to move people on: 'warm fuzzies'. I think we are quite directive. I mean I think some of our students think we give them a whole lot of space, we actually don't, it's all calculated. You have key points each week where we think we make people more able to survive better, in a lot of different settings like being able to converse to get a job, being able to make a request, being able to express needs, express interest in a variety of settings, its more about quality of life. That's something that I came up with just from my own life experiences."

For Duncan, reality lies with his course. Real life is a distraction. Not something to be confronted or challenged, but to protect young people from: "I think their outside lives we know nothing about, as much as we try to build them up in terms of confidence and looking out in trying to understand things they have chaotic lives we don't know anything about...one incident may set them back, and either they may not show up for the week or end up doing other crime again. There are then outside variables. I wish that I could actually protect our students more. I think we would have a higher success rate if we could protect them more...actually shield them from the outside for a while. To have them to be forced to get into themselves, right now we only have them 11am-4pm three days a week and when they step outside the door they might have something that might get in their way, or for the most part, they see a lot

of things that might possibly get them distracted."

For Duncan college can act as a safe haven. His young people can take advantage of the college's need to enrol more students. But while he talks up the fact that the students are at college in order to, as he sees it, give them a greater sense of their own self worth, the college does not always see his students in the same way: "It's wierd, it's actually quite a good time because of the fact that colleges and universities are trying real hard to get students. This year there is year round entry points to a lot of colleges, even Goldsmiths used to only be September entry points, now they have year- round entry points to a lot of their courses, so now all of our students on this course that ends next week are starting college two weeks after ...Before, when entry was only in September, we had to find things to hold people until then. For our first course it was very hard. People would complete a whole course but there was nothing that would hold them. But now every one is easing in to college so that it's not a constraint, it's a buyers' market for courses.

We say, 'you're in college now'. Well, you try to hype it up. Some buy into it and some don't. We have some that go to student meetings and dances, and some don't even know the inside of the college, and stick around our class room only. I think the fact that the course is actually in a college setting...and the college on the one hand is trying to get people to use its services, but on the other hand actually they don't know what it's about. They think our people are going to steal from the college; and they have these fantasies about what our students are about. So that is one of the things that gets in the way. On the one hand we tell our students to stay above board in terms of PR for the class and also PR for

the tag that people in the college have given them."

The responsibility for finding jobs and work is given to someone else. Duncan views the recession as a form of natural disaster, once it has gone away life can return to normal, with no sense of how young people are involved other than as victims who he wants to protect: "We use a group called LEAP...They do all of our ground work for us. They find employers like Macdonalds, Boots, Bodyshop, who actually need staff to do jobs without any prerequisites - they can be trained on the job. LEAP say that if they train people for two weeks in interviewing techniques and social skills they will get them a guaranteed interview for a job. As far as a job is concerned they can't guarantee anything. To go to LEAP...it's the closest thing for guaranteed interviews. Some people, however, are too needy even after LEAP, there is no way that they will be ready. The thing is we don't really push jobs. We have the Catford Job Centre that comes in twice to try and tie people up with the things that are going. I don't think work is a realistic option except on the retail basis, or cash-in-hand kind of thing, and we say if people can find it themselves fine, but other than that...We try to push using college or getting some training in the way of gaining some experience in trying to wait out the recession and hope that other things will happen, but you are gaining experience along the way."

Insight is secure for as long as he can satisfy the Home Office that a sufficient number of young people are completing the programme. The course justifies itself within the logic of its own rationality. As Duncan says "They (Home Office) think we are wonderful, but it's all based on numbers and how much you spend per client and what the outcomes are. Our goal is to get 12 people enrolled on the course and to get at least 7 to complete



the course, and so far we have already done that and had a couple of people extra. Last year we had 9 people in college that won bursaries so that so far as the course is concerned we are doing all right. That's why they don't have any questions on reports and everything clicks."

But Duncan is concerned that the aspirations of young people are too narrow, and too influenced by American and Australian television: "I think it is too bad that this country doesn't talk about young people so that young people don't get a lot of help. Young people in this country watch a lot of American movies.. they feel like Americans always... they don't realise that something is missing in this country... there is no media for young people, either you're a kid like 'Grange Hill' or afternoon shows, or Australian soap. They never show young people growing up, being adults and facing the issues and stuff like that. It makes it really hard. I wish the education system was more geared to helping people deal with life in terms of dreaming, in terms of expanding their horizons, which may be different from the outlooks of their parents, which may be different from the people who make the laws... this might make our jobs a bit easier."

**Sally, a Careers Officer working with ex-offenders, has a more straightforward approach to her work: "To be honest all this stuff about doing vocational guidance is actually a load of crap really..."**

She feels the paradoxes associated with her job acutely: being a careers officer at a time of mass unemployment. She feels that some of the solutions might be found by helping young people to find alternatives to

work: "The aim is, as I perceive it it, to help, for want of a better word, people who have convictions or are at risk of becoming offenders and give them more support, more guidance on a personal level than they would get normally using careers. So, looking at different avenues into education, training, employment, trying to positively support whatever people want to do. I don't really have influence. There is a need for an information provider and that is probably what we do best.

Unless people really don't know what to do, really really really don't know what they want to do - and when someone comes in and says that your heart sinks - you have to get right back to basics. Most people have some sort of idea about what they are good at or what they want to do, they might need to look at what else they could do and that is where the information side of it becomes useful, because that is partly information and partly picking other things out so people aren't tunnelled in their vision. People still think they will do one job for the rest of their lives, that is beginning to disappear; but we can do, and what we should be doing is making sure that people are aware of all of the options that there are."

But even this approach is not without its frustrations: "Sometimes you think what the hell am I doing? I sit and tell people things they could do and then I have to say 'well in fact you can't do that because there aren't any jobs around. So you are constantly looking for alternative things to do, like things to do in your unemployment. It's not just going to be for people who are finding it hard to find work, it's going to be everybody eventually looking for other things to do. Apart from a job there will be three or four or five different things that you do, and the idea of having lots of different skills and abilities and recognising that...and I see as part of what I have to do, and this is quite important, is to make people

realise what those skills are...and because usually the majority of clients don't feel they have achieved very much, they have failed and they are constantly being told that they have failed, so I see it as part of my responsibility to bring out things that they can do, things that they have done and utilise them, and the different ways they can use them and look at different avenues. You have to be quite inventive and look at different ways into things as opposed to the normal straight path. So lack of jobs is a problem which means looking at lots of different ways of getting to where you want to be and, I suppose, saying to people that it is not the be-all-and-end-all if you haven't got a job; but then money is the problem."

With regard to training Sally is clear: young people don't like it, but they have to do it: "I think there is a big disillusionment with training generally. I know there is. I mean most people don't want to do it but they have to. Where else are they going to get £35 a week from?"

She sees little hope of things getting better unless the government decides to do something about it: "I don't know. If we carry on in the system that we are living under, it's not going to get better. Things go in peaks and troughs and it is just going to keep happening and keep happening, and so long as the motivation is profit to the detriment of people, then things are not going to get better. Then things are going to get worse because people's attitudes...there isn't going to be employment and that may not necessarily be a bad thing. Who wants to work all their lives, 40 hours a week? But there has to be some alternative and there has to be some effort by governments to think of the people involved, whoever they are".

**Barbara, works at the Central Wandsworth Youth Advisory Service:**



"What we offer is a warm and accepting place for young people to be safe... People call me mummy these days, quite literally sit on my lap and say 'hi Mum'...They give over so much power to you, that you think 'Oh, God. I can't fulfil the role people want me to fill and I don't want to fill it anyway'..but its very hard."

She regards young people's 'problems' as expressions or manifestations of something more significant. Part of the way in which this can be addressed is by taking better care of young people: 'giving them a hug', and by more support for the workers in terms of management structures both internally on specific projects (e.g. management committees) and the way in which they connect with funding bodies (e.g. Local Authorities).

