

Reconstituting Troublesome Youth in Newcastle
upon Tyne: Theorising Exclusion in the Night-
Time Economy

by

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Abstract

Following economic stagnation and deindustrialisation in 1970s and 1980s Britain, the shift toward neoliberalism and entrepreneurial urbanism has had profound effects on the ways in which cities are experienced by different socio-cultural groups. As many urban commentators have noted, in the pursuit of maintaining a spatial capital fix, some groups have found themselves increasingly marginalised through various image-related redevelopment processes. The working classes, the homeless and, increasingly, young people continue to be faced with a number of curtailments which restrict access and spatial freedoms. Taking Newcastle upon Tyne and its night-time economy as a case in point, this thesis examines the roles of class identity, delinquency, and exclusion in contemporary nightlife, and how current representations of troublesome youth such as the ‘chav’ are used to articulate exclusionary practices. This thesis, though, also illustrates that exclusion is ultimately driven by commercially-defined imperatives commensurate with extant urban entrepreneurialism. However, whilst it was initially speculated that the young ‘lower’ classes were excluded from city centre nightlife outright, it was actually found that the night-time economy functions through a number of channelling and redistributive processes. The ‘chav element’, whilst being rejected from many venues, is not wholly excluded from the city centre, but segregated and contained in certain locales. Pointing to a more nuanced idea of exclusion as a spatial restructuring process, this thesis suggests that urban cultural geography should pay closer attention to a temporal, fluid, and fragmentary notion of exclusion that is constantly shifting and transforming alongside other changes in production and consumption.

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Chapter 1

Post-Industrial Urbanism and Troublesome Youth: An Introduction

1.1 Urban Transformations and the Exclusion of Troublesome Youth

Over the past thirty years or so, Britain's cities have been experiencing rapid transformations in their political-economic function, their built form, and their socio-spatial composition (Harvey, 1989a). Once operating predominantly as Fordist manufacturing hubs – whose managerialist governments were mainly concerned with extending the “provision of public services and de commodified components of welfare” (Macleod, 2002: 604) – they are now largely constituted by globalized service, finance and leisure economies, laboured by and catering for a predominantly consumption-oriented middle class (Lash and Urry, 1994; Thrift, 1987), and governed by a post-industrial ‘public-private’ state (Hubbard and Hall, 1998). As many urban commentators have illustrated, these changes are the result of a shift towards a neoliberal economy and what has become known as ‘entrepreneurial urbanism’.

In the 1970s and 1980s, manufacturing flight and a host of other economic transformations instigated a period of catastrophic deindustrialization in Britain and indeed elsewhere in the western world. Growing fiscal austerities and structural unemployment became politically entrenched in a “rising tide of neoconservatism” and mounting sympathies to “market rationality and privatisation” (Harvey, 1989a: 5). Commensurate with accelerating processes of globalization (Harvey, 1995), a newly elected Thatcher government sought to roll back the frontiers of the state (Peck and Tickell, 2002), promoting a neoliberalized economy devoid of municipal intervention whilst advancing superior social control through conservative moralist ideologies (Smith, 1994). Encapsulated in this neoliberal schema, city administrations, through ‘public-private’ partnerships and comprehensive place marketing strategies, sought external funding, new investments and new sources of labour, actively attempting to recapitalize on urban space in an effort to offset the deindustrialization, unemployment and deprivation that pervaded city landscapes at the time (Harvey, 1989b).

Also key to this entrepreneurial agenda was the physical reconstruction and re-aestheticization of urban space. As Don Mitchell notes, in the post-industrial era image “becomes everything. When capital is seen to have no need for any particular place, then cities do what they can to make themselves so attractive that capital – in the form of new businesses, more tourists, or a greater percentage of suburban spending – will want to locate there” (Mitchell, 1997: 304). As a result – and variously depicted over the years as ‘renewal’, ‘regeneration’, ‘redevelopment’, and currently under New Labour ‘renaissance’ (see Lees,

2003) – the obsolete manufacturing infrastructures and enclaves of industrial wastelands have largely been “scrubbed clean and dramatically reinvented as glittering office and hotel atriums, themed leisure zones, upscale shopping districts, gentrified housing, and aesthetically enchanting cultural districts” (Macleod, 2002: 605).

However, these economic, political and spatial transformations which characterise entrepreneurial urbanism and the neoliberalized regime have had profound effects on the ways in which western cities are experienced by different social groups. Whilst some commentators have alluded to increasing empowerment, opportunity and thus an “emancipatory city” (see the collection edited by Loretta Lees, 2004), others have raised significant questions about exactly which members of the citizenry actually have universal and unfettered access to urban ‘public’ space in recent times (see the collection edited by Michael Sorkin, 1992 for example).

Neil Smith (1996a; 1996b) for instance, suggests that the repoliticization of the city concomitant with entrepreneurial urbanism has given rise to an era of urban ‘revanchism’, where, in the pursuit of maintaining a spatial capital fix, some groups have found themselves increasingly marginalized through various image-related redevelopment processes. Examining the gentrification discourses purveyed by the successive Koch, Dinkins and Giuliani mayoral administrations in the 1980s and 1990s, Smith argues that the New York City entrepreneurial regime developed a vernacular through which those already disenfranchised by economic restructuring became criminalized. The working classes, urban poor and groups of ‘street people’ were argued to have stolen space *from* gentrifiers and the wider public and became subject to further duress through rapid gentrification (itself legitimated through the normalization of the ‘frontier’ ideology (see Smith, 1992)) and increasingly punitive sanctions in the form of zero-tolerance policing (ZTP). A term which can be loosely understood as a ‘revenge on public space’ (Atkinson, 2003), revanchism thus encapsulates the urban processes where inner-city neighbourhoods, streets, parks and other municipal / public spaces are being ‘reclaimed’ by dominant urban powers from the delinquent urban poor through gentrification as a “global urban strategy” (Smith, 2002), increasingly intense ZTP, and their punitive corollaries (Coleman, 2005; Fyfe, 2004; Smith 1996b; also Hackworth and Smith, 2001).

Drawing on Smith’s ideas of revanchism, Don Mitchell (1997) has pointed to more legislative means through which the urban poor become displaced for the sake of increased capital accumulation. The anti-homeless laws in many US cities operate to cleanse urban space to

make way for capital, but in doing so ultimately seek “simply to annihilate homeless people themselves” (Mitchell, 1997: 305). In Mitchell’s words:

“In city after city concerned with “liveability”, with, in other words, making urban centres attractive to both footloose capital and to the footloose middle classes, politicians and managers of the new economy in the 1980s and early 1990s have turned to what could be called “the annihilation of space by law”. That is, they have turned to a legal remedy that seeks to cleanse the streets of those left behind by globalisation and other secular changes in the economy by simply erasing the spaces in which they must live – by creating a legal fiction in which the rights of the wealthy, of the successful in the global economy, are sufficient for all the rest” (Mitchell, 1997: 305).

Although the use of legislation seems to be more relevant in the American context, the foundations for criminalizing the homeless remain similar in the UK – their path into poverty being irrelevant when “placed alongside more pressing concerns to do with the ‘contamination’ of city space that homeless people symbolize” (Coleman, 2005: 137).

In addition to ZTP, gentrification and anti-homeless laws which aim to rid cities of specific ‘undesirables’, the capacity to seek out and remove urban delinquents through intensive surveillance mechanisms has also become central to recent entrepreneurial strategies. The use of Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) for example has become widespread throughout the UK (in shopping precincts, high streets and city centres etc.). Yet whilst such infrastructure has been intimated as a tool used in the prevention and control of crime by government and media rhetoric, it is actually better understood as a means through which to boost the ‘feel good factor’ of city downtowns, thereby attracting more consumers to the city centre, and ultimately increasing the profitability of urban space (Atkinson, 2003; Coleman, 2004, 2005; Coleman *et al*, 2005; Fyfe and Bannister, 1996, 1998). Working in a similar way to the image-enhancement practices of ZTP, gentrification and anti-homeless legislation, CCTV surveillance reinforces “particular urban subjectivities around who has the right to inhabit, (re)define and utilise aspects of contemporary urban spatiality” (Coleman, 2005: 135), and criminalizes groups perceived to threaten the putative success of neoliberal urban space. As Rowland Atkinson notes, “exhortations that if you are doing nothing wrong you have nothing to fear have been met with a realisation that this really depends on who is defining what is wrong” (Atkinson, 2003: 1833):

“CCTV control rooms are ridden with racism and sexism, and certain types of young people are targeted with socially constructed suspicion and are labelled as ‘toerags’, ‘scumbags’, ‘yobs’, ‘scrapheads’, *‘Big Issue scum’* ... and are scrutinised, followed, and harassed. Thus

operators are already imposing a 'normative time-space ecology' on the city by stipulating who 'belongs' where and when, and treating everything else as a suspicious 'other' to be disciplined, scrutinised, controlled" (Graham, 1998: 491 quoted in Atkinson, 2003: 1833).

CCTV is thus less to do with the spatial control / deletion of crime than the control / deletion of specific groups in urban space under entrepreneurial governance – its proliferation therefore “less the outcome of a careful evaluation of different crime reduction strategies and more ... a recognition that CCTV ‘fits’ with a wider economic and political agenda to do with the contemporary restructuring of urban public space” (Fyfe and Bannister, 1998: 257).

In the post-industrial era, then, the working classes are finding themselves increasingly displaced as their neighbourhoods become gentrified; the urban poor are becoming ever more subject to ZTP and direct expulsions; the homeless are being legislated against, effectively annihilating the ‘public’ spaces in which they must live; and some groups are being beleaguered by mounting CCTV and other control agencies who are redefining ‘appropriate’ uses of city space. And so, under this new urbanism, “any conception of “publicness” we ascribe to the new renaissance sites is highly selective and discriminating” (Macleod, 2002: 605) as a vast array of spaces are becoming more and more controlled, exacerbating an “idealized class-based performative rationale for citified behaviour” (Coleman, 2005: 133).

Certain groups of young people are similarly understood as problematic to post-industrial urbanism. Whilst young people as a social group have been separated, regulated and subordinated for centuries, and have sometimes been understood as deviant or delinquent (especially urban working-class youth – see Valentine *et al*, 1998), contemporary understandings of troublesome youth are being reworked alongside recent political, economic, and social urban transformations so that along with the urban poor, they too are becoming increasingly subject to castigation, curtailment and exclusion in the entrepreneurial city.

The idea of troublesome youth is, of course, not new. As Geoff Pearson has shown in his seminal text *Hooligan* (1983), the young working classes have been thought of as socially problematic since the unruly apprentices of Merrie England, to the cads and roughs of the Victorian period, the hooligans tackled by Baden Powell through the scouting movement, right up to the more recent phenomenon of the teds (McDowell, 2002). Similarly, the moral panic that emerged from the mods and rockers' Clacton disturbances in the 1960s reinforced particular beliefs that working-class youth were out of control (S. Cohen, 1972), and similar panic episodes emanating from the ‘mugging crisis’ were subsequently engaged to strengthen

law and order proposals in the 1970s (although these anxieties were not necessarily exclusive to young people in particular – see Hall *et al*, 1978). Even more recently, concerns about young people, their morality and their behaviour have surfaced from tragic events such as the murder of Jamie Bulger and the Columbine High School Massacre in the 1990s (Aitken, 2001; Davis and Bourhill, 1997), where again in the form of moral panic, a generation of parents began to limit their children's spatiality outside the home and school (Valentine, 1996; 1997). With fears being articulated through notions of danger, abuse and abduction, and a common consensus that childhood as the 'age of innocence' was over, the subordination of young people as social members both *dangerous* and *in danger* helped assemble a range of restrictions limiting their access to public space. As Gill Valentine puts it:

“The moral panic of the 1990s about the ‘end of innocence’ appears therefore to be mobilising a popular consensus that children, particularly though not exclusively teenagers, are uncontrollable and are a threat to adult hegemony in everyday spaces ... It is a consensus which is being used to justify further attempts to police the crisis of childhood by restricting young people's access to, and freedoms in, so-called ‘public space’” (Valentine, 1996: 593).