For Barbara the problems young people present are not always quite what they seem. "Well, the most significant problem that people bring here is probably housing and homelessness. That is the biggest issue, if you want a nice neat problem that brings people here. But I think that what continues to bring people here is a sense of isolation in young people's lives, probably those young people whose experience of their families hasn't been particularly wonderful, they don't feel supported or have had hardly any support from their families, and also young people who don't fit very neatly into their peer groups...who find it difficult on the whole to make relationships with their peers... Those young people who find themselves at a loss in terms of the world out there...I would tend to say that those young people who have all sorts of other concerns about who they are and don't feel supported emotionally are probably more likely to experience all those other problems...rather than that they have a problem with their housing and that is why they feel isolated...It is the other way around according to my experience with young people, because in a way you

have to compete for those things and then you are at a disadvantage if your competitive powers are being sapped by all sorts of other things and there is a competition for those things.

Some of the young people we see here are so damaged, have such long histories of damage, there have been quite a few of them who are bordering on falling over the edge, and suddenly they have and they have gone into a Mental Health institution. You get young people who find it gets too much and they go bang, snap...and suicide. The numbers of young people who have approached this service who at one time or another have either attempted suicide or who have chopped themselves about a bit is quite a fair proportion. More likely to be young women as well, and I think a lot of that gets covered by sexual abuse...we see a lot of young women who have been sexually abused, and men as well. Young people who use us have really suffered at the hands of adults during their formative years."

But it is not only the problems of young people that Barbara is concerned with. She also complains about the way in which workers are treated: "I think I feel increasingly personally frustrated in the working conditions for people in the voluntary sector: for me and for people who work with me...I think that quite probably more demands are made on us in the voluntary sector, and the range of decisions that we make go far beyond what most people in statutory work do and yet we can get chopped any second. Of course local authorities are also feeling that, but not in the same way that we do and we get paid much less. So those things can become quite a problem. I guess we do well in holding people here, but then people will want to move on because of the level of pay which isn't particularly great for an organisation that wants to deliver a high level of quality work with that level of consistency and all the rest of it...And it's

important that you can retain people to do that and I am not sure that we have the capacity to do that, which is very short-sighted really."

She feels that things will not improve. Although she does not see this deterioration as inevitable.: "I think it will get worse for young people. It doesn't have to get worse. This is what is so awful and tragic. I mean, we just don't take care of children, and if we don't take care of children we don't take care of young people and, therefore, what can we possibly expect? So it is about what happens if you don't offer support, particularly when you get a body of young women who are opting for pregnancy at early age and who aren't well supported...some of them cope well, lots of them don't, countless young people find themselves in poverty. I think we don't take care of children very much, even less so young people, because once they get to horrible adolescence, who cares? They are just pains then, even though the pain could have been eased if we had dealt a bit more caringly with children. I hate to say it, but I think Princess Di was right: 'Give them a hug'. There is an element of truth in that. Unless we become better at parenting in some ways, and more caring with that, but also parenting needs to be better supported so people have sufficient money so as to be able to bring their children up adequately, have better housing, all those things. Otherwise we are not going to do a very good job, are we, really."

For Liz, a probation officer at Sherborne House - an alternative to custody centre for young people and a student tutor at the West London Institute, it's not the young people who are the problem but the workers who suffer from a lack of what she calls 'integrity' and limited ambition which manifests itself in their feelings of anxiety which is



further fuelled by their lack of knowledge about the young people they are working with: "We see people coming here every day and we don't know anything about the shit that they are coming from, and therefore we will, unfortunately I think, not believe what they are saying, or think they are exaggerating, because it's too shocking."

Liz feels that this leads them into a defensive posture where they barricade themselves behind their professional status, qualifications and institutions. The gap that this creates between worker and client could be reduced, she argues, if workers were chosen as much for their life experience as academic status. But this would necessitate a different model of training the workers.

She says that workers' refusal to deal with the reality of young people's lives in a meaningful way and their determination to impose their own sense of reality on young people is part of their own defense mechanism to protect themselves: "I think sometimes that when you get into these institutions there is a very cotton wool approach. After a while that we mustn't stress ourselves, that we must have the best of everything, and that we mustn't be taxed too much, and that this is the ideal. I think a lot of workers get through the system because they manage to be very precious about things...what happens is that the worker's needs become almost paramount.

I think that any problem that arises is in terms of staff's integrity...I think the staff can get quite anxious about the fact that they have little idea about these people's lives...that they want to have a purpose for what they do so they hang on to the things that we know and then we stop, we don't explore other areas. Whereas the young people who are coming

in..what's happening to them is changing all the time. But that is not necessarily the case with the workers. They have quite a lot of stability in their lives in comparison and I think it is quite threatening for people who are coming in, who come from such a different angle. They find a few skills about how to hang on in there but never progress forward."

Liz has always resisted the objectifying process through which workers are trained. She feels that the way in which people are trained prevents them from doing their job: "I remember when I was doing my training, I resisted an awful lot of what was going on, not in a radical rebellious way, but I just thought that some of this is just such common sense that I wonder why they are trying to teach it to us, and then a lot of it I couldn't relate to. But what I was resisting was the process of change and I think that is what they do do when they are creating a probation officer - I mean training someone to work in this sort of work - I feel that what they are trying to do is to develop skills which enables them to have a one-sided relationship. I think that is the basis of counselling, that it is a one-sided relationship , so that the whole relationship is about the person that you are counselling or the person that you are social working and the skills that you need to do that. I think they are there already, but somehow they are focused upon the social work training and therefore you get values that come out like non-judgementalism, acceptance, respect for the person, empathy, unconditional regard. When I was in the process I couldn't really understand what they were doing.

The thing that I come up against again and again - and I felt it in the field and I still feel it now - is how can we really engage...how do we develop a relationship that is meaningful without getting involved? You can't really do it. And that's why it works at Sherborne House, because in

a way we do get involved. We are with them all day, and there is quite a lot of personal disclosure sometimes so the relationship is more even-handed. We do crafts together, we do activities together, they see us more as a human being. Whereas if you sit at a table with somebody and they are behind there and you are writing a report, there is an element of falseness to it. I think what I am saying in terms of working with people is that you as a person are the most important thing, and sometimes I think that we don't really examine who we are and what we have to offer. We just say that we are here for other people, which is very naive of us. Our tools are ourselves and therefore if you are not changing them and moving on, then what have you got to offer...and that's the bit where people get very anxious and where they bring in the procedures and they bring in the thingybob...and sometimes some of the things I hear at team meetings are so silly..and I say silly things too because we are a bit stuck because the experience these young people bring is overwhelming... I feel that what we do sometimes is to create these big edifices and people go round systems and that's how we manage it. But I'm wondering sometimes with staff members, who are the institutions for, are they for the workers or the clients?"

She feels that one way around the problem is bringing in people with what she refers to as appropriate life experience. But to do this the training has to be changed: "One way of overcoming this is by tapping into the life experience of workers. But there is a problem here because often the people with that life experience find it difficult to get over the academic hurdle. That is part of my job as a tutor trainer. That is a solution lies in adapting the training, to make the training less directive. I am quite excited by it because I feel that there is a move in the people they are trying to train to be social workers and probation officers. The West



London Institute seems to be particularly radical in removing the obstacles that were there for people who did have life experience, because there were lots of academic qualifications that people had to have. People do have to be academic, there are reports that have to be written, arguments that have to be combatted. To do that you need to have a lot of skills - to stand up in court and argue that somebody shouldn't go into custody or that somebody should have access to a child or somebody shouldn't be confined within a mental institution... then you need to be able to present very coherent arguments and have a good understanding of the way in which organisations exist, so there must be that academic understanding. But from my experience, life experience ability and academic qualifications don't go together." But this is not an anti-intellectualism. Rather a criticism of a particular sort of academicism. Her intention would be to reduce the gap between 'life experience' and 'the academic'.

Arjoon, the manager of the Lambeth Employment and Training Scheme, argues that in order for things to improve the world must change. Change is natural and inevitable. It is through the training process that change can be facilitated and various problems can be overcome: literacy and numeracy, racism, planning for self-development. As the training becomes better organised so the training opportunities for young people improve: "There are areas of excellence. When the thing first started out, there was a lot a of trash around: cheap labour and the mutilation of young people...probably the only advantage now is youngsters are given the opportunity to get accreditation for their training: NVQs and that sort of thing. We have had to upgrade all of our programmes, equipment and things like that, and tighten up on the training processes: there are aims and objectives and training plans for youngsters."

The high levels of unemployment in Lambeth have meant that young people are not getting the jobs they have been trained for: "We train people for the motor vehicles trades, car repairs, construction trades which is mainly for fitting people into the construction part of the Council. That has gone out to competitive tendering now. So they have slimmed out the number of apprentices they are taking on. That bit has been slimmed down as a result of the recession. So we have a lot of youngsters who have done their basic skills and are waiting for a placement, but are not able to..and that has struck very hard. And we do catering. Generally during the boom times the average length of stay on a scheme was 8-9 months, now it's more. They used to get a job after 12-14 months, now the process is longer.

This is one of the limitations of YT, it's a sort of 2 year quick-fix...preparing someone for the labour market. Which is short-sighted because this is an area of large economic deprivation...There are two large employers in the whole borough: Otis Lifts and the Council. The Council is shedding staff and Otis Lifts is pretty much in recession now."

There are young people on his scheme who do not want to be there: "But there is that minority of youngsters who traditionally, because YT had such a bad name, are not interested...they don't really care. Once on the scheme they refuse what is on offer by failing to attend. Absenteesim is a problem, a major problem. We have a drop-out rate and this has always been the problem with workshop and training scemes in this area. Absenteeism has been a massive, massive problem. On our scheme we probably lose 15 per cent in drop-out that takes place within the first 3-4 months. We do follow-up surveys, we have to and it is good practice also...These are the same trainees - and it has increased over the last year - who would not

have gone onto a training scheme anyway, the government has removed their benefits, so they have to. So there is this mobile passage of trainees throughout the borough. They come in, they do a couple of days, a bit of induction, come in for a couple of days, Monday, Tuesday, miss Wednesday Thursday...come in Friday collect money... so they go through the process of counselling and discipline and the whole process will take three months...and they go from scheme to scheme right around the borough.

These things, you have to be careful, you can't use broad brushes - I'm talking about 16-18 year olds, the school leaver. If you widen that for ET, the profile for 18-30 is going to change massively. What I am telling you for young people is not relevant to that age group. With long-term unemployment, the experience in terms of ET it will be dismal.

Statistically 90% of these people will say: 'What is the point of me doing training, I am not going to get a job anyway'. It's a case of the low skill equilibrium...expectations are low, no training, no jobs, the whole cycle of the low skills equilibrium. We have good trainers which helps to reduce absenteeism. But not in every section because the achievements in particular areas are patchy. This ain't no pile of excellence - you could meet some trainers who get good results in terms of what is measurable in terms of NVQs, certification, job opportunities...it could be a reason why we have not had a riot in Lambeth for a while. I'm not saying that I'm the primary cause of it but still... (joke)."

This non-attendance makes organising funding and planning very difficult: "For managing agents one of the problems is the funding structure. At the end of the day we have an open door policy, who are motivated and who we can work with. If there are incredible special difficulties then we won't, we will pass them on to the relevant people. But one of our problems is



absenteeism. Now for the days that the trainee is not here we don't get paid for that. So you have a trainee who is in a group. We try to keep small groups, it's the best method, with the type of trainees we have and their academic achievement we keep the groups small: 8-10, and the sections are like that, literacy and numeracy is like that, and it really works if you work in small groups. If you work in large groups you find that you can't give people individual attention that they require, but if one or two of those trainees are off you don't get paid for it, at the end of the day if you set up your group for say 10 you work with that group whether they are in or not. The TECs say 'Why don't you have 15 a group?', on the basis that some of the groups are going to be always less. It makes planning impossible.

Now those trainees, their money will get docked if they are absent - some of them accept this and some of them wouldn't. Some of them have got second jobs, a small proportion of them is hussling, earning extra cash on the side. We lose probably between 5-8% of our claims on absenteeism. About 15% of trainees who enter the scheme drop out. But this has to be taken within a proper perspective. The 5-10% that we lose are the people who go on placement which is the largest part of the scheme. There are 60 trainees on placement. These are the ones who have gone through the workshop, these are the ones who are going to stay the course. That's the reason why the absenteeism is so low - it's because there is a sifting process that goes through the workshop. If you take the absenteeism in the workshop, it is very high, absenteeism on placement is only about 1%, in the workshop it's about 20-30%, I'm talking about the scheme generally, so the workshop acts as a sifting process for the absentees, for the people who go missing. But if you go onto ET schemes it is very different. ET schemes take people in and stick them out on placement straightaway so their statistics are going

to show up dismal all the time because there is no sifting programme. And this happens. Lambeth is bottom of the country in terms of ET. Literally at the bottom. Somewhere in the middle in terms of YT, there are worse areas: Tower Hamlets, Southwark: a basket case. So we have to be careful how we use statistics."

Planning is also made more difficult by the constant changes that are being introduced and with which Arjoon has to contend. He deals with it by attempting to manage it and by ensuring that the staff are well trained: "In terms of training and training for staff, every member of staff has gone through extensive staff development which is very important to me and for managing change. Just about every part in life now is change: the council, a lot of organisational changes; in training there has been a lot of changes, for example the TEC, training credits, changes in funding structure, in further education the introduction of self-managing and schools opting out...Staff here have the highest level of training probably within the council. I made that plan ages ago. We are lucky because in the past we have been able to ask for training and get it from the MSC. We made very full usage of that, so that has been good. Also the recognition that there is room for improvement.

Things are constantly changing. For instance, over the next 6-8 months we are supposed to be moving to education. This is still in the air, in the pipeline, supposed to take place, almost take place...Also the government spending: local authority budgets for next year that is going to mean, I am sure, less resources...I'm sure. They have removed Urban Programme..and Lambeth was heavily dependent on that. So that is going to affect us somehow. The TECs are introducing training credits in March, Lambeth won City Challenge, work on that starts in April, that's going to mean changes,

major all the time. But as time goes along we try to fine tune but in dealing with national problems of YT as exhibited at local level you can't. For instance there are groups of youngsters who are not cut out for YT, are not suitable, and yet squeezed into an inflexible system. Plus here we are very very short in terms of schemes which specialise for people with particular problems like disability, dyslexia, that sort of thing. I am trying to run an open-door policy for be all and end all, but this inevitably means that you can't cater for everyone which shouldn't be the case..."

But, Arjoon argues, change is not altogether a bad thing. He feels that it is needed in some cases to counter the wrong policies of white progressive educationalists and racist practice: "I do feel this fairly strongly that where white liberals took over who didn't espouse the idea of streaming and all that kind of thing, that this is some of the problems we are facing now. I don't want to sound conservative or reactionary about it, but it is important that if someone do need extra help that there is someone there to provide it. For instance, there are trainees who come onto the scheme who would be much more suitable at a different scheme, they come here with particular types of disability that we do not have the resources for. We need proper assessments. We try to use places with specialist knowledge, of course they are strapped too.

Changes take place - that's what change I see - it happens because people are changing, driven by society. OK let's look at the apprenticeship system in Britain, part of the occupational labour market, very selective, elitist, pay better, job prospects, very white male environment. Is change necessary? Damn sure. Yes! Get rid of them, change them, do something with them. We had black youngsters who could not get on the Construction



Industry Training Board course in 1985. Change very necessary, change is here a good thing. I guess I'm sorry, but if you talk to a person from a different cultural background or context they will say, 'Well, why change?' If you have power anyway, then why change? Hang on as long as you can, don't you? If you have access to power then why change. So change in some cases is very necessary. And inevitable.

It's not that these problems aren't resolvable. People have to change, it's evolutionary. You could use a contingency perspective on change, or a theory of population ecology, which is a bit like Thatcherism. The strong will survive. The contingency theory says that every organisation will be in a process of change whether it is rapid or slow. It's down to the manager to influence that change rather than standing back and decrying change for the sake of it. Government policies are government policies - we have got John Major for the next 5 years. John Major has laid out his White Paper on vocational training and these things are being carried out. It's going to take place, e.g. competitive tendering. It's for people like us at ground level to interpret those changes as best as we can.

We have to change because technology changes. One of the problems if we look at the private sector, this includes international competitiveness, machinery working techniques, that sort of thing, will be constantly changing and evolving. Markets come and go, style fashion changes, different fabrics, jeans, skating boards, our taste - things are changing constantly - type of movie, what we do and inevitably there is the market, consumerism, so there is change whether we like it or not. People come up with better techniques, theories. I read a very interesting thing I didn't know existed by Paulo Frierie and his theories of oppression, something I

didn't know about, and by reading I will start looking at things slightly different. I'm not saying I will get up tomorrow and be a different person, but all these things have subtle effects.