In addition to cultural frameworks of curtailment, other recent systems for controlling young people's behaviour and regulating their spatialities originate from the state level, where supplementary legislation is utilised in the forms of the Anti Social Behaviour Order (Asbo), by-laws, and curfews. The Asbo has the legal capacity to confine an individual both to a particular locality, and restrict them from others (despite the individual perhaps not being convicted of an actual crime – see McDowell, 2007). By-laws – for example banning skateboarding at particular places within contemporary urban settings – implicitly prevents the presence of young people from congregating at commercial locales (see Rogers, 2006). And curfews give police the discretionary power to disperse groups of young people from public spaces such as streets and parks at certain times if their presence is seen as threatening or intrusive (Collins and Kearns, 2001). Youth groups are also subject to spatial curtailment implemented by various private-sector institutions. CCTV and private security assemblages enable shopping malls and other festival marketplaces to be policed against non-consuming youth who are perceived as intimidating or threatening to the middle-class adults who consume such spaces in the 'correct', appropriately-defined ways (Sibley, 1995; Valentine, 2004).

But whilst the development of neoliberalism, entrepreneurial urbanism and increased urban spending has influenced a number of direct spatial exclusionary mechanisms, a number of working-class youth groups have found themselves marginalised in other, more lateral ways.

As a Post-Fordist neoliberalism pervades the current economic landscape, many jobs are now located in either high-skilled managerial spheres or low-skilled, feminised service sectors, which has indirectly socially excluded countless young working-class men from post-industrial employment, despite their alliance to a traditional working-class labour masculinity based on craft, graft, and pride in the job (see McDowell, 2002, 2003; also Nayak, 2003a, 2003b, 2003c). As Linda McDowell observes:

“Those older forms of acceptable ‘macho’ behaviour among working-class men that used to be a key feature of male manual employment are now a positive disadvantage in the labour market, where self-presentation, punctuality, attitude, and demeanour to customers and superiors are increasingly important attributes” (McDowell, 2002: 104).

Furthermore, those who have become disenfranchised by economic restructuring have often been reconstituted in policy and media debates as ‘yobs’ – a violent generation of young working-class men who disrupt the moral hegemony of the classroom, the street, and the city centre, increasingly captured under the banner of the New Labour idiom ‘anti-social behaviour’, and subject to its ever more punitive corollaries. Perhaps signalling a ‘crisis of masculinity’ (see McDowell, 2002; 2003), young working-class men continue to be defined by their pseudo-criminalities and their lack of educational achievement compared to young women, reinforcing contemporaneous sensibilities to punish, control, and exclude.

This disparagement of working-class youth, though, has shifted even more recently, emblematising new forms of class politics and condescension (McDowell, 2006, 2007). The rise of the ‘chav’ in 2004 highlighted the more visual, aesthetic and embodied characteristics of troublesome youth that have come to serve as overt “symbols of deviance” (Hayward and Yar, 2004). In a rather disdainful account, Neil Tweedie of the Daily Telegraph explains:

“When you see a stunted teenager, apparently jobless, hanging around outside McDonald’s dressed in a Burberry baseball cap, Ben Sherman shirt, ultra-white Reebok trainers and dripping in bling (cheap, tasteless and usually gold-coloured jewellery), he will almost certainly be a chav ... Very short hair and souped-up Vauxhall Novas are chav, as is functional illiteracy, a burgeoning career in petty crime and the wearing of one’s mobile telephone around the neck. Chavs are most at home in run-down, small-town shopping precincts, smoking and shouting at their mates” (Tweedie, Daily Telegraph: 13 December 2004).

These cultural symbols make young people’s extant class status seemingly verifiable, and have come to play major parts in recent exclusions in the post-industrial city. Their socially constructed relationship with notions of crime and deviance influenced bans on baseball caps

and hoodies at a number of shopping centres nationwide, including Bluewater in Kent and the Elephant and Castle in South London (Hayward and Yar, 2006). Anoop Nayak (2006) for example, also found that many bars and clubs in Newcastle upon Tyne's city centre expressed and advertised themselves as "charver free zones" (the 'charver' being the north-east's personification of the nationally recognised 'chav'), pointing toward a similar set of regulatory processes that seek to filter access according to contemporary cultural, class-based politics. It is the place of these representations in Newcastle's night-time economy that are the major focus of this study.

1.2 Newcastle and the Night-Time Economy: Research Context and Objectives

As cities have turned to more flexible modes of accumulation following deindustrialization, nightlife has been repositioned as a viable supplement to urban economic growth. Newcastle upon Tyne stands out as a frequently cited example of this, becoming famous for its night-time economy and 'friendly locals', but also through its new image as an urban centre for arts and culture in the north of England. Where the city-region once relied on manufacturing and heavy engineering industries, it is now characterised, like many other UK cities, by its post-industrial economic practices. Coal mining, shipbuilding, munitions production etc – which heavily contributed to the region's popular historic identity of cloth caps, Brown Ale, dog-racing, 'fog-on-the-Tyne', Geordie, white, masculine, working-class culture – has given way to the cultural industries and branch-plant economies following deindustrialisation in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s (Nayak, 2003c; Tomaney *et al*, 1999). And where local industry in the past had a major bearing upon Newcastle's built form, nowadays only relics are left. A brief glimpse around the city at the present juncture reveals a transformed landscape, and what were the emblems of a resilient heavy-industrial region have become the symbols and landmarks of Newcastle's new globalized, post-industrial cultural identity. For example, the Newcastle-Gateshead quayside – once the centre of Newcastle's industrial prowess – is now home to upmarket office and living spaces, leisure facilities, numerous bars, a new entertainment centre, and of course the Millennium Bridge. Additionally, the building which housed the Baltic Flour Mills is now a contemporary arts centre, and the old Fish Market has since become a major nightclub.

Other recent developments include the promotion of science and technology-based industries, retail infrastructure, the renovation / rebuilding of the city library, a multitude of office buildings, and a number of gentrified housing vestibules (see NCC, 1999; 2006), and most, if not all of these developments are characterised by the public-private nexus pertaining exclusively to entrepreneurial urban governance. Newcastle City Council, both Newcastle

and Northumbria Universities, numerous other businesses, private developers / gentrifiers, and Regional Development Agencies ((RDAs) themselves comprised of representatives from local authorities, trade unions, the voluntary sector and the private sector) are all collaborative stakeholders in Newcastle's contemporary plans for economic growth and re-aestheticization.

The night-time economy in particular has played a major part in recent cultural and economic transformations of the city. Wedded to the entrepreneurial agenda, it has recently been recognised that many cities now position nightlife as an intrinsic constituent of urban development strategy, much of the time being employed as a counterbalance to the loss of a manufacturing base (Chatterton and Hollands, 2002, 2003). And it seems that Newcastle, like other British cities, has followed suit. As Nayak observes:

“From its monochrome representation as a bleak post-industrial outpost, the North East, and in particular its principal city Newcastle Upon Tyne, is today portrayed in the media as a ‘Party City’: a site for excessive drinking and wild stag and hen nights ... At the same time there has been major investment in tourism, waterfront developments, the arts and new cultural industries ... As the traditional ‘masculine’ infrastructure has been depleted, it has been replaced, then, by new cultural industries, nightclubs, restaurants and café bars in what amounts to the creation of a vibrant, if much mythologized, night-time economy” (2006: 816).

However, the recent production of nightlife can be seen as symptomatic of wider urban redevelopment and gentrification processes; that is, urban economic development through evening and night-time economies at the current juncture seems to be heavily reliant on large corporate firms that provide themed, branded or highly stylised environments specifically for the more affluent of urban consumers. Premium products and services, along with higher drinks and entry prices, and cultural codes that filter access and define belonging have prompted a “displacement of lower-order activities and working-class communities by higher-order activities aimed at cash-rich groups” (Chatterton and Hollands, 2003: 10). Some groups of young people, not seen as lucrative enough consumers, are becoming increasingly disenfranchised from contemporary nightlife leisure spaces – excluded by price, dress, and style – and subsequently marginalised to peripheral community pubs, social clubs and estates (Chatterton and Hollands, 2002, 2003; Nayak, 2006). These processes are helping to segregate different forms of nightlife, enacting a kind of gentrification that privileges only those who can afford access and conform to contemporary night-time aesthetics. As Paul Chatterton and Robert Hollands suggest, “within such urban transformations, it is important to note who gains and who loses, who is guiding urban nightscapes and to what ends, and who, literally, has been invited to the ‘party’” (Chatterton and Hollands, 2003: 10).

Research Objectives

It is these exclusions, systems of filtering, methods of controlling access, and redistributing groups of young people that are the focus of this study. Aiming to bring together notions of the entrepreneurial city, nightlife and its consumers with the contemporary cultural politics of troublesome youth, this study pursues two lines of questioning: how are groups of young people being reconstituted as the new delinquent in the current urban night-time economy; and what effects do these new configurations have on young people's access to the spaces of urban nightlife?

The objectives are four-fold: first, to show that contemporary urban nightscapes are unequal in their admission to all youth groups, with many venues exclusive to the more cash-rich, middle-class consumers; second, to show that this inequality helps construct and perpetuate class-based representations of troublesome youth in the social imaginary. The third aim is to illustrate that exclusions are the result of capital obligations to maximise profit through the most lucrative markets; and fourth, to exemplify that the consequential spatial ordering of contemporary nightlife reflects the increasingly fragmented and segregated arrangement of the post-industrial city. The result is a thesis which posits exclusion as a channelling, filtering and redistributive process which divides class-based groups, rather than a blanket spatial sanction denying participation completely. Significant in relation to debates in contemporary human geography, this study also calls geographers to investigate further the intricacies of exclusion, the role of embodiment, and how they interrelate with the construction and perpetuation of deviant social identities in the twenty-first century.

1.3 The Thesis

Chapter 2 contextualises the study in the relevant academic literature, examining theories of the post-industrial city, deviance, and the geographies of troublesome youth. I begin by outlining how urban space in the developed west has changed in recent years due to economic restructuring and related shifts in political systems. I illustrate how after economic austerities and deindustrialisation in the 1970s and 1980s, neoliberalization, characterised at the urban scale through entrepreneurial governance, obligated urban administrations to recapitalize on city space through public-private partnerships, flexible modes of accumulation and gentrification in order to attract capital and labour. I also illustrate, as many commentators have suggested before, that entrepreneurial urbanism has produced multiple landscapes of exclusion, where gentrification, zero-tolerance policing, and an increased capacity to regulate

space through surveillance infrastructure have marginalised and even eradicated certain social groups from specific urban spaces.

I then go on to examine some of the conceptions of deviance formulated in academia over the years. I begin by illustrating how some social groups were theorised as pathologically deviant in the early 20th century, before moving on to a cultural explanation put forward by scholars working out of the Chicago School of Sociology in the 1920s. I then explore theories of delinquency, which aimed primarily to uncover the deviant sensibilities of young men, and how this influenced later theories of deviance – via ‘subculture’ – by the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) at the University of Birmingham in the 1970s and 1980s. Whilst these accounts allude to deviance as an intrinsic characteristic of the individual and / or group, subsequent theories I explore are suggestive of a more constructed nature, where deviance is a label attached to certain groups through representation (particularly by the mass news media, but also by the citizenry and state). Borrowing from this understanding, I then illustrate how specific conceptions of deviance operate in conjunction with certain spatial processes. Work coming from cultural geography and the geographies of young people shows how a common understanding of young people as troublesome prompts a number of marginalising and excluding practices. I conclude the chapter with a brief summary outlining how these literatures inform the study, arguing that contemporary representations of troublesome youth are a perpetuation of older deviancy discourses reworked alongside current urban entrepreneurial performances.