If you have a closed shop into accessible skills you are locking off a large part of very skillful people. Apart from North Sea Oil the only resource that Britain has is people, raw products manufacturing and selling. If you lock off or make it so selective that only a small part of the population has access to that, then it doesn't augur well in terms of international competitiveness. If you go to America and you want to site a factory, then I am going to site it in a place that has got all the skills, the human resources...So it's a reaction to what is happening worldwide...Look at Nat West computing programmes are being processed in Bombay, because some people are stupid, they will work for a bowl of rice."

He is not hopeful about the future. He puts his faith in what he calls the economy: "Generally most of the young people would prefer to work in this area, rather than travel or move. Unemployment will stay high in the area, we are starting to see the first trickle of youngster coming through with qualifications and moving into unemployment which is something we have not experienced before. Companies are not taking qualified young people on, they said they were shedding, and that's for the achievers. Out of 60 drop-outs who left in the last 12 months the chances is that 95% of them are on the unemployment register, so as long as the economy does not get better large employers in the area are contracting. I don't see the future as being very bright. The future depends on the economy improving: land labour and capital."

But Arjoon enjoys his work, and in particular the independence and freedom

that his job gives him. While it is too early to say how his relationship with the TEC will develop, he is used to having a free hand: "We are semi-autonomous here, so while we are part of the council we are an outpost. There are advantages and disadvantages in this. The disadvantage is that we tend to be cut off from mainstream thinking. The advantage is that I'm involved in a lot more decisions and decision-making processes - for example, in organising a contract with the TEC. If I was sitting in the Economic Development Office this might be negotiated way above my head, I wouldn't get a peep at it. Which is one of the things that has kept me here really. It is very interesting. I quite enjoy it here, even though there are limitations in terms of YT and that sort of thing, but working here gives me a lot of autonomy."

And having trained as an engineer Arjoon enjoys the experimental nature of his work: "I will stay here. It is a very good laboratory for me. I hate looking at it like that, but I run into some of the most diverse youngsters, people, contacts, employers in the area, and it's nice cos I know people in the area: young people and employers - it's brilliant, you know...I'm involved with my kid's local school and I do my study for an MA on training and employment at Leicester University plus the work that I am doing. I am at the cutting edge of it."

Paul, at Springboard Southwark YT, presents himself as the epitome of the training professional. For him it is not just a question of managing change, but inventing the future. You don't just respond to it, you control it. He attempts to do this through the introduction of business techniques borrowed from management theory: Quality Management Systems,



with its slogans of agendas, mission-statements, planks, value-added and customer satisfaction.

"I am interested in developing things like Quality Systems. I have agendas of my own. I think I am better at setting up management systems. I get more pleasure from that. I think a lot of my work is about creative thinking, getting things to work better, looking at things like customer satisfaction, I'm sorry to drag the word customer into this - trainees, young people, according to quality models, they are customers, they are receivers of a service from us. I want them to enjoy and benefit from that service and it's not for us to decide what they need, it is for them to set the agenda. To a certain extent it is a limited menu that we have on offer, because any young person who comes in here we have got to say we are paid to do this. Now with all this you can have certain choices, but if your choices fall outside this no one is paying us for doing it, except we might be able to help you. I think if you can put that message clearly to young people you are more likely to actually get them to identify something that they can get out of their time with us and to be happy. I want young people to be happy.

The aims are primarily to create opportunities for young people to gain training/employment. Originally that was just through YT and that still is 90% of what we do, although we do now also run the Volunteers Programme through the Prince's Trust and access training for adults. A young person coming to us is offered vocational training in business admin or community care towards an NVQ with help in terms of getting a job - no guarantee of a job, but hopefully enhanced employment opportunities and generally on a year-to-year basis we have had more of our young people getting into jobs and getting qualifications as time has gone by, despite recession and

various other things.

I think that partly through the funding model that we live with these days we have become tighter and more goal-orientated, more professional. I think that there are bits that we have lost in that process - the programmes are more trainee specific. We will genuinely sit down and discuss what they want to do. We genuinely listen to what sorts of jobs they are interested in. And we will genuinely try to get them a job in that area. Quite a lot of the trainees on the scheme are employed while they are going through training. I think that if you have got a young person, you can't just say that you have got them by right, they are here therefore they want to be here, that's not the case.

Over the last few years lots of the young people that have come to us don't want to be here, but have been forced by changes in benefit rules or parents' pressure and all sorts of things to get themselves a job or a training scheme, jobs haven't been available so they have gone for a training scheme as a last resort very often. It's up to us to make that a worthwhile experience. If you have got people coming here against their will, our job is a lot harder. The only thing we can do is to change their minds about it and make it a worthwhile experience for them or, if it comes to it if they haven't got the commitment then they are probably more likely to get referred on elsewhere or be dismissed.

We are tougher on trainees, we expect higher standards from trainees. I don't have any problem with that because I think that young people would rather be on a programme that takes itself seriously, and if you are not going to do it then this probably isn't the right place for you. We are not responsible for the environment that we exist in. There was originally

a temptation to say that the world out there isn't very nice and we have got a nice sheltered environment that we can look after people in. I don't think that did young people any favours, we would give people extensions if they had been here for two years and didn't have anything to do, even if we couldn't give them any added value, we couldn't improve on the training, they weren't making progress and all we were doing was fostering a dependency on what little we had to offer.

I think part of what we have lost is the personal touch. I remember when I started here 8 years ago there was the personal touch. We had time for trainees, we had the opportunity to sit down and work things through with whoever needed it. I think now we have 180 trainees on our books, most of them are working with team leaders who work with a ratio of 45:1( 8 years ago 15:1). We have one team leader who works on a ratio of 15:1, her responsibility is for taking care of the people who need close support and whatever, but that is a quite significant change. 45:1 is a lot."

Despite this professionalism Paul is keen to dispel any notion that they don't care: "We are funded to deliver vocational qualifications and to help get people into jobs. I certainly don't think we should let people drop off the end and say you're not right for us, nor do I see it as rejecting special needs trainees because some of the people we keep for 2 or 3 years may be very special needs, but it is about actually being able to say at the end of a 6 month period, 'Has this person made progress towards their goals?', not towards what Springboard says they should be doing. It's what they say they should be doing, it's what they want out of us. Have they progressed towards that, and if they stay on will they make more progress? If they haven't made progress then the question is why not? Are we doing something wrong? Do we want to change what we are doing? Are



we providing the right training, the right support? Do they want to be here? If the answer to the question 'Will they make progress in the next 6 months?' is 'no' then you have got to look at what we can do to make progress, but if not then where can they go to achieve something.

Particularly as we have got a waiting list. We have got people who are sitting at home not getting benefit. There are people who are ringing us every day, who are saying 'When can we come on, I'm broke'. In the summer, the wait was 6 months it's now 3. So much for the guarantee.

And the fact that you have that waiting list is bound to have an effect. You have a responsibility to the young person who wants to come onto the scheme. If people aren't getting anything out of being with you, then you have got a responsibility to find something where they could be doing better - and that's not just to say go down to your careers office and tell them to find you somewhere else. It's having staff who are networking with other organisations, and it's not just 'pass the parcel' but it's about making decisions about where someone is going to get what they need with their consent or helping them towards that decision."

Paul sees the changes in funding models as something of a liberation. While it creates certain problems for them it allows them to take decisions for themselves in consultation with the TEC: "When I first started with the MSC you agreed a contract at the beginning of the year for, say, 100 places. You might get 10 staff and it didn't matter if you filled those places or not. You might operate with 10 trainees and 10 staff. They might at the end of the year say 'you didn't do very well, we are going to cut you'. There was no pressure apart from that. But on the other side, you had no control over what you wanted to spend. If you wanted to buy paper clips you had to let them know a month in advance, it was that sort of funding, and they

paid you for doing it before you did it. We are now paid in arrears, we have to do the training before we get paid. Two years ago, during the transition to arrears funding, we had to get through two and a half months with no money. It cost us £80,000 to get through that period, so that was a fairly hard transition to make. Now we are paid after the event for the training weeks that we deliver, but we have complete control of our finance. We don't have to rush around at the end of the year to make sure our allocation is used up just because we had the money. I think we are also in a better position in terms of size. We are one of the larger providers in London - that does have benefits, it gives us quite a lot of clout. If they do want to shut us down they have to think about where they are going to find someone else to fill in, and I think that has helped us quite a lot. A couple of years ago we were 60 places, 65 in 1989 now at 180, and during that period quite a lot of providers have gone.

Our criteria for success is worked out with the TEC, and includes getting trainees through to Level 2 NVQs. Our total TEC funding in respect to YT is £700,000, about £120,000 is held back against achievement of NVQs, that is quite a sizeable chunk of what we do. There is another £60,000 that is linked to us meeting occupancy and profile targets, but they are fairly easy to achieve. That is about how we recruit, maintain an open door policy, recruit special needs people, stay full. At the beginning of the year I make a forecast about what we will look like. I sit down with the TEC and they say they would like us to do more of this or less of that. It's negotiated and once it's agreed, for staying within 5% of that profile, I get additional funding on a quarterly basis. It stops me recruiting the people who would get through NVQs easily. It stops me having a selection process, I don't want one - but it's a payment to recognise that we have an open access recruitment policy, and the rest of

it is about how many people I do take on to get qualifications.

In straight financial terms we are paid for getting results, for trainees we get through qualifications, which means that at the moment I have told a couple of my staff that they have got to identify trainees in their group who will be through certain qualifications by certain dates. And they are going to have to fast-stream those people. We need to do that because it's worth about £30,000 to us to meet certain targets by March. There has been a shortfall, we have failed on some of our targets, so we need to make sure that we get these people through, that's 2 staff posts we're talking about. We will do it. Those trainees will get through faster than they would have probably and will do quite well out of it, but I am diverting resources for the long-term good of the organisation. If I don't do that then we are losing staff posts, and we won't have the resources to spend on the trainees who are losing out at the moment. What will happen is that those other people on those teams will get less attention during the next three months than they would have otherwise.

I think that 3 or 4 years ago that sort of operation would have been completely unacceptable to anyone working here - it might have been all right on other schemes, we took our time coming around to that style of operation, but too many YT providers have gone down in the last 18 months, large providers have failed to survive. If you are going to survive you have got to meet your targets. In the long run so long as we meet our targets we can afford to provide for everyone, by getting the achievers through their qualifications we can put resources into the people who are going to take longer to achieve, who need more support. 6 months ago we could not have afforded the placement officer who is working at low ratios. This is something we have introduced, we had everyone at 40:1. It is



because they have been successful that we have been able to bring in someone working at a low rate, to provide additional support. We are providing more special needs training now than we have in the last 2 yrs, because we have been successful in the last 12 months."

Absenteesim is not a problem although monitoring attendance is. As Paul explained: "Absenteeism is not too bad. Monitoring attendance is an administrative nightmare. We try to keep tabs on 180-192 people in anything up to 150 placements. We need an attendance record on a weekly basis. I think in terms of admin it's a nightmare in terms of keeping tabs on where everyone is, and what they are doing. But absenteeism isn't too high. I think absenteeism stems from people not having enough to do or not having enough to do that they want. If you forget about a young person and say 'oh well, they will be alright, leave them there, they were happy last time I saw them', they will lose interest if you are not paying them attention, then you have problems. We will dock for absenteeism. If someone disappears they will get their money stopped. If they have a legitimate grievance then we might pay them. It's about sitting down with people saying there are ways of dealing with problems that are more succesful than others, you chose the wrong one this time, but have a fresh start, set up new courses."

Springboard are successful in finding young people jobs. As Paul says: "We run a Job Club for people who are coming up to leave and I think it is a more effective job search programme that we have ever done. I think that in the past we did not invest as much time as we could have in terms of getting people jobs. In retail and business admin if the placement isn't prepared to pay then they don't go in, that is the norm now. We expect organisations to employ trainees. We have placements with Southwark

Council, with B&Q, the Gas Board in their accounts department. Now as far as I am concerned it is understood that when the trainees get their NVQs they will get jobs and that is agreed. I don't think we had those sort of opportunities available 5 years ago. I think it is partly that we have been pushed into that position, but it has borne results and we do have more people getting jobs and qualifications."

Young people are encouraged to value their training experience. This is enhanced through the certification process: "5 years ago the situation was that the team leader would think: 'Maybe I will write them a certificate when they leave if they want one', but the staff did not value the certificate so the young people didn't value them. We have presentations now of people getting certificates and quite often it's the first one they have had. We invite parents and employers, the Gas Board have sometimes given us their conference rooms, we have speeches, cheering and clapping. Young people who have never had a piece of paper, however much they go all macho and street-wise about it, they really are proud and smiling when they get that bit of paper which says that they have got a qualification. I think the YTS certificate was a joke, it didn't have any real value but I think that, to a certain extent, it quite often started with the people who were issuing the certificate. It has always been the case that young people have wanted recognition for what they have achieved and I think that quite often it was we who devalued the certificate rather than the trainees. I think it is better if it is a certificate that is issued by City & Guilds rather than one issued by Springboard, that's fairly understandable. But I think we played our part in devaluing it."

Paul is pleased with the relationship that he has with his TEC: "The TECs are not that bad. In the last year we have more than doubled in size. I

think that there was a big launch when TECs first came live. The offices were plusher but it was the old MSC Training Agency building, that had been refurbished. Most of the staff were the same staff as before, they were basically civil servants. They have started appointing people, for the first year they weren't even allowed to appoint outside the Civil Service, jobs had to be advertised internally. So even if you did advertise all you got was more Civil Servants coming in. It is only in the last 8 months that they have been able to recruit with a free hand. And that has begun to have an effect. A lot of the old staff are beginning to feel disempowered and wonder about what is happening, and they are quite often fairly indiscreet about their feelings and about what's going on. The TECs want people who work to its methods, they have a view of Civil Servants that doesn't fit in with the way they want to be going.

I think our TEC is fairly good. The Chief Executive is Mike Hanson who has a good track record in terms of the voluntary sector. He is sympathetic to many of the social issues: he is interested in homelessness and is funding work on youth and women returners; he's made money available for child-care for people under 18 before other TECs, he has been fairly innovative and imaginative. I think South Thames TEC are creative and imaginative in terms of achieving goals: they are looking at lots of small one-off pilots, at providing vocational training for volunteers, for people who aren't on training schemes but can get help towards achieving qualifications..."

And Paul enjoys his work: "I am happy. I think it's a lovely job that I have got. I have more autonomy here than I would have if I went into private industry. To have the level of autonomy I have here I would have had to have been in the job for ages, I would be quite senior, with more stress and pressure. When I want I can take the job home with me or I can



leave it behind me. It's great. And to a certain extent I do inform my own work. I can choose because I am in a position where I can do the bits I like and delegate or arrange the structure of the organisation so that there is someone to do the bits I don't like."

His situation makes a chilling contrast with the current position of young people as he describes it: "I'm glad I'm not young. For young people, I think it is very depressing. I think the world at the moment is very depressing. I don't know why we voted for another conservative government or how we get out of the situation we're in. I think it is really depressing. And particularly if you are young. When I was young it didn't matter. I didn't care. I didn't have to make these kind of decisions or behave responsibly. I think it is damaging to young people to force choices on them. People here take any job they can just for the sake of it being a job. I think we are wasting a whole resource with our young people, taking away any creativity they might have or any original thought, forcing them into models because that's the way it is."

Mike works as an Education Officer with the Inner London Probation Service. He is also in the process of writing a PhD thesis at Warwick University.

"I'd stopped working with young people. I'd been doing it for 13 years on a variety of different programmes. I simply couldn't justify it to myself anymore. I'd worked through the idealistic missionary rescue phase: 'If you can save one young person, then you have saved all young people', through to more practical applications, e.g., setting up a job creation scheme based on the simple idea that the answer to unemployment is employment, through to Alvin Toffler and Charles Handy's vision of a workless working

future and on to the post-Fordist fantasy of a deregulated regulationist working class heaven. That was where I stopped.