Chapter 3 builds upon the research context by surveying recent popular conceptualizations of troublesome youth. I begin by suggesting that contemporary cultural politics developing alongside the inception of New Labour in 1997 point to a *continual reconstitution* of deviant identities commensurate with structural transformations in the political-economy. Those who have become socially excluded – largely working-class young men – remain castigated by the media, where conceptions of violence, class and youth converge as defining characteristics of a purportedly new and pervasive national problem, threatening the prospects of middle-class life in neoliberalized late-capitalism. I then go on to show that this popular understanding has led to the construction by the state of a new, or perhaps more accurately, *enlarged* range of regulatory measures that aim to instil new forms of respect and civility in those labelled ‘anti-social’ whilst increasingly aiming to curtail and control their spatialities. Representations of troublesome youth also spill over into debates concerning violence and disorder in the night-time economy where the yob once again takes centre stage. These discourses suggest that representations of the yob maintain the long-standing fears attached to various ‘youthful’ figures such as the hooligan, the teds, the mods and rockers.

I then go on to outline another instance where youth and class have been reconfigured alongside contemporaneous socio-economic politics. The rise of the 'chav' phenomenon in the early 2000s succeeded concerns in the 1990s of a growing violent 'underclass' dependant on state benefits. This succession has also entailed a shift from the locus of production to consumption, where specific consumer practices have come to signify this new underclass in more significant ways than in the past. Those at the bottom of the social ladder, along with idleness, fecklessness and promiscuity, are now identified and categorised through a vast array of consumer symbols, which have, in turn, become symbols of deviance. A contemptuous signifier of contemporary class relations, I also illustrate how the chav has come to symbolise an increased social, cultural and spatial separation of the classes, where a multitude of exclusions now occur to keep the classes geographically divided. I conclude the chapter by showing how contemporary representations of troublesome youth are reconstituted and entangled in the political-economic practices which characterise post-industrial Britain; how governance and representational apparatuses have promoted specific socio-economic dynamics; and how they have also constructed deviant cultures, where young people are becoming increasingly criminalised through economic transformations and their concomitant regulatory functions.

The purpose of Chapter 4 is to illustrate the geographical context of the study, showing how Newcastle upon Tyne has been culturally and economically transformed in recent years. First, I examine Newcastle's economic history, and how the city has shifted in its economic practice from heavy engineering to post-manufacturing practices. I also look at how recent political-economic agendas in the city reflect the wider transformations in British urban governance where the city aims to re-attract investment, capital, and labour through aesthetic redevelopments and the public-private partnership. Second, with nightlife being a major element of Newcastle's contemporary imagining, I discuss the academic literature addressing the production and regulation of current night-time economies, examining the ways in which nightlife functions to help revitalise cities, and how night-time leisure is implicated in a number of marginalising practices. I conclude the chapter with a brief summary and examination of Newcastle's night-time economy, suggesting that with the gradual domination of corporatism and its consequential regulatory mechanisms, the future for diversity and equal access within Newcastle's nightlife looks uncertain.

In Chapter 5 I explicate the methodology, outlining the process of the research. I discuss how I observed the admittance practices at a number of bars and nightclubs, and how I interviewed licensed premise operators to provide the data required to understand and illustrate the extant regulatory practices, rejections and exclusions that permeate urban nightlife, how they are

articulated through current representations of troublesome youth, and how contemporary Newcastle nightscapes can be seen to reflect the wider exclusionary landscapes of post-industrial urban space. Beginning with the principle tenets of ethnographic work, I discuss issues of positionality and situated knowledges, and I also illustrate how this particular thesis takes on a case study form, where processes uncovered by the research are reflective of more general economic, cultural and socio-spatial processes operating in a variety of contexts. Subsequently I explain the interview procedure, explicating the justification of participants and sites, the position of the participants within knowledge relations, and the method of questioning. I also discuss some of my experiences, and the limits I faced. I follow with a brief overview of the observation work, outlining its advantages, the particular knowledges it would yield, its methodological procedure, and again, its limits.

In chapter 6 I begin to present the research findings. In section 6.2 I set off to give a brief overview of nightlife in Newcastle, presenting the four main locales in which the majority of mainstream nightlife takes place. I argue that the Quayside and the Gate complex serve to accommodate the mass market, whilst the Bigg Market caters for the lower markets, offering cheap discounted drinks, and the area around Collingwood Street which has become known as the 'Diamond Strip', is an archetype of recent gentrification practices in contemporary night-time economies, marked by premium services and highly stylised environments. In section 6.3 I go on to illustrate how current representations of delinquent youth, such as the chav and charver, become operative in Newcastle's night-time economy. I discuss first, the continued role of consumer aesthetics in the identification of deviance and the 'wrong consumer', where a range of clothing labels and other commodities are sought out in practices of exclusion, and second, the increasing role of embodiment in the same exclusionary processes. I illustrate that whilst the tangible symbols of deviance play an essential part in nightlife regulation, they are ineffective on their own, and thus become reinforced with a method of visualising lower class status through demeanour, comportment, speech and behaviour. In doing so, the research revealed a distinct masculine bias throughout, indicating that whilst the chav phenomenon encompasses delinquency by both young men and young women, in the night-time economy young men seem to be ever more visible and prone to exclusion, reinforcing contemporary perceptions that young men lower in the social structure are increasingly problematic in a number of spatial contexts. Subsequently, I go on to show how processes of exclusion are strengthened: first, through a process of 'self-regulation', whereby certain groups come to know and understand their position in the spatially inequitable night-time economy, refraining from attempts to gain access to the more upgraded and stylised venues; and second, through extended networks of surveillance and regulation, where communications between venues and police are increased to ensure rejection across

multiple premises. Section 6.4 concludes the chapter by presenting four main arguments concerning the reconstitution of delinquent youth: that consumerist aesthetics continue to play a fundamental part in visualising and contextualising deviance; that embodiment vis-à-vis extant class relations is becoming ever more significant in marking out the 'other'; that lower-class masculinity continues to be defined as increasingly problematic compared to its feminine counterpart; and that the entanglement of contemporary representations of troublesome youth with exclusion is suggestive of a 'normative landscape' at work in the night-time economy.

In chapter 7, I expand on the research findings. First, I illustrate the rationale for exclusion, arguing that image has become ever more important for the gentrified and upgraded venues in attracting and maintaining the most lucrative markets. The research revealed that operators and bouncers, whilst having some concerns for crime and disorder, utilised representations of delinquent youth to articulate the idea that exclusion is predicated on commercially defined imperatives. Impervious to contemporary media rhetoric on youth deviance, nightlife architects of the upmarket establishments thus practice exclusion to preserve the reputations and images intrinsic to the maximisation of capital. However, as I go on to show in section 7.3, exclusion in Newcastle's night-time economy, whilst being widely practiced by a number of differing venues, is far from a systemic embargo which completely prevents participation by those enveloped by the chav representation. Instead, the research suggests a more subtle, nuanced form of filtering and redistribution, which, alongside the normalisation of many other nightlife cultures, keeps particular class-based groups in their respective place. I conclude the chapter by arguing that despite this variegated and nuanced process of exclusion, Newcastle's night-time economy remains an inequitable landscape which restricts access to particular groups in various ways.

In Chapter 8 I conclude this thesis by summarizing the main arguments and the ramifications for human geographical enquiry. In outlining the political implications of this thesis, I raise four matters of interest for contemporary urban and cultural geographers: first, the perpetual dependence of corporeal identities, whether through consumerist aesthetics, embodied discourses of deviance, or both, in representing and contextualising deviance; two, the complex and variegated nature of exclusion in the entrepreneurial city; three, an increasing social and spatial separation between the classes as neoliberalism becomes ever more ingrained into the everyday urban fabric; and four, the various multi-scalar relationships made evident in this thesis by the down-link from the city to the street and body.

Chapter 2

Theoretical Contexts: Entrepreneurial Cities, Deviance, and the Geographies of Youth

2.1 Introduction

This chapter illustrates the study's theoretical foundations. I begin in section 2.2 by outlining how urban space in the developed west, with a particular focus on Britain and the US, has changed in recent years. I first examine economic restructuring processes before illustrating related changes in urban governance. I then look at some of the more concrete spatial changes – particularly the re-aestheticization and gentrification of urban space – that have taken (and continue to take) place alongside political-economic adjustment. Finally, I examine the consequences of these changes, showing how the shift into post-industrial urbanism has produced multifarious landscapes of exclusion.

In section 2.3, I explore how ideas of troublesome youth have been understood in academia over the years. I begin by outlining how notions of deviance and delinquency came to be central analytical tools in sociology, criminology, and cultural studies, before introducing the concept of subculture used by those working out of the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) at the University of Birmingham in the 1970s. Subsequently, I examine the 'transactional' or 'labelling' approach to deviance, which recognises the constructed nature of deviant social identities.

In section 2.4, I explore some of the work on deviance in cultural geography and the geographies of young people, showing how young people's deviance is often predicated on certain spatialities. Borrowing from the transactional approach to deviance, I also examine work on contemporary representations of troublesome youth, illustrating the most recent discursive practices through which young people come to be defined as criminal, deviant, and problematic to British society. I then explore the implications of this, outlining a 'crisis of masculinity' that affects the experiences of young men in Britain, and demonstrate the roles of gender and class in the popular construction of troublesome youth.

Finally, in section 2.5 I conclude this chapter with a brief summary, explicating the relevance of these literatures, and begin to show how groups of young people, through contemporary representations of troublesome youth, are being reconstituted as the new delinquent in the current entrepreneurial urban economy; and what effects these new configurations have on young people's access to urban space(s).

2.2 Urban Transformations and their Socio-Spatial Consequences: The Post-Industrial City

“[I]t seems worthwhile to enquire what role the urban process might be playing in the quite radical restructuring going on in geographical distributions of human activity and in the political-economic dynamics of uneven development in most recent times” (Harvey, 1989a: 4).

As David Harvey has suggested, urban processes and transformations are inextricably linked to wider social, economic and political changes (e.g. 1985, 1989a, 1989b, 1990, 1995). It is for this reason that tracing the contours of urban change in late capitalism needs to be contextualised in accordance with more general economic adjustment and wider shifts in political activity. Here, I begin tracing these contours by outlining the economic transition from Fordism to Post-Fordism in developed capitalist cities (concentrating on the UK and US), the associated political change widely known in urban studies as the shift from ‘urban managerialism’ to ‘urban entrepreneurialism’, and the more concrete spatial transformations which have altered the look and feel of many urban spaces.

Subsequently, I outline some of the consequences of these shifts. Changes in urban policy and the practices which constitute entrepreneurial urbanism have profound effects on how people experience urban space, and occasionally, how some are excluded from this experience. As I illustrate in the following sections, many have observed how groups disenfranchised by changes in the global economy have become even more marginalised at the local level, pushed out of public places due to new legislative measures (Mitchell, 1997), more punitive policing measures (MacLeod, 2002; Smith, 1996b; Atkinson, 2003), forced out of neighbourhoods through gentrification (Smith, 1992; also Mitchell, 1995), and excluded from many of the new ‘festival marketplaces’ and surrogate private spaces that pervade much of the contemporary urban landscape in the developed west (Coleman, 2004, 2005; Fyfe, 2004; Fyfe and Bannister, 1996, 1998; Jackson, 1998).

Changing Economics, Changing Politics, Changing Space: Towards a Post-Industrial City

Prior to the 1970s, western urban economies, particularly those of the US and UK, were characterised by a Fordist regime of accumulation. This highly organized and stiffly structured economic practice pioneered by Henry Ford in the early 1900s, was characterised by a specific reproduction of labour power, modes of labour control, and labour management. Coupled with Keynesian politics, state regulation helped maintain a highly productive and

profitable Fordist economy in the west, booming in the post-war period before settling in the late 1950s (Harvey, 1989b). However, during the 1960s, as recession in the US and UK began to take hold, the Fordist regime began to suffer. A host of factors problematized the capability of Fordism as a regime that could provide stable economic growth in the developed world. There were problems with investments in mass-production systems that “precluded much flexibility of design and presumed stable growth in invariant consumer markets” (Harvey, 1989b: 142). Multinational corporations fled abroad seeking labour in developing countries “where the social contract with labour was either weakly enforced or non-existent” (Harvey, 1989b: 141).