I left my job as the Director of a youth development programme in Wandsworth Youth Development (WYD) to recreate myself. I thought I could do that by investigating the process I had been involved in, and in the meantime to earn some money by doing some teaching and training. Before leaving Wandsworth I had a number of articles published in a wide range of publications, I thought I would survive in that way, as well as doing some training and consultancy work. And in that way avoid or at least reduce the killing contradictions that were making it impossible for me to continue in my role at that time. I wanted and needed to get outside.

By this time I'd started reading Marx. I was introduced to him at Middlesex Poly as part of a part-time MA course: Employment and Planning, which I had started and finished while at WYD. The course and Marx had been a major factor in fuelling my sense of dissatisfaction. It was not a big part of the course, but I had seen enough to know that I wanted more and to be aware of its possibilities. I didn't 'understand' it, but I felt like I had caught a glimpse of something...progressive. It was only a fleeting glimpse and was blurred at that time by other reading I had started to do: post modernists and post structuralists, but Marx was something else...

Through reading Marx my intense frustration was given some meaning, and it gave me the courage to leave my job. I wanted to make that statement and to reproduce myself in another form. I had, by now, started a PhD programme at

the University of Warwick with Simon Clarke. I was introduced to more reading that gave me more courage and yet made me more frightened at the same time. I think the work that had the most startling effect on me was the Situationist International (SI). Not only did I want to read more of it, I wanted to have my own private revolution. It fitted in perfectly with my need to recreate myself.

As my understanding of Marx developed and as my own private revolution began to founder on the need to eat, I quickly became aware of the limits of the SI. This did not make the work any less impressive or exciting, but I knew that it was not enough. There was no outside. In order to reproduce myself I would have to write through the SI, to write a critique of it. But first I would have to live through it. I needed to make some money.

I applied for jobs involving what I knew: working with young people. I didn't get them. But from those applications people knew that I was about, and I began to get some work. I rationalised my return to the work with the view that if there was no outside I could work in through and against the contradictions of the work, by revealing them more obviously to myself and perhaps I'd get the chance to discuss them with my colleagues. By now I'd read John Holloway's In and Against the State, I knew now that I wasn't on my own.

The most substantial piece of work I picked up was as a part-time literacy tutor in a Probation Centre in South London. The Centre was an alternative to custody for 'habitual young offenders'. If they weren't there they



would be in prison. I was encouraged by the Manager to work not just on literacy but to develop the educational content of the programme. The educational part of the programme was optional and the young people tended to reject it, or if they chose it they gave the tutors a hard time.

I started from the simple idea that the educational content should be about developing the interests that the young people already had, and linking that to what I was interested in and had to offer. If the young people were unable to achieve what they wanted through any specific limitation then we could work on that, and, not to assume what the problem was, but to work from what they needed and what they were able to do. I had been reading Marx's early works and their interpretation by Kay and Mott. I thought we could at least think about the problem of alienated labour by conceptualising the problem through the concepts of needs and capacities. I asked the young people what do you need and what are you able to do. And from that to work out a plan to make something happen, as quickly as we could. That is not to promise anything in the abstract or in the future but to make it instant - the immediate future at least. So that in order for the process to justify itself something had to happen. Whatever that something was.

But in order for that to happen, the activities would have to be properly resourced, and for that we needed money. Money makes the impossible possible. I wanted to focus on money. Money is the form in which the problem is most obvious and yet it is never discussed in that way. I wanted it to be discussed. I'd read something in Lefebvre which, despite its Proudhonist overtones, had a shocking effect on those Probation

Officers I said it to: 'Its not about rehabilitating young offenders, what we should be doing is rehabilitating money.'

From my experience in Wandsworth I knew that there were various amounts of money around to finance this kind of activity. The young people and I put a lot of effort into applying for grants. The money began to roll in. From the success of this approach it became obvious that this model could be generalised to include everyone on the programme. The work could be justified by the obvious fact that it was assisting young people to develop something that they could involve themselves with at the end of the programme. There had been some attention paid to what young people would do at the end of the ten week programme, but the priority for the Probation Service was to get the 'clients' through the Court Order. It was eventually decided to generalise this model of working for all of the young people who would attend such a session every week. This new initiative was to be known as *The Futures* programme.

There was a certain amount of opposition to this new part of the programme. The Probation Officers, with some exceptions, were not keen. I think that they saw it as subverting the work that they were doing. The basis of their work was focused on what they refer to as redirecting offending behaviour: challenging the criminal activity of young people and getting them by one means or another, e.g. by encouraging guilt by making them confront the circumstances of their crime, or to make more rational choices based on a cost/benefits analysis of the problems that offending has for them in their lives. However, with the support of the Centre manager and

some of the more influential main grade officers, *The Futures* programme was piloted.

Every Friday morning I would ask the young people what they needed and what were they able to do. Together a link would be made between their demands and their capacities, and from that a plan of action would be drawn up. This would involve costing the project and a plan for how to get the money in a way that would not result in them having to talk to people like me. They wanted to do everything and nothing. The plans included going to New York, learning how to fly, make records, construct sound studios, make a film, write a book, make wooden toys, go to college etc. Usually the money was made available. Most young people would get several hundred pounds and some more than a thousand.

*Futures* quickly became a very popular part of the programme. The young people were positive about it. Some of the Probation Officers got fully immersed in the process but there was always a lingering resentment and opposition to the work. As time went on and the programme began to expand this resentment was to become more evident.

It is vitally important for the Probation Service that what they do has some affect on rates of recidivism. *The Futures* programme worked in the sense that the young people liked it and it had a concrete result. But it is not easy to make such claims for the offending behaviour approach. Not least because of the unreliability that surrounds recorded crime figures. There was though at this time a 'new' correctional approach - inspired by a Canadian criminologist, Robert Ross, and known as The Reasoning and



Rehabilitation Programme - that seemed to respond to many of these problems. There is, in fact, nothing new about the programme. It was a development of the behaviouralist-inspired devices taken a stage further as cognitive training. However, such are the claims that it made for itself: of its success in reducing recidivism, claims that were readily accepted by the Probation Service on tenuous evidence, that Inner London Probation Service committed itself to the programme, although many of the probation officers who were going to have to deliver Ross did not like it. It was not that they disliked its theoretical basis, it was more the fact that the programme was very prescriptive: they were encouraged to work from a script, its language was racist and it cast them very much in the role of trainers, rather than group workers, or counsellors or facilitators, which is how they liked to see themselves. I didn't like it either. I thought it was A Clockwork Orange.

A Clockwork Orange is essentially a book about the Probation Service and its methods. This point has been lost in all the hype about the film and the violence. The essential point is that Alex, an offender, is reprogrammed to become a model citizen. And it works. At the end of the book, in a sequence omitted from both the film and the American version of the book, Alex displays all the conventional attitudes of bourgeois domesticity. He has been remade through a particular correctional technique.

In conjunction with a colleague (Graham Taylor) I wrote a critique of the Ross programme. We concentrated on the concept of rationality, on which the Ross model of correct thinking is based, and counterposed this with the

irrationality of modern society. Ross was due in England in September 1992 to attend a 'What Works' conference. I had arranged with the conference organisers that we could display the article. I was already attending as a delegate to talk about the Futures programme. On the first morning of the conference I set out a stall with the articles. I saw Robert Ross and gave him a copy. I said that I would be interested in his thoughts, and left with my friends to have a coffee. When we returned the articles had been removed. I saw one man flicking through a copy. I asked him if he knew where the articles had gone. He told me they had been removed, and when I asked him if he knew why he said because 'It's 'garbage'...it's graffitti...it's Mein Kampf'. I was shocked by these remarks, even more so as he had to admit that he had not read the piece.

The article may have been 'disappeared' from that conference, but the manner in which it had occurred gave it a certain notoriety which a more relaxed approach, or if it had been ignored, could not have achieved. At the next National Association of Probation Officers AGM a special motion was proposed deploring the removal and censorship of our critical piece. I wrote an article for the Probation Journal about the incident. All of this generated a lot of interest and requests for the article. At time of writing only one critical piece has appeared, based not on the original article but the piece I wrote in the Probation Journal. And no news from Robert Ross. The critical voice at the conference turned out to be MacGuire, a psychologist and Probation Service ideologist. He has since apologised.

Meanwhile *The Futures* programme began to generate a large amount of work.

I had been working part time, but more and more of my time was taken up with researching and planning the various ideas with the young people. With the support of the Centre Director I investigated ways in which the work could be supported through charitable funding to support a full-time worker. The money to support a two-year contract was raised. ILPS immediately converted the post into a full-time position with a full-time contract.

The young people had been very successful in raising funds from various charities, but now the money was beginning to dry up, either because the funders thought that we were getting too much out of them, or because of 'the recession' which meant that their own sources of funding were drying up. It seemed like a good idea to set up our own fund that we could control and avoid all the aggravation associated with seeking funding elsewhere. Again the money became available very quickly. In fact after having several refusals, the Sainsbury's Trust, approached me after having heard about the work from another source. They came down to see the work and at the end of the meeting said that they would ask their committee to grant £22,000 to support the work for a year. That works out at about £300 for each young person on the programme. I was surprised at the amount of money, I had thought that we might get a couple of thousand, but not that much. What this meant was that we could virtually 'guarantee' the young people that whatever they wanted to happen could happen in a form with which they were satisfied.

But if I was surprised about the amount that we had been given, the money



sent a simmering shock of resentment through the rest of the programme. The real trouble was about to begin.

Sherborne House is one of the Inner London Probation Service's more prestigious projects. It therefore attracts a lot of visitors, a book has recently been published *Living Dangerously*, a voyeuristic account of the programme by the journalist Roger Graef. And most recently Home Secretaries have been coming to see us. In 1992 Kenneth Clarke and in 1993 Michael Howard. It was usual that I would get to meet these people and explain *The Futures* programme, Kenneth Clarke was distractedly interested, but Michael Howard took more notice. This was the time when press attention was being focused on a correctional therapies which claimed that offending behaviour could be challenged by taking people out of their normal environment and subjecting them to an alien experience and culture, i.e. 'taking them on holiday' as it was to be characterised in the popular press. There was a number of articles on the subject and MPs in parliament were denouncing this practice. Part of *The Futures* programme had been to encourage and support foreign travel, not justified as a correctional technique but simply as a holiday, or an educational and learning experience. Michael Howard was interested in this and questioned me closely about the rationale for such activity. The first example I gave him, of a young man who wanted and needed to go to Spain to visit his child that he had not seen for many years, was not a problem for Michael Howard. He thought it was a perfectly reasonable thing to do. He was not so sure about a trip that another young man was planning, to go to Italy to see Inter Milan. However we parted amicably and he admitted himself that he may have made rather too much of it. However, three months later on 5th December 1992 the Independent on

Sunday printed an article on the visit: 'When Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, visited the Sherborne House Probation Centre in Bermondsey, south London, in September he had his worst fears about liberal do-gooders confirmed. Staff [that's me] running Sherborne House, the community centre for juvenile offenders, proudly told him about an 18-year-old burglar who had learnt Spanish and would soon be heading to Madrid to test his skills. But far from being impressed the Home Secretary exploded. 'This is quite extraordinary!', he exclaimed, and began a hostile cross examination to find out how it was that a young criminal could get a foreign holiday. Then Mr. Howard marched out. Decisive action followed. Last Wednesday David Maclean, the Home Office minister, told the Commons: 'Community penalties should be just that - penalties. A cushy foreign holiday...is clearly an unacceptable response to offending'. He promised new national standards which would ensure 'offenders receive proper punishment'.

None of this was true. While we had a disagreement about appropriate responses to youth crime, he had in the usual way, been very impressed by what Sherborne House could provide. However, the implications for all of this was not so much that it was not true but it caused an acute case of anxiety for my colleagues who had no desire to have their faces or Sherborne House all over the front pages of the Sun, and to put their careers at risk. Most if not all of this anxiety was directed at me, and *The Futures* programme.

There was a virulent backlash against the money. The Probation Officers complained about the way grants were awarded, the system was not rigorous enough, it lacked accountability. And, what's more, I was undermining their work. While feeling intensely uncomfortable I at least felt that I

had exposed something and made something more concrete and that this debate about money was a real debate about something real. In the face of this opposition I was forced to retreat. And to devise a programme to make the money more accountable. Money could no longer be allowed to be used as money. It had to be justified (: as capital).

My practical retreat has given me the impetus to write a theoretical critique of the subject of money within the probation service. I am writing it with Graham Taylor. The paper is called 'Money Changes Everything! The invisibility of Money in Probation Work Theory and Practice.' In the paper we discuss the fact that money as a social form has been largely absent from analyses of 'crime' and 'criminality' in both bourgeois and 'radical' or 'Marxist' criminology and social science generally. The absence of money is similarly evident in the day-to-day practice of probation and social workers. The focus of the paper is to highlight the fundamental relationship between money and crime and the way in which a careful delineation of money as a social form is central to understanding the rationality of human action in capitalist society. The paper first explores the work of Marx and the bourgeois sociologist Georg Simmel on the social determination of money and the ways in which the development of the money form has fundamental implications with respect to the material and cultural domination of human subjectivity by capital and the state.

We highlight the way in which money played a central role in the historical development of social work and probation practice. These practices developed through the failure of the money form, or the absence of money in the form of 'poverty' and evoked attempts to reimpose money relations



through the 'casework' method of charity provision and control which was increasingly administered by the state. The contradictory domination of the state resulted in the development of administrative forms of criminal regulation abstracted from the money form. This abstraction resulted in the regulation of 'offending behaviour' through practices which focus on its 'irrationality' and which attempt to 'remoralise' the demoralised and propertyless individual through forms of cognitive and behavioural 'training'. The regulation of deviant behaviour is therefore abstracted from the money form, but is unable to escape the reimposition of the abstract power of money in a contradictory and fetished form.

The paper explores recent development in probation work practice in order to demonstrate the way in which money determines the form of probation and the extent to which 'radical' or 'Marxist' are therefore both misconceived and have problematic political implications. Money changes everything, including the rationality and morality of human behaviour and its regulation by the state!

Now I think it is time to move on. I pushed the contradiction almost as far as I could before having to pull back. It was a very unpleasant time for me. But now that I have finished my research at Warwick I can leave Sherborne. However, the nature of the contradiction is that it might not let me go. I have to find another job.

**in and against**

All of the interviews express a particular form of existence lived by the training police, derived out of the contradictory character of the training

state. Every worker, without exception, enjoys a contradictory relationship with the training state. The training state really is attractive to its employees in the sense that it is forced to respond to the material aspirations of the training police and the young trainees. However, whatever the training state can provide always depends on the subordination of the working class to the alienated forms of capitalist power: money and the law. The relationship, therefore, is always antagonistic. It is this relationship of antagonism and positive gratification that gives the class struggle its characteristic form. This struggle over incorporation and struggle against the training state is not a forced differential between disconnected elements of the working class or different employees of the training state, but is a division which decides the relationship of every worker and group of workers to the training state, so that every struggle is a struggle in and against the state (Clarke, 1991: 59).

## Retrospective

### Retro-spective

By concentrating on the dynamic energy of working class subjectivity this work has sought to deconstruct the bourgeois nature of social reality and the way in which this reality describes itself to itself. Utilising my own experience as an individual and co-operating employee of the training state I focused on a particular form of dynamic subjectivity with which I am associated through my work i.e. youth and an objectifying process within which youth is constructed i.e. training. This attachment to subjectivity includes my own subjectivity as researcher. I became what I am: an immanent part of the social reality I am trying to explain. This incursion denied the detached perspective of social science and demanded a critique of its methodology which I supported with reference to painterly and scientific theories of relativity.

Using these theories, and contextualising them within their most complete social form, Marx's theory of relativity (: commodity fetishism) - by which he explained how society appeared as a formal universe within which the concrete attributes of humanity appear as the socio-natural properties of the commodities that they produce - I suggested that bourgeois reality constituted a virtual reality. I meant by this that the representations of bourgeois reality were neither natural nor immutable, but were the abstract forms of a



social process whose existence could be derived through an investigation of its determinations. This peculiar detachment arises from the particular social characteristics of the labour which produces it. This is not a natural condition. These characteristics are derived from the necessity of labour (subjectivity) to be recognised as labour-power (objectivity) in order that it might subsist. But the antagonism implied by this grotesque arrangement, that one thing must become its opposite thing in order to exist, suggests that the process is not rational and, therefore, in constant need of reinforcement. This reinforcement implies struggle and struggle implies recomposition of the social arrangements within which social formations are composed. From an investigation of this struggle I was able to [want to] suggest the possibility of an absolute reality whose nature is already implied in the detachment of its abstract form.