In what was a “troubled period of economic restructuring and social and political readjustment” (Harvey, 1989b: 145), the relocation of the manufacturing infrastructure in the 1970s and 1980s left enclaves of dereliction and unemployed skilled labour in cities across the UK and US, where social problems, deprivation and poverty became rife. But in recognising the problems posed by Fordism in the face of economic recession and global transformations, “a series of novel experiments in the realms of industrial organization as well as in political and social life [began] to take shape” (Harvey, 1989b: 145). As opposed to the structural rigidities of Fordism, which became increasingly problematic in a changing global economy, ‘flexible accumulation’ as Harvey calls it (see Harvey 1989b; 1990), or what has also been termed ‘Post-Fordism’ elsewhere (see the collection by Amin, 1995 for example), rests on:

“flexibility with respect to labour processes, labour markets, products, and patterns of consumption. It is characterized by the emergence of entirely new sectors of production, new ways of providing financial services, new markets, and, above all, greatly intensified rates of commercial, technological, and organizational innovation” (Harvey, 1989b: 147).

As the manufacturing sectors declined, they were replaced by burgeoning service and financial sectors. Greater emphases were placed on urban consumption rather than production, and were complimented by the growth of new cultural industries. The rise of this new regime was also predicated around distinct political shifts. The newly inaugurated conservative governments in 1970s USA and Britain, headed by Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher respectively, set out to free the markets of state intervention through a neoliberalized economic policy – by ‘rolling back the frontiers of the state’ (Peck and Tickell, 2002; see also Peck and Tickell, 2007) – whilst advancing stricter social control through increasingly authoritarian and moralist ideologies (Smith, 1994). Referred to by Brenner and Theodore

(2002) and Harvey (2006) as a process of ‘creative destruction’¹, urban administrations under this neoliberal political agenda sought to recapitalize on city space by attracting new kinds of capital in new ways. Rather than acting as providers of social services and welfare, local states began acting as mediators of inward investment, collaborating with the private sector in bringing jobs and labour back into the abandoned Fordist city. Even the most stubborn of socialist councils employed similar measures, as Harvey suggests:

“Deindustrialisation, widespread and seemingly ‘structural’ unemployment, fiscal austerity at both the national and local levels, all coupled with a rising tide of neoconservatism and much stronger appeal (though often more in theory than practice) to market rationality and privatisation, provide a backdrop to understanding why so many urban governments, often of quite different political persuasions and armed with very different legal and political powers, have all taken a broadly similar direction” (Harvey, 1989a: 5).

Indeed, as While *et al* (2004: 555) exemplify, “deciding that resistance to the Thatcher government was self-defeating ... by the early 1990s the solidly Labour city councils of Manchester and Leeds rejected earlier tentative experiments with ‘municipal socialism’ in favour of strategies to reorient the city and attract inward investment”. In contemporary urban studies, this political-economic change has been interpreted as a shift from urban managerialism to urban entrepreneurialism, where city administrations began to function in a more business-like manner (Hubbard and Hall, 1998). As a result, urban governance is now largely characterised by the taking of risks, inventiveness, and being motivated predominantly by capital growth (Hubbard and Hall, 1998).

David Harvey (1989a) suggests three principle characteristics of this entrepreneurial urbanism. First, local states are seen to work together with the private sector to increase the profitability of urban economies, prioritizing economic growth over the redistribution of welfare and services. Known as the ‘public-private partnership’, “traditional local boosterism is integrated with the use of local government powers to try and attract external sources of funding, new direct investments, or new employment sources” (Harvey, 1989a: 7). Second, the planning and execution of activities by this partnership is speculative rather than rationally planned and coordinated, often meaning that the local state assumes most of the risk whilst

¹ Borrowing the Marxian concept *creative destruction*, ‘destruction’ here refers to deregulation, liberalization and state retrenchment; or the destruction of “extant institutional arrangements and political compromises through market-oriented reform initiatives” (Brenner and Theodore, 2002: 362). ‘Creation’ here refers to the variety of neoliberal initiatives through which capital is attracted back to the city: the creation of “a new infrastructure for market-oriented economic growth, commodification, and the rule of capital” (ibid.). This has also been articulated through the ideas of ‘roll back’ and ‘roll out’ neoliberalism respectively (see Peck and Tickell, 2002).

private sector institutions reap the benefits of any success. Third, Harvey suggests that entrepreneurialism is driven by the political economy of place rather than territory. Where previous urban political agendas were primarily driven by the redistribution of welfare and provision of services in a particular jurisdiction (i.e. a political *territory*), the new entrepreneurial urbanism is largely concerned with livening-up the imageability of cities (i.e. as *places* in a global economic network) in the pursuit of footloose capital and labour, through the development of ‘flagship projects’ like convention centres and festival marketplaces – developments experienced more by those living outside the immediate area (Harvey, 1989a). Thus, in order for capital to invest and relocate, for labour to return and settle in the post-industrial city, and for tourists to visit and spend, urban spatial aesthetics are viewed by municipal powers as a necessary prerequisite for economic development; that is, urban space has to be seen to be profitable, safe, and conducive to the relocation of capital and labour. In line with the construction of new places, flagship projects and festival marketplaces, “environmental enhancement, property development and cultural boosterism” also became intrinsic features of the entrepreneurial urban condition (Hubbard and Hall, 1998: 6).

Entangled within the processes of urban entrepreneurialism is the increasing importance of consumption in the post-industrial city. Once places of Fordist mass production, “many towns and cities are being reconstructed not primarily as centres of production but consumption” (Lash and Urry, 1994: 216), where along with increasing service sectors, “a more generalized post-Fordist attention to urban ‘lifestyle’ has helped precipitate a range of alluring consumption spaces – *nouvelle cuisine* restaurants, boutiques and art galleries – alongside instantly recognisable coffee bars (Starbucks being emblematic)” (MacLeod and Ward, 2002: 155 original emphasis). Bespeaking an emerging ‘experience economy’, these trends have helped to “‘aestheticize’ the visual consumption of public space” (ibid.). Urban spaces, then, with their new festival marketplaces and retail cathedrals, are now to be consumed en masse.

The role of gentrification has also been essential in the shift toward a post-industrial entrepreneurialism, and is now used as an additional strategy through which to attract capital, labour, and tourists. However, the role of gentrification in urban development has changed in recent years. As Neil Smith notes (2002; also see Hackworth and Smith, 2001), rather than gentrification processes being undertaken by a small portion of the private sector in run-down working-class neighbourhoods, gentrification is now much more a generalised global strategy for the regeneration of urban space under entrepreneurial conditions:

“The scale of ambitions for urban rebuilding has expanded dramatically. Whereas state-sponsored post-war urban renewal in Western cities helped to encourage scattered private-market gentrification, that gentrification and the intensified privatization of inner-city land and housing markets since the 1980s has, in turn, provided the platform on which large-scale multifaceted urban regeneration plans, far outstripping 1960s urban renewal, are established. The current language of urban regeneration, particularly in Europe, is not one-dimensional, but it bespeaks, among other things, a generalization of gentrification in the urban landscape” (Smith, 2002: 438-439).

It is evident, then, that the new entrepreneurial urbanism is constituted by a distinct neoliberal political culture concerned primarily with improving the prosperity of the city through attracting jobs and investment. After the crisis of Fordism, urban governments were “forced to engage in a demunicipalized and more ‘entrepreneurial’ approach ... to revive the competitive position of their local economies” (MacLeod and Ward, 2002: 155). This implied a shift from urban government to urban governance, where urban states no longer act as the primary providers of welfare and services, and instead, act as mediators of inward investment through the public-private partnership. This inward investment is itself argued to generate societal benefits through ‘trickle-down’ economics (MacLeod, 2002), and bring once deprived urban populations up to speed with an accelerating global economic culture (Hubbard and Hall, 1998). This in turn has fuelled further transformations in the image of the city, both materially, in that many cities have been renovated, re-built and redeveloped, and immaterially, where place marketing through promotion and advertising has changed urban place identities (Hall, 1998; Lash and Urry, 1994; Short and Kim, 1998). As I show in chapter 4, Newcastle upon Tyne has undergone a series of parallel transformations, now marketed as a cultural and retail leisure hub, and famed for its nightlife.

The post-industrial city is thus one of industrial and economic transformation: from Fordist to Post-Fordist, characterised by flexible modes of accumulation, entrepreneurial governance and neoliberalization, and subject to re-aestheticization and gentrification, place promotion and marketing. It is also, however, a city that has belied even spatial development². Only certain locales within cities are transformed and rejuvenated, with many others remaining or becoming dilapidated. Furthermore, the prioritisation of inward investment over the redistribution of welfare and state-provided services works to “entrench and deepen social inequalities” (Herbert and Brown, 2006: 756). And space, as I show in the coming section, is

² See Harvey (1973; 1985; 1989a, 1989b; 1990; 2000) and Smith (1982; 1987) for early observations of uneven development at the urban and inter-urban scale; and Smith’s continued work on the relationships between gentrification, economic restructuring, and neoliberalization (e.g. Smith and Defilippis, 1999; Hackworth and Smith, 2001; Smith 2002, 2005).

pivotal in this process. Despite some arguing of an increasingly 'flatter world' (Amin and Thrift, 2005 for example) in which "distance and geography no longer matter" (Herod and Aguiar, 2006: 435), space remains fundamental to the neoliberal regime. As Herod and Aguiar suggest, "neoliberalism is a spatial project that is spatially projected" in that "the sway of place still shapes how political praxis is imagined and articulated in these neoliberal times" (ibid.). Indeed, in a response to Ash Amin and Nigel Thrift's call to perceive a flatter world (Amin and Thrift, 2005), Neil Smith (2005) argues against the notion that neoliberalism has evened the playing field, created equality and done away with social hierarchy. For Smith, the world remains reflective of uneven spatial development, fraught with inequality at multifarious scales:

"The world may be flat for those who can afford a business class ticket to fly around it, gazing down on a seemingly flat surface, while for those gazing up at passing airplanes in Sub-Saharan Africa or the Indian countryside, the opportunity represented by London or Bombay or New York is an impossible climb to a destination visible only as mediated television or movie fantasy, if even that. For those in Bombay's shanties, or for that matter in New York's Harlem or London's East End, the price of the same business class ticket to see the world as flat is just as prohibitive" (Smith, 2005: 894).

Inequality, injustice and spatial curtailments engendered by neoliberalism and entrepreneurial urbanism have become a significant focus for human geographers in recent years. As MacLeod and Ward (2002: 154) observe, a growing body of work warns of "a 'fortified', 'authoritarian' or 'revanchist' urban landscape, characterized by mounting social and political unrest and pockmarked with marginal interstices: derelict industrial sites, concentrated hyperghettos and peripheral shanty towns where the poor, the 'socially excluded' and the homeless are shunted increasingly so as to facilitate the new architectures of renaissance". It is this body of literature to which I turn next.

Experiencing Post-Industrial Urbanism: Landscapes of Exclusion

Neil Smith's (1996a; 1996b) account of the 'revanchist city', developed from his previous work on gentrification in New York City (for example Smith, 1992), illustrates a particularly cruel and excessive process through which the poorest and most vulnerable in society are becoming increasingly marginalised at the urban level (Lees, 2000; Murphy, 2009)³. Similar

³ There are a number of other urban commentators who address similar marginalisation / segregation / exclusion processes engendered by late-capitalism and its (predominantly spatial) transformations. Of particular note is Mike Davis (1990; 1992) who describes recent Los Angeles governance practice as the 'militarization' of urban space (see also Dear, 2000).

to the main tenets explored above, Smith argues that the recent shift to Post-Fordist neoliberal and entrepreneurial urbanism involves a “trenchant repoliticization of the city”, where urban politics function solely to create a space conducive to the occupation of footloose capital and labour (Smith, 1996a: 117). However, this repoliticization also involves the reconstitution of social identities – particularly those of the ‘urban poor’ – in the justification of marginalising, segregating and exclusionary practices:

“The revanchist city is a city of occasionally vicious revenge wrought against many of the city’s most dependent – unemployed and homeless people, racial and ethnic minorities, women and immigrants, gays and lesbians, the working class. It has everything to do with a defence and reconstruction of the lines of identity privilege (which came under attack in the 1960s) in the context of rising economic insecurity” (Smith, 1996a: 129).

Smith argues that in the late 1980s, a riot in Tompkins Square Park (situated in New York City’s Lower East Side) became emblematic of the rise of this revanchist urbanism. It involved a number of anti-gentrification protestors on one side and the police on the other. The police were mandated to protect a curfew imposed on the park, purportedly aimed to clean out drug dealers and the homeless. The riot ensued as a number of the area’s inhabitants saw the curfew as a method through which to claim space for the already rampant gentrification ongoing in the Lower East Side, but despite their limited success⁴, the city powers eventually succeeded in reinstating the curfew. They also implemented new regulations governing the use of the park, demolished a number of buildings used by squatters adjacent to the park, and later, destroyed the tents, shanties and belongings of those – often permanently homeless – residing in the park. The homeless were forced to leave, yet provided with no other space in which to live; an eight-foot fence was erected around the park; and a reconstruction programme began almost immediately. These actions were justified by then Mayor Edward Koch, who claimed to be ridding the park of “social parasites, druggies, skinheads and communists” (ibid.). Further attacks on those who depended upon the park were defended by Koch’s successor Mayor Dinkins, who alleged that the park had “been stolen from the community by the homeless” (ibid.)⁵.

The reclamation of other locales within New York City through gentrification worked in a similar way and were often legitimated through discourses of the ‘urban frontier’ and the ‘wild wild west’. As Smith argues though, whilst these particular discourses may seem

⁴ Tompkins Square Park is described by Smith as a temporary “liberated space” through the anti-gentrification protests (Smith, 1992: 62).

⁵ See also Mitchell (1995) for a similar account of how public parks are re-appropriated by dominant urban powers.

‘playfully innocent’, they are actually re-enactments of older ideologies which also served unjust marginalisation through an imperialist apprehension of space⁶. In Smith’s words:

“The frontier imagery is neither merely decorative nor innocent, but carries considerable ideological weight. The frontier motif makes the new city explicable in terms of old ideologies. Insofar as gentrification obliterates working-class communities, displaces poor households, and converts whole neighbourhoods into bourgeois enclaves, the frontier ideology rationalizes social differentiation and exclusion as natural and inevitable. Defining the poor and working class as “uncivil”, on the wrong side of a heroic dividing line, as savages and communists, the frontier ideology justifies a monstrous incivility in the heart of the city. Disparaged in words, the working class is banished in practice to the edges or even deeper into the wilderness” (Smith, 1992: 75).

Thus, gentrification in this instance – a process through which urban forces reclaim space in accordance to the principles of neoliberalism and entrepreneurial urbanism – displaces, marginalises, and excludes. It is an enactment of a revanchist politics that seeks to rid the city of those already marginalised by economic restructuring and globalized capital flows. Smith argues that the Tompkins Park riot “has become a trenchant symbol of the new urbanism that threatens to reconstruct not just the Lower East Side but neighbourhoods in cities throughout the developed capitalist world”, where “inner-city working-class neighbourhoods [are being] transformed into middle-class and upper-middle-class havens devoted to boutique retailing, elite consumption, and upscale housing” (Smith, 1992: 64). It points to an erosion of urban tolerance (see Hancock, 2007: 69), a disintegration of urban spatial justice, and the sanitisation of cities for the footloose middle classes at the expense of the working class and the urban poor.

However, revanchism reaches far beyond gentrification. When Rudy Giuliani succeeded Dinkins as Mayor of New York City, the revanchist ethos intensified. With the instatement of zero-tolerance policing (ZTP), revanchism became much more direct, actively targeting those seen detrimental to the city’s image and who were argued to foster “an ecology of fear among those [Giuliani] considered decent, honest New Yorkers” (MacLeod, 2002: 608). Again, those subject to revanchism through ZTP were the urban poor (the homeless, panhandlers, prostitutes, and squeegee cleaners), sought out and eradicated in the repossession of neoliberalized urban ‘public’ space.

⁶ Other discussions surrounding the role of discourse in the stigmatization of places for demolition and redevelopment can be found in Weber (2002).

Other commentators have applied the concept of revanchism to British cities (e.g. MacLeod, 2002; Atkinson, 2003). Gordon MacLeod (2002) for example considers Glasgow and how “a punitive, revanchist vernacular might now form part and parcel of a mandatory political response intended to discipline the deleterious social consequences and the escalating sociospatial contradictions that continue to be generated by a neoliberalizing political economic agenda” (MacLeod, 2002: 603). Glasgow, like many other cities in Britain, gained wealth from traditional manufacturing industries, shipbuilding and other heavy engineering. However, like other British cities, it also experienced rapid socio-economic decline subsequent to deindustrialization in the 1970s and 1980s. The city soon acquired a reputation for unemployment, poverty, deprivation, hard-drinking, slum housing, and gang violence. But then in 1980, as the Glasgow Labour group returned to power, the city became subject to a new and quite comprehensive marketing strategy. Private-sector participation also dramatically increased, and with this came retail developments, the promotion of gentrification and café culture, as well as arts developments and the attraction of events such as the European City of Culture, which Glasgow accomplished in 1990 (MacLeod, 2002; see also Lash and Urry, 1994: 216).

However, whilst these developments have no doubt attracted tourists and new cultural events, contributing to a new wealth through entrepreneurial strategy, it is evident that the wealth generated only seems to benefit a few. As the ‘downtown monster is being fed’, “there is no hiding the fact that, with one-third of Glasgow’s population reliant on state benefits, any purported renaissance is failing to “trickle down” to the wider urban conurbation” (MacLeod, 2002: 613). Geographies of inequality do not stop there. As MacLeod also notes:

“Glasgow’s new civic spaces appear to be concealing more active geographies of displacement and marginality – ones that might just imply the onset of a revanchist urban politics. Immediately opposite the Buchanan galleries lies the George Hotel. For years this building served as a cheap hostel for homeless people, particularly middle-aged men. With the opening of the Galleries, the George Hotel and its clients presumably assumed a role as part of Buchanan Street’s “clutter” and were cleared from the civic gaze. Any “sympathy” inscribed into the architecture of the Buchanan Galleries was to appease the pleasures and fantasies of consumerist citizenship, and was not to be extended to those without a permanent home” (MacLeod, 2002: 613).

Other accounts of homelessness also build on ideas of revanchism, attributing the marginalisation and exclusion of the city’s poorest to neoliberalism and urban entrepreneurialism. As Stacey Murphy suggests, modern homelessness as a phenomenon

emerged “directly from a neoliberal policy regime that has been forged at the Federal level but whose effects are most pronounced at the urban scale” (Murphy, 2009: 309). In some US cities, combating homelessness has not revolved around the municipal provision of homes, or jobs, or anything else ameliorative for that matter. Rather, the problem of homelessness constructed as an urban pollutant has been resolved through the use of legislation. Don Mitchell (1997) examines how anti-homeless laws in several US cities are predicated on a specific urban spatial aesthetic – an entrepreneurial prerequisite for the relocation of capital and labour. As Mitchell suggests:

“The anti-homeless laws being passed in city after city in the United States work in a pernicious way: by redefining what is acceptable behaviour in public space, by in effect annihilating the spaces in which homeless people *must* live, these laws seek simply to annihilate homeless people themselves, all in the name of recreating the city as a playground for a seemingly global capital which is ever ready to do an even better job of the annihilation of space” (Mitchell, 1997: 305 emphasis in original).

But what is most disturbing is the way in which the anti-homeless laws symbolise a new kind of social being in late modernity, where they both “reflect and reinforce a highly exclusionary sense of modern citizenship, one that explicitly understands that excluding some people from their rights not only as citizens, but also as thinking, acting persons, is both good and just” (Mitchell, 1997: 306). This conception of citizenship, argues Mitchell (1997), is far removed from those of the past – such as the civil rights and women’s movements – which sought to establish inclusion as part of a modern and just democratic citizenship.

The proliferation of regulatory and surveillance practices commensurate with entrepreneurial governance also points to discriminatory and uneven conceptions of citizenship. CCTV in particular – as a method through which to administer greater social control (Fyfe, 2004) – is argued to be “reinforcing particular urban subjectivities around who has the right to inhabit, (re)define and utilise aspects of contemporary urban spatiality” (Coleman, 2005: 135). CCTV is now a fundamental urban infrastructure in Britain (Fyfe and Bannister, 1996). Following the success of CCTV in privately owned shopping malls in seeking out criminal behaviour such as shoplifting and thus ‘protecting’ spaces of consumption from crime (and implicitly protecting profit), the use of CCTV has expanded dramatically, with urban administrations installing CCTV in city centres in the hope of improving economic appeal. Wedded to the entrepreneurial agenda, CCTV helps defend against those who may threaten the economic potential of city downtowns. However, CCTV and other regulatory mechanisms are reconstructing “particular cultural sensibilities around crime, deviance and incivility”, and

instead of seeking out, protecting against, and eradicating crime and deviance, CCTV and contemporary control measures can actually be seen to *construct* crime and deviance (Coleman, 2005: 132). This does not mean that more crime occurs under the gaze of the cameras (although rises in crime figures can be attributed to a wider surveillance scope and increases in the efficiency of surveillance infrastructure) but that more and more people are *becoming criminalised* and sought out through CCTV regulation. As Fyfe and Bannister argue:

“Those perceived not to belong in commercial spaces now risk being ‘monitored and harassed, losing rights as citizens just because they aren’t seen to be lucrative enough as consumers’ ... The result is a subtle privatisation of public space ... as commercial imperatives define acceptable behaviour, excluding those who detract from the consumption experience” (Fyfe and Bannister, 1998: 263 citing Graham *et al*, 1996: 19).

Again, processes fostered through entrepreneurial urbanism, in this case the proliferation of surveillance, can be seen to be eroding spatial justice in the post-industrial city. CCTV, however, is but one of the methods through which such an exclusion is attained. As Rowland Atkinson (2003) has observed, something as seemingly benign as street furniture can also play a putative role in the regulation of public space:

“Street ‘furniture’ increasingly allows only a codified use through design. Climb-proof paint and vandal-proof lights are logical and useful developments, whereas other changes in the style of chairs and benches actively prevent resting ... Other changes can be seen in ‘bum-proof’ park benches ... which have become segmented by armrests in order that people cannot lie on them to prevent people (i.e. the homeless) sleeping on them – thus ‘designing-out’ the already socially excluded” (Atkinson, 2003: 1834).

The result is a ‘purification of space’ (Sibley, 1995) – an assault on the freedoms of what is usually thought a democratic urban public space – where numerous ‘undesirables’ are excluded on premises engendered by entrepreneurial urbanism and all that goes with it. Surveillance and the increased capacity of social control measures in the city are thus intrinsic to the exclusion of groups seen as deviant, non-conformist, or who threaten the consumption experience of the middle classes (Fyfe, 2004).

Review

Whilst I am not dealing directly with issues of gentrification, urban renaissance, revanchism, ZTP, homelessness or CCTV in this study, these issues help to illustrate how transformations

in the urban political-economy influence people's experiences of urban space, and how they have created multiple landscapes of exclusion. In Smith's terms, neoliberalism and entrepreneurial urbanism, in their myriad guises, have fostered a revanchist urban politics where gentrification and ZTP are used to reclaim neighbourhoods and streets for the citified middle classes (Smith, 1996a). The homeless in particular, seem to be continually displaced in the entrepreneurial city. Despite its long history as an urban phenomenon, emerging in the US shortly after the 1930s New Deal programme, homelessness "is as much the result ... of a vindictive reaction from the right in the 1980s", when conservative governments reinstated class privileges pertaining only to certain social groups (Smith, 1996a: 127). More recently, the homeless are argued to have been 'annihilated' by being legislated against using public space in a number of US cities, in what amounts to the creation of a city conducive to the relocation of capital. As Mitchell (1997) notes, the attraction of new business, more tourists and more spending, is predicated on the removal of undesirables.