#### youth

On the face of it youth appears to be a simple and obvious sociological category. However, I revealed it to be something altogether more complex and determined, undermining the naive mysteriousness with which this category is often approached. From this I deduced that youth is not a natural condition posited by nature and in conformity with nature or some vague conception of human nature. Nor is it enough to functionalise it as social construct. This is merely to replace naturalised youth with a naturalised vision of society. In order to explain youth I needed to acknowledge youth not as the starting point of history, but as an historical result that has re-solved and dis-solved itself in the course of its development. An investigation of youth therefore required an investigation of the development of modern society. This

demanded an organic examination of the way in which society has developed and been produced.

### **divergence as social development**

Social development demands production and production implies social development. The traces of this progressive process are recognisable in the various phases within which development manifests itself. Some attributes of production are common to all forms of society, but development can only be traced through the way in which categories diverge. For example, youth has always existed but not always as youth. Failure to recognise this divergence denies this historical process and suggests the foreverness and harmony of existing social relations. The failure to perceive social development as production of difference through similarity supports the entire wisdom of modern sociology (Grundrisse: 83 - 111).

### **productivity**

I suggested that the nature of difference is determined by degrees of productivity. Productivity is not simply a clockwork arrangement based on the symbiotic self interest between employees and employers, but is as Marx showed through his exposition of the law of value, a contradictory process derived from the fact that in modern society social reproduction (use value) is subordinate to the production, accumulation and appropriation of surplus value: a process which depends on the co-operation of the producers it subordinates.

In order to create surplus value it is necessary that the labour time objectified in the product of labour is greater than that which was present in

the original components of capital. Labour time is the essential determinant of all production and consumption in any form of society. The struggle between capital and labour over surplus value is essentially a struggle over time. All economy ultimately reduces itself to the economy of time. Initially the struggle is over absolute time, over the length of the working day and the number of hours worked. But in an attempt to overcome the barriers that capital becomes for itself, this antagonism develops into a struggle over the nature of time itself, as relative time, or as Marx has it over socially necessary labour time: commodity (clockwork) time and not commodity time: real time (communism). The intensification of time through the imposition of socially necessary labour time increases the productivity of human labour and therefore creates the possibility for time not spent as labour-power: as real time. This struggle over clockwork time and real time becomes a struggle over the nature of reality: what is realistic, as capital attempts to enforce a reduced existence on the working class through a redefinition of their productive consumption. This redefinition appears in the form of new social subjectivities with new needs to be satisfied and capacities to be recognised.

### **training**

Degrees of productivity are best examined through the process which deforms it: the process of training. Not training in general but training as it relates to this specific most modern period. That is training as a device to produce a particular form of social being required for the production of surplus value. Working from the most modern period, beginning with the deregulation of labour with the repeal of the Elizabethan Statutes of Artificers in 1814, I trace the deformation of working class existence



through the imposition of the utilitarian law of labour in the workhouses and prisons of the nineteenth century, through the increasing involvement of the training state, seen for example in the Factory Acts of 1830 - 1850, through to the defining moment of the most modern science of training: the Employment and Training Act (ETA) 1948. This legislation marks a radical shift in perspective of the training scientists. Previous attempts to deform the working class focused on labour as a resistant inert mass that needed to be overcome, whereas the ETA 48 recognised labour as a dynamic energy that could be contained and utilised to power renewed accumulation.

Insofar as the young working class was concerned this process of containment and utilisation was formalised as youth. In the preceding chapters [chapter 2] I set out in some detail a section of the debate about the nature of youth, concentrating on the discussion that took place in the House of Commons. This significant event has not been noted elsewhere. The historians of training science usually begin from the formation of the Industrial Training Boards in 1964. While this was a spectacular administrative provision, the regulatory context for youth training was established in 1948 not simply by the conjoining of youth and training together for the first time as Youth Training; but, more importantly, the determination of a new form of social being: the young working class as youth. Youth had existed before as, for example, an ideal condition (Michelangelo's David) or a psychological state (adolescence) or as a category of reproduction (the Youth Service), but in 1948 youth was created as capital. Youth as capital does not refer to youth in general, but to a form of existence that is not related to any young body in particular. Youth becomes an indifferent form which attempts to condemn young people to an abstract existence by denying their ability to exist as any

other form. This abstract existence is expressed in the arbitrary mutations identified by the sociology of youth as sub-culture.

**post 1948**

While capital was attempting to define the young working class as it developed through increasingly intensified and modern forms of productivity, the young working class was developing its own identity as it developed in and against capital. The manifestations of this process were not seen in the UK until the mid to late 1950s and were described by Richard Hoggart in Uses of Literacy. The emergence of the phenomena of youth is also increasingly related in literature and in the cinema in the late 1950s and early 1960s, e.g., Billy Liar, Absolute Beginners, A Clockwork Orange etc. This process had began earlier in the US, hence the earlier development of this youthful difference, seen most notably as the teenager and Elvis Presley. This production of difference through similarity manifested itself as the problem of youth.

**consumption: difference as difference**

The modern sociology of youth confronted the problem of youth through difference not as a socially developed product but as a category of distribution (: difference as difference). Where production is acknowledged it is regarded unproblematically as an eternal and natural law. Through the perspective of bourgeois sociology youth creates itself through conspicuous consumption of commodities (: Abram's teenager, AK Cohen's gangs) or through the consumption of different historical experiences (Mannheim) or the consumption of lived space (Chicago School) or as dysfunctional to the natural order of consumption (Pearson's hooligan) or as the result of dysfunction in society's main unit of consumption (Burt's family). The epitome of this

consumptive fetish is the sub-cultural school of youth sociology. In this ideology of youth identity and consumption become fused in an orgy of metaphors out of which it is not possible to escape. Youth is condemned to forever recreate itself as youth.

#### **cinematic**

Utilising cinematic techniques developed by the Situationist International I deconstruct the genre of the sub-cultural type by exposing this theory of mutation to a self critical analysis and by juxtaposing the abstract existence of these hybrid forms to the reality of concrete individual resistances graphically evidenced by the inner-city riots of 1981. In this way I suggest that youth is not trapped within its own ritualised forms, but is a real challenge to the forms within which capital attempts to rationalise it. And that the ritualistic ideology is, despite its radical pretensions, an attempt to condemn youth to its existence as youth: either as rationalised opposition (:Youthaid) or rationalised inactivity (Entrain).

#### **no future**

This analysis suggests that there is no future for youth in the abstract social form constituted in 1948, and that any attempts to emancipate or empower youth as youth is simply a reactionary attempt to reconstitute the subjectivity of the young working class in an objective form appropriate to its existence as capital. But this work has demonstrated capital's inability to contain this subjectivity in anything other than the precarious forms of social existence which are deconstructed by the very subjectivity it attempts to contain.



These precarious forms of social existence are derived from a struggle over the future. The struggle over the future occurs in the struggle over time, between the clockwork time of capital (: no future), and the real time time of the working class (:communism). Not only is there no future for youth, and other objectified forms of capital, there is no future for the future. A reconstitution of youth therefore demands a reconstruction of the future: for the future to be defined as something other than the past and the present. The past and the present are important. They are the moments through which an historical and theoretical analysis can be made and utilised to reconstitute the future as something other than a product of the past and the present. But this theoretical analysis can never get ahead of the future, the struggle over the future and the victory of real time over clockwork time can only be created by the young working class and the working class denying its virtual existence by an imposition of its absolute subjectivity. This imposition forms the basis for the abolition of indifference in all its invidious forms, e.g., the unemployed, housewives, blacks and of course, youth, so that real sameness and difference can be recognised.

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## **interviews**

The interviews were conducted over a period of three months between September and January 1992 - 1993. They were recorded on the premises of Wandsworth Youth Advisory Service, Wandsworth Careers Office, Lambeth Youth Training, Springboard Southwark and Sherborne House.

## **music**

'Forever Young' recorded by SFK on Sound of the Underground [SOUR] 1993. I came into contact with SFK and its members through my work with Lewisham Probation. D. Young, one of the members of SFK, is currently serving on a Probation Order. I worked with him on developing the concept of SFK and raising money to finance the project.