Whether the governance of Newcastle displays elements of revanchism toward its most vulnerable inhabitants is the concern of another study. However, this literature helps foreground the kind of processes which may be ongoing in Newcastle's night-time economy, explaining how marginalised social groups have been excluded by entrepreneurial processes engendered by both public and private bodies. This literature exemplifies how groups who do not fit in to contemporary capitalist culture are constructed in opposition to, and out of place within its spaces, seemingly legitimating increasing measures to marginalise, segregate, and exclude. The point here is that there seems to be a political agenda which seeks to eradicate any threat to urban economic development, and as I show in chapter 7, this is of fundamental concern in this study.

The exclusion of other social groups can be interpreted in similar ways. Young people are also often denied access to some city spaces at certain times, particularly shopping malls where they are seen as "out of place" as non-consumers (Cresswell, 1996; Sibley, 1995). Where their access to urban space is granted, they are often under heavy surveillance, scrutinised on premises of deviance and anti-social behaviour (Coleman, 2005). But before I discuss the place of young people in contemporary urban space, the next section looks more closely at the multifaceted concept of 'deviance', tracing its theoretical history and how it is understood for the purposes of this study.

2.3 Constructing Troublesome Youth 1: Deviance, Subcultures, Folk Devils

Whilst most modern sociological and criminological interpretations view deviance as a socially constructed phenomenon, in early twentieth-century sociology it was taken as a legitimate social reality which existed in and through the individual / social group. I begin this section by examining the pathological conceptions of Cesare Lombroso before looking at the cultural explanations put forward by the Chicago School of Sociology. I then turn to the work of the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies at the University of Birmingham, introducing the concept of ‘subculture’.

I then illustrate a very different understanding of deviance. Known as the ‘transactional’ or ‘labelling’ approach, deviance here is understood as a social category pinned to specific individuals and / or groups who are deemed deviant by certain social audiences (Becker, 1963). Of key interest at this point is the mass media who often construct deviant identities through this labelling process. The media, through the construction of ‘folk devils’, create ‘moral panics’ – episodes where social groups deemed deviant are used to highlight the normative boundaries of social life – and subsequently justify increasing social control (Cohen, 1972; Hall *et al*, 1978).

Proto-Criminologies and the Chicago School of Sociology

In the early twentieth century, proto-criminologist⁷ Cesare Lombroso (1918) claimed that deviance and criminality were inherent features of the individual. Studying in prisons, mental asylums and from post-mortem examinations, Lombroso argued that certain minority groups were either born with a criminal disposition or became so through mental disorder. Ultimately he saw crime as “an inherited and atavistic propensity towards behaviour which humanity as a species has outgrown” (Sapsford, 1980: 262) and the criminal as a “morally inferior human species, one characterised by physical traits reminiscent of apes, lower primates, and savage tribes” (Platt, 1969: 21). His arguments gained a wide currency in certain cliques due to his application of a ‘scientific’, albeit limited, method. However, his bio-pathological conception of deviance, where specific groups were born into certain social positions, also had a pragmatic dimension. As David Sibley suggests, “this kind of scientism lent itself to racist theory and practice in Nazi Germany where Jews, defined in terms of

⁷ I use the term ‘proto-criminology’ here following observations in Downes and Rock (2007) that crime and deviance were documented and reported prior to the inception of its sociological study in, perhaps, ‘formal-scientific’ institutions such as universities. Other examples of proto-criminological work would include Henry Mayhew’s descriptions of impoverished Victorian London (Mayhew, 1862) amongst others.

physical difference or imperfection, became dangerous, like the mentally disabled, because of the threat they posed to the Aryan race” (Sibley, 1995: 25). Many did come to critique Lombroso’s theories, however, and rejected such deterministic ‘science’. As Sapsford points out:

“[T]his kind of theory assumes that such complex and essentially social behaviours as the commission of crimes can be explained at the level of the individual ... it assumes that the explanation can relevantly be cast in terms of the individual’s biology or experiences, without reference to ‘mind’ or ‘meaning’ or how social reality is constructed by the individual” (Sapsford, 2005: 263).

Later theories of deviance were explained on quite different foundations. The scholars working out of the Chicago School of Sociology, set up in the late nineteenth century, argued that deviant behaviour was the product of an individual’s socio-cultural environment rather than a feature inherent in the individual. People were not born deviant / criminal, but resorted to crime and deviance if their surrounding socio-cultural terrain (i.e. locality and population) provoked such behaviours and ways of life. Whilst it was not the initial objective of the Chicagoans to study crime and deviance, funding opportunities and the sheer abundance of social problems in Chicago at the time (1920s) influenced much of their research. The ‘zone in transition’ – the area known more commonly now as the inner city – became the major geographical focus, being the area where social problems, deprivation and poverty were most profuse. For the Chicago School, crime and deviance in the zone in transition were “explained principally by the effects of the isolation of certain natural areas. They became a kind of surrogate social order, an alternative pattern, which replaced the workings of conventional institutions. Their forms were themselves explained as a functional response to deprivation, to the social and moral structures imported by immigrants and to the experience of growing up in the inner city” (Downes and Rock, 2007: 59).

Deviance was thus seen as learnt social behaviour, a product of the surrounding environment and the surrounding people, often in areas of high unemployment, poverty, low education, and family breakdown. It was a social feature passed down from generation to generation, or a method of coping with the often harsh reality of living in the zone in transition. Anderson (1923) for example, undertook ethnographic work on the hobo, and Thrasher (1927) on the gang, and these, amongst other works, initiated a plethora of theories of deviance which have become, as I illustrate below, major facets of sociological theory ever since.

Delinquency, Subculture, and the CCCS

Developing the Chicago School's ideas, later theories of deviance paid much more attention to young people, and it was here where the first studies of juvenile delinquency became prominent in cultural studies. One of the most renowned of these is Albert Cohen's *Delinquent Boys* (1956), which developed Robert Merton's (1938, 1957) theory of anomie (an account of deviance sensitive to the emerging social structure in the post-depression years of the United States) to explain the occurrence of crime and delinquency in young men. Merton, reflecting much of what the Chicago sociologists had argued, understood deviance as a conflict between culture and structure – a 'strain' between the promises offered by American culture and the restraints of its prevalent social structure. In Merton's view, individuals, restricted by the organization of American society, resorted to deviance in pursuit of the 'infinite aspirations' imbued in the doctrine of the 'American dream'. Cohen (1956) saw deviance in a similar manner, although he speaks of a much more insulated nature of deviance. For Cohen, delinquent individuals rarely compared themselves to the upper social structure – that is, the confines of class, law, governance in the organization of society etc. – and instead related to the people immediately around them. Cohen argued that delinquency came about much more through the micro-scale of locality rather than as a reaction to the macro-scale of social class internment. He also argued that delinquents share common group values, but values entirely different from the wider dominant culture. These delinquent 'subcultures' took material form as a 'gang', and were characterised as non-utilitarian, malicious and negativistic. They were said to be versatile, not wanting to specialize in any specific criminal activity. Stealing, for example, would go "hand-in-hand with "other property offences", "malicious mischief", "vandalism", "trespass", and truancy" (Cohen, 1956: 29). Members of delinquent subcultures were also described as purveyors of "short-run hedonism", there being "little interest in long-run goals, in planning activities and budgeting time" (ibid. p. 30), and defined by their group autonomy, where the gang came first and relations with other groups were "indifferent, hostile or rebellious" (ibid. p. 31).

Richard Cloward and Lloyd Ohlin (1961) put forward a similar account of delinquency, suggesting three distinct types of subculture. They state that "the criminal subculture prescribes disciplined and utilitarian forms of theft; the conflict subculture prescribes the instrumental use of violence; and the retreatist subculture prescribes participation in illicit consummatory experiences, such as drug use" (Cloward and Ohlin, 1961: 14). But whilst these theories of delinquency rooted its cause in 'strain' and emphasized the tightly bound characteristics of a subculture, other conceptions of delinquency, especially the work of David Matza (for example 1964), argued against such an 'over-prediction'. For Matza,

delinquent behaviour is sporadic and mundane, and ultimately willed behaviour. It is not a result of a deeply held oppositional set of beliefs that go against dominant cultural norms, but a process that gradually occurs through a state of ‘drift’ – a loosening of social controls from which delinquency could be only one outcome.

However, the idea of deviant or delinquent subcultures had academic purchase and became a central concept for a group of British scholars following the work done in the US by the likes of Albert Cohen, Richard Cloward and Lloyd Ohlin. Whereas previous studies of deviance and delinquency “employed the concept of subculture to investigate non-normative, non-mainstream, deviant, marginalized, minority, class, racial, criminal, unemployed, ‘underdog’ groups within their social milieu, for the Birmingham people ... white, male, working-class youth set their parameters” (Jenks, 2005: 121). For the Gramsci-influenced Marxian CCCS at the University of Birmingham, this youth group were used to highlight increasing class-based social injustices engendered by structural changes in the British post-war political-economy.

Akin to the US delinquency theories, the initial studies by the CCCS focussed on the deviant norms and sensibilities of gangs in specific localities, such as Phil Cohen’s (1972) work in East London. But over the subsequent decade this focus shifted from locality and community to style-based groups such as the teds, mods, and rockers etc – therefore shifting from the analysis of the local scale toward a subcultural mode of explanation, i.e. from the micro-scale of locality to the macro-scale of class (Bennett and Kahn-Harris, 2004). The CCCS’s work ended up seeking to exemplify how working-class youth became disenfranchised by deindustrialisation, stagnation, unemployment and the erosion of working-class culture, and thus how they ‘resisted through rituals’ (Hall and Jefferson, 1976) – by demarcating their own meaningful social and cultural existence through the formation of subcultures. As Phil Cohen (1972) suggests, working-class adults were becoming increasingly pressured in the early 1970s:

“Their bargaining power in the labour market was threatened by the introduction of new automated techniques, which eliminated many middle-range, semi-skilled jobs. Their economic position excluded them from entering the artificial paradise of the new consumer society; at the same time changes in the production process itself have made the traditional work ethic, the pride in the job, impossible to uphold” (P. Cohen, 1972: 21).

But Cohen argues that young people experienced and registered these changes more deeply than their parents, and as a result aimed to “express and resolve, albeit “magically”, the contradictions which remain hidden or unresolved in the parent culture” (P. Cohen, 1972: 23).

Many working-class young people thus set out to form the kind of cultural alliances that distinguished them from others, adopting specific styles and appearances. These subcultures, such as the teds, mods, skinheads, and rockers, then, “all represent, in their different ways, an attempt to retrieve some of the socially cohesive elements destroyed in their parent culture” (ibid.).

According to Dick Hebdige, the teds, defined by the Edwardian style suits they wore, “had been almost universally vilified by press and parents alike as symptomatic of Britain’s impending decline” (Hebdige, 1979: 82), and “swiftly gained a terrible reputation for gang fights, vandalism, street robberies, rock and roll cinema riots, and attacks on café owners and late-night bus crews” (Pearson, 1983: 18). However, in his ethnography, Tony Jefferson (1976) found that the teds were extremely group-minded and ‘touchy’ to insults, a possible reason, or at least explanation for such disorderly behaviour. Jefferson states:

“My contention is that to lads traditionally lacking in status, and *being further deprived of what little they possessed* ... there remained only the self, the cultural extension of the self (dress, personal appearance) and the social extension of the self (the group). Once threats were perceived in those areas, the only ‘reality’ or ‘space’ on which they had any hold, then the fights, in *defence of this space* become explicable and *meaningful phenomena*” (Jefferson, 1976: 82, original emphases).

Other subcultures examined by the CCCS are interpreted in much the same way: John Clarke suggested that the skinhead subculture represented “an attempt to re-create through the ‘mob’ the traditional working class community, as a substitution for the *real* decline of the latter” (Clarke, 1976: 99, original emphasis); and Dick Hebdige (1976) argued that mod style “was a reaction to the mundane predictability of the working week, and that a mod attempted to compensate for this ‘by exercising complete domination over his private estate – his appearance and choice of leisure pursuits’” (Bennett and Kahn-Harris, 2004: 6 citing Hebdige, 1976: 91).

But despite its prominence in cultural studies, there are many criticisms of the CCCS’s work. Angela McRobbie (1980) warns of the dominance of male youth in the study of subculture, and indeed the only accounts of female subcultures are McRobbie and Garber’s (1976) work on ‘teeny bopper’ girls (see Valentine *et al*, 1998 for discussion). Many have also come to question the authenticity of the relationship between subcultural resistance and class i.e. were all subcultural members exclusively working class (Muggleton, 2000)? The CCCS’s conception of class is also thought to be over simplistic, overlooking variations in class

sensibilities. It is argued that the CCCS failed to account for others in the working classes who did not choose to adopt a particular subcultural lifestyle (ibid.). In addition, the political consciousness of resistance has been questioned. Whilst the CCCS gave youth subcultures “‘grown-up’ political purposes” it is hard to tell how far it corresponded “to the lived reality of those groups of adolescents” (Jenks, 2005: 130; see also Cohen, 2002: lviii). Related to this, Stan Cohen (2002) is concerned with the CCCS’s dependence on externally ‘reading’ the symbolic attributes of subcultural style from an academic perspective. As he states: “This [CCCS subcultural analysis] is to be sure, an imaginative way of reading the style; but how can we be sure it is also not *imaginary*” (Cohen, 2002: lix, emphasis added). There is, then, as Muggleton suggests, “an academic ‘elitism’ implicit in this method” (Muggleton, 2000: 13).

The shift from the micro scale of locales to the macro scale of class claimed a universality of subculture, which consequently failed to account for regional variations. It has also been noted that the CCCS’s conception of subculture is an essentially British concept, as the intricacies of their subcultural theory are unable to traverse to other Western-bloc countries (Bennett and Kahn-Harris, 2004). In addition, the CCCS failed to acknowledge the media’s role in the construction of subcultural identities. According to Thornton, “rather than emerging as fully-formed, grass-roots expressions of youth solidarity, subcultures are the product of youth’s dynamic and highly reflexive relationship with the mass media” (1995, cited in Bennett and Kahn-Harris, 2004: 10).

Despite these criticisms, the CCCS’s work illustrates some of the impacts that economic and related social transformations had on young people in Britain at that specific juncture. In this way, youth subcultures “were interrelated as spectacular indicators of the ongoing class struggle in British society”, with economic restructuring and changes in the reproduction of labour having the most profound impacts on the working classes, and especially on working-class youth (Bennett and Kahn-Harris, 2004: 5). According to Chris Jenks, the CCCS’s goal was to “mobilize the idea of subculture to articulate the unspoken, or perhaps unheard, voices of a populist proletariat within a critical vision and ... an eye to radical social change” (Jenks, 2005: 5). However, in doing so, the CCCS instead highlighted how despite increased spending power by working-class youth, their life chances, bound by their class would not alter. Symbolized by the emergence of style-based, resistant, subcultures, the CCCS “thus offered a bitter-sweet analysis of subculture, one that celebrated its achievements at the same time as noting its inevitable limitations” (Bennett and Kahn-Harris, 2004: 6).

The Transactional Approach

The CCCS's subcultural theory, at first, seems directly relevant to this study, showing how economic restructuring affects the socio-cultural experiences of young people – a task which this study seeks, in part, to undertake. However, despite its prominence in cultural studies and its commitment to a critical reading of the effects of political-economy, a caveat needs to be made here concerning the conceptions of deviance used by the CCCS and others. The theories of deviance outlined above allude to a specific ontology where deviance exists in and through the individual / group, either as a method of coping with poverty, a lifestyle, or a mode of resistance to changing cultural politics. This study understands deviance differently. Following from Howard Becker (1963), deviance here is understood as a socially constructed relationship, not in the sense that “the causes of deviance are located in the social situation of the deviant or in “social factors” which prompt his [sic] action” (Becker, 1963: 9), but rather that:

“Social groups create deviance by making the rules whose infraction constitutes deviance and by applying those rules to particular people and labelling them as outsiders. From this point of view, deviance is not a quality of the act a person commits, but rather a consequence of the application by others of rules and sanctions to an ‘offender’. The deviant is one to whom that label has successfully been applied; deviant behaviour is behaviour that people so label” (ibid. original emphases).

In a similar understanding of the deviance ‘label’, Erikson (1964) states:

“Deviance is not a property inherent in certain forms of behaviour; it is a property conferred upon these forms by the audiences which directly or indirectly witness them. The critical variable in the study of deviance, then, is the social audience rather than the individual actor, since it is the audience which eventually determines whether or not any episode of behaviour or any class of episodes is labelled deviant” (Erikson, 1964: 11 original emphases).

Thus, deviance does not just come about through the individual. Deviance is constructed through the relationship between the social audience and the perceived deviant/s. This particular understanding gave rise to arguably the most well known and most cited work in contemporary sociological disciplines, itself influencing a huge array of studies (some of which are demonstrated in section 2.4). Using the premises set out by Becker, Stan Cohen's *Folk Devils and Moral Panics* (first published in 1972) suggests that specific social groups are constructed as ‘folk devils’ threatening a moral social order, and used to justify reactions against them. Cohen argues, in this now canonical passage:

“Societies appear to be subject, every now and then, to periods of moral panic. A condition, episode, person or groups of persons emerges to be defined as a threat to societal values and interests; its nature is presented in a stylized and stereotypical fashion by the mass media; the moral barricades are manned by editors, bishops, politicians and other right-thinking people; socially accredited experts pronounce their diagnoses and solutions ... One of the most recurrent types of moral panic in Britain since the war has been associated with the emergence of various forms of youth culture ... whose behaviour is deemed deviant or delinquent” (Cohen, 2002 (3rd Ed.): 1).

Cohen illustrates the process of constructing folk devils and moral panics through an examination of how the mass media reacted to a series of public disturbances involving groups of mods and rockers in Clacton in 1964. According to Cohen, despite the disturbances actually being fairly minor, the media sensationalized, exaggerated and distorted the events for the purposes of defining appropriate behaviour, to create a scapegoat – in this case a unique cultural group – on which to blame social ills. As he suggests, groups such as the mods and rockers “have been distinctive in being identified not just in terms of particular events (such as demonstrations) or particular disapproved forms of behaviour (such as drug-taking or violence) but as *distinguishable social types*” (Cohen, 2002: 1, emphasis added). And thus, he continues: “In the gallery of types that society erects to show its members which roles should be avoided and which should be emulated, these groups have occupied a constant position as *folk devils*: visible reminders of what we should not be” (ibid. p. 1-2, emphasis added). Thus, specific groups are not deviant *per se* but constructed so, used to outline the normative contours of social life, demarcating boundaries of appropriate and inappropriate actions.

This perspective is also exemplified by Stuart Hall *et al*’s (1978) *Policing the Crisis*, which adopts a similar theoretical base to that of Becker, Erikson, and Cohen. Hall and his colleagues were in fact working out of the Birmingham School, yet this particular thesis of theirs departs radically from the theoretical trajectory of the earlier CCCS work on subculture. Rather than study the deviant social groups in question (as did the CCCS), *Policing the Crisis* addressed the processes through which groups became labelled so. In this way, Hall *et al* sought to “interrogate why mugging resulted in a moral panic at a specific historical juncture, and how this panic came to be profoundly racialized” (Vanderbeck, 2003: 368). Again, for Hall *et al* the key determinant in the construction of folk devils and moral panics is the mass media, which stimulated “public anxiety, producing changes in policing and criminal justice that became a self-fulfilling spiral of deviancy amplification” (Reiner, 2003: 316).

For Hall *et al*, the media are chief arbitrators in the knowledge acquired and utilised by society, shaping negative perceptions of groups represented as deviant and a threat to the normative moral order. And this is achieved in various ways. First, we have to recognise that the media “do not simply and transparently report events which are ‘naturally’ newsworthy *in themselves*. ‘News’ is the end-product of a complex process which begins with a systematic sorting and selecting of events and topics according to a socially constructed set of categories” (Hall *et al*, 1978: 53, original emphasis). This can primarily be seen in the bureaucratic organisation of news institutions, divided into home affairs, political, foreign affairs etc. but also in the ‘professional ideology’ of the news institution – those news values which determine what is ‘news’ and how it should be reported. It can also be seen in the construction of the news story itself, which involves “the presentation of the item to its *assumed* audience, in terms which, as far as the presenters of the item can judge, will make it comprehensible to that audience” (ibid. original emphasis).

Second, by reporting specific events, the media “define for the majority of the population *what* significant events are taking place, but, also, they offer powerful interpretations of *how* to understand these events” (Hall *et al*, 1978: 57 original emphases). Third, by calling upon various sources of information for their stories, the media present a ‘credible’ interpretation of the event. In representations of crime and deviance, powerful social actors such as the police, the judiciary, members of parliament etc. validate the issue of concern which ostensibly reinforces an ‘impartial’ and ‘objective’ reporting rationale, although as Hall *et al* aver, the ways in which these voices are represented reflect the institution’s own professional news ideology – the result being news which is far from objective and unbiased.

In the case of mugging, the media coverage of police spokespeople, judges and politicians, as well as coverage of mugging events, made the mugging ‘phenomenon’ a real, ‘new’ and valid issue of the 1970s, despite its wholly unremarkable existence as a street crime long recognized and established in Britain (Hall *et al*, 1978; also see Pearson, 1983 for a similar commentary). Ultimately, Hall *et al* (1978) argue along the lines of Stan Cohen (1972) by suggesting that the media helped foster a moral panic through the creation of a black criminal folk devil. Mugging was represented as a new and unforeseen crime plaguing the streets of Britain.

But by focussing on mugging, Hall *et al* were also able to show how crime and deviance are mobilised in the continuing pursuit of increased discipline and social control (Muncie, 1999). At this theoretical period, Charles Acland (1995) seeks to demonstrate the similarity between

Hall *et al*'s ideas of social control and those of Michel Foucault. Although they do not draw directly from him, Hall *et al* and Foucault are argued to have much in common:

“Foucault studies the complexly structured forms of social knowledge power. In his work, power is multifaceted and cannot be said to be singularly located. It operates in and through epistemology; the very mechanisms that order our relations to the world in an intelligible fashion and that make something comprehensible to us are equally relations of power ... When *Policing the Crisis* is read with this in mind, a Foucauldian sense of the discursive construction of knowledge, necessarily a power relation as well, encounters a Gramscian notion of cultural leadership and class alliance to provide a comprehensive analysis of the articulations of deviance and social power as mediated through and motivated by the mass media of news reporting” (Acland, 1995: 40).

For Hall *et al*, representing the world through the news media thus has very real consequences which redefine and reinstate powerful ideologies, discursively constructing knowledge of deviant, less powerful groups, in order to create and police boundaries of their normative social world. The coverage of crime and deviance thus “evokes threats to, but also reaffirms, the consensual morality of the society: a modern morality play takes place before us in which the ‘devil’ is both symbolically and physically cast out from the society by its guardians – the police and the judiciary” (Hall *et al*, 1978: 66).

Review

In this study, deviance is not understood as an intrinsic feature of the individual, nor the group, but rather a complex process through which people and persons come to be defined as deviant according to a previously constructed set of categories demarcated by a prevalent, and powerful, ideological moral order. Deviance is therefore a representation, a social construction. And these representations of deviance operate in a variety of ways. They circulate through society and work at a number of levels. In the case of the mods and rockers, representations of deviance constructed by the mass media worked to create folk devils and moral panics (Cohen, 1972), a similar process to that of mugging exemplified by Hall *et al* (1978), which, in turn, became used to legitimize more punitive reactions and sanctions against perceived offenders.

These representations therefore have more material implications in extant political, economic, social, cultural and most importantly spatial processes. In the post-industrial city, notions of deviance perhaps work in a similar way to Cohen (1972) and Hall *et al*'s (1978) folk devils

and moral panics, where the urban poor and homeless are constructed as deviant by more powerful public and private institutions. Perceived vis-à-vis contemporary urban culture of mass middle-class consumption, they are seen as threatening to the putative success of the entrepreneurial city, acting as a deterrent to those who perform the city in pre-defined, acceptable ways. This construction process also seeks to legitimate deleterious consequences for these groups, exemplified by the previous cases of gentrification, ZTP and increasing surveillance capabilities discussed in section 2.2. As I show in the next section, representations of deviance are also put to use in the socio-spatial exclusion of young people from urban public space. Recent representational practices that construct young working-class men as deviant, delinquent and problematic to society are also entangled in a range of contemporary exclusionary scenarios, a situation which I also explore next.

2.4 Constructing Troublesome Youth 2: Gender, Class, and the Cultural Geographies of Young People

Examining recent work in cultural geography and borrowing from the transactional approach to deviance outlined above, here I illustrate how the construction of deviant identities is also predicated around the distinct *spatialities* of particular social groups. First I look briefly at Tim Cresswell's work (1996) on notions of place and transgression, before exploring the specific spatialities of young people and how they are implicated in the construction of deviance. Many commentators have recently suggested that young people are largely excluded from full societal participation and that this is reflected in their exclusion from specific spaces (for example Valentine, 1996, 1997; Matthews *et al*, 1999; Aitken, 2001; Collins and Kearns, 2001). Simultaneously, however, it has also been noted how young people are able to carve out their own spatialities free from adult control, able to resist adult hegemony and construct their own meaningful cultural existence (for example Cloke and Jones, 2005; Matthews *et al*, 2000; Skelton, 2000; Thomas, 2005). Here, in accordance with the research agenda of this study, I concentrate on the former, showing how young people are socially and spatially excluded due to their construction as deviant, out of control, and 'out of place'.

Second, I investigate the changing nature of troublesome youth, illustrating the most recent discursive trends through which youth are constructed and understood as troublesome in post-industrial Britain. Deviance has long been gendered, being strongly associated with young men, and this has persisted to the present day where they are seen to be especially problematic to society. Deviance, however, also revolves around specific ideas of class. Again, deviance

has always carried specific class connotations to which I alluded in section 2.3, but as the political economy changes, along with numerous other social transformations, ideas of class and gender are constantly being reworked. Changes in urban economies have had numerous effects on the employment opportunities of young working-class men, and recent media and government representations of this youth group have served to alienate them further. It is these issues that are the focus of the latter part of this section.

The Spatial Implications of Deviance

As I outlined in section 2.3, deviance is socially constructed; it is a quality conferred upon groups as they are represented. In the preceding cases examined by sociologists such as Stan Cohen (1972) and Stuart Hall *et al* (1978), deviance, by way of folk devils, often shapes normative reaction through moral panics. Here I trace the theoretical lineage of the transactional approach to deviance to contemporary work in cultural geography and the geographies of young people, showing how representing deviance is also contingent upon spatially-specific ideologies. Tim Cresswell's work (1996) is an especially useful starting point. Cresswell investigates the ways in which the normative prescriptions of space are defined, exploring the "intricate ways in which place and space are deeply embedded within the cultural ideologies which regulate our everyday lives" (Kitchin, 1998: 60). Using an innovative methodology, Cresswell shows how commonsense assumptions about the 'place' of people, things and behaviour become most evident through spatial transgressions. It is argued that both people and things occupy distinct normative positions and these are intrinsically spatial – what Cresswell calls 'normative geographies'. However, when something is 'out of place' – when a transgression occurs – only then do these normative geographies become evident: "By looking at the events that upset the balance of common sense I let the events, themselves, become the questions. The occurrence of "out-of-place" phenomena leads people to question behaviour and define what is and is not appropriate for a particular setting" (Cresswell, 1996: 22). Following from Howard Becker (1963), Cresswell also argues that 'place' is a fundamental determinant in the creation of deviance:

"It is my assertion that place plays a significant role in the creation of norms of behaviour and thus in the creation of deviance ... Howard Becker does not emphasise place in his classic study of deviance. He does, however, refer to those labelled deviant as "outsiders". *Outsider* is commonly the term used to describe people new to a place or people who do not know the ways of a place. The term *outsider* indicates that a person does not properly understand the behaviour expected of people in a town, region, or nation. Outsiders are often despised and

suspected of being trouble-makers. They are people “out of place”” (Cresswell, 1996: 26 original emphases).

I raise Cresswell’s theoretical assertions here as they are also evident in the work done on the geographies of youth, where it is acknowledged that young people occupy a distinct subordinate and outsider position in both society and space. But whilst youth have often been understood as a problematic social group in late-capitalism, they have not always been thought of as troublesome and in need of strict control. As Valentine *et al* suggest:

“It was not until the fifteenth century that ‘children’ began to be represented in icons as having a distinct nature and needs, and as separate from the adult world. This conceptualization of the young was subsequently fostered through the development of formal education and the belief that children required long periods of schooling before they could take on adult roles and responsibilities ... [L]egislation in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and more critically the introduction of mass schooling, popularised the mythical condition of ‘childhood’ and slowly a universal [although arguably Western] notion of what it meant to be a child developed” (Valentine *et al*, 1998: 3).

This conceptual shift brought with it a number of spatial changes, and children “were gradually removed from adult spaces and provided with environments catering specifically for ‘children’s’ needs” (Gagen, 2004: 405). Young people began spending more and more of their lives in institutional contexts containing “normative assumptions about how children should be” – in particular the home and school (Holloway and Valentine, 2000: 770). Recognizing these spatial implications, many geographers have turned to examine the ways in which conceptions of childhood and youth become mobilised in the construction of space, following from Chris Philo’s (1992) call to study children as individual social actors in their own right. In reviewing Colin Ward’s work on young people’s experiences of city and country spaces (Ward 1977, 1990), Philo proposed that geographers should “galvanize specific attention from cultural geography” (Gagen, 2004: 406; see also Valentine *et al*, 1998). Since, many human geographers have come to explore the geographies of young people through a cultural lens, examining their exclusion from “full participation in society’s activities and spaces by both formal legal frameworks and everyday practices that serve to naturalize adult authority” (Vanderbeck and Dunkley, 2004: 177).

For many geographers, the study of young people, childhood and youth is greatly influenced by the sociological and cultural studies disciplines I discussed in the previous section. The exclusion of young people in post-industrial cities is often precipitated due to a common belief that they are deviant, problematic and troublesome to society. Similarly to Cohen

(1972) and Hall *et al* (1978), some of the time this belief is the result of a reflexive relationship with the mass media. Gill Valentine (1996) argues that throughout modern history, childhood and youth have been constructed so as to promote the idea that young people are inherently innocent but corrupted by society as they age. However, the murder of Jamie Bulger in 1993 by two ten-year-old boys sparked a debate in both the national press and central government concerning the essentially deviant nature of childhood and possible remediation. The coverage of the murder “shattered the dominant contemporary imagining of children – that they possess a special nature ... and are morally as well as temporally set apart from adults” (Valentine, 1996: 588) and “gave rise to a particularly intense moral panic, one that was encouraged by the British Conservative Government in an attempt to win support for ‘crack downs’ on youth crime and truancy, and the retrenchment of welfare benefits” (Collins and Kearns, 2001: 391). It was used ultimately to declare the end of childhood as the age of innocence.

Valentine (1996) found that in response to the death of Bulger and the coverage of the event in the press, a number of parents highlighted concerns for apparently ‘demonic’ children, and fears for their own children’s safety in public space. Parents argued that “children as young as 7 or 8, but more commonly teenagers, are a menace to the moral order of neighbourhoods: threatening not only property through acts of vandalism but also adult’s peace and tranquillity through being noisy and visually intrusive” (Valentine, 1996: 590). Some also reiterated the discourses prevalent in the media coverage of the case where children are no longer seen as innocent. The parents interviewed by Valentine recall partaking in similar activities to modern-day children like hanging around on the streets and occasionally getting up to mischief, but that these were harmless behaviours, unlike the teenagers of today who are purportedly “aggressive, intimidating and out of control in public space” (*ibid.*). Thus, media reports of “child violence, such as the Bulger case, were ... repeatedly used by interviewees to justify their perceptions that contemporary children are more violent than they themselves were during their own childhoods, and that other children are a threat to the personal safety in public spaces of their own offspring (who remain the personification of innocence)” (*ibid.*).

Other events “have also been used to snowball the end-of-innocence argument” including “everything from joy-riding to bullying ... to the mugging of actress Elizabeth Hurley by a group of teenage girls” (Valentine, 1996: 588), as well as the Columbine High School massacre in the US. Stuart Aitken (2001) argues that the media coverage of these events have helped intensify the disparagement of young people and their behaviour in the Western world. But despite a continuing focus on specific groups of young people like the mods and rockers in the 1960s and 1970s, and more recently ‘chavs’ and ‘yobs’ (discussed later), Aitken (2001)

argues that the perpetuation of moral panics induced by media representation have come to demonize a whole generation of young people. These reports, coupled with wider social transformations where changes in familial structure, changes in production and reproduction, “increasing corporate surveillance of individuals and the commodification of large portions of the private sphere” (Aitken, 2001: 147) have helped stimulate increased anger at young people who “cannot or will not fulfil their expected roles” (ibid.). The result is what Aitken (2001) refers to as a ‘moral assault’ on young people thought incompetent, dangerous and troublesome, serving to exacerbate the strict regulation of young people’s spatialities.

In another piece of research, Valentine (1997) notes how conceiving young people as “naïve, immature and innocent and thus in need of protection by (and from) rational, experienced adults” (p. 82) influences many parents to restrict their children’s spatial activities outside of the home. Again, this is also partly a response to fears propelled by the media. But in addition to domestic and parenting frameworks, the restriction of young people in public space is also administered by legal frameworks such as curfews. With the construction of public space as predominantly adult space, young people’s spatial freedoms are becoming increasingly suppressed, much like that of the homeless and other urban undesirables. Curfews that exclude the young work in a similar way to the legislative reactions explored by Mitchell (1997), where criminalizing young people and their use of public space is used as justification for cleansing the city to make way for capital (Coleman, 2005; Collins and Kearns, 2001). A similar scenario exists in privately-owned spaces. As Valentine argues:

“Efforts to revitalise or ‘aestheticise’ public space as part of attempts to revive (symbolically and economically) cities in most contemporary western cities are increasingly resulting in the replacement of ‘public’ spaces with surrogate ‘private’ spaces such as shopping malls and festival marketplaces. The development of these new privatised spaces ... are serving to homogenise and domesticate public spaces by reducing and controlling diversity in order to make these environments safe for the middle classes’ (Valentine, 2004: 84).

Highlighting similar processes at work, David Sibley suggests the reasons for excluding groups of youths from shopping centres:

“In the shopping centre management’s response to the presence of adolescents, maybe not consuming very much, in a place dedicated to consumption by the family, there is a connection between the function and design of the space as determined by commercial interests and design professionals, architects and planners, and the construction of one group of the population as ‘deviant’, out of place, and threatening to the projected image of the development” (Sibley, 1995: xii).

Whilst young people have been subject to spatial restrictions for the past few hundred years, neoliberalism and transforming urban space have therefore engendered new processes of control and regulation. The result in the post-industrial city is a plethora of exclusionary processes aimed at restricting young people's access to and use of urban space. This echoes Cresswell's (1996) arguments discussed earlier, where groups find themselves transgressing appropriate spatial norms. Young people find little freedom in the entrepreneurial city because they are not seen as lucrative enough consumers, a situation exacerbated by their construction as simultaneously troublesome and deviant.

The 'Problem' of Young Working-Class Men in Contemporary Britain

Specific ideas of gender also play fundamental roles in the creation of troublesome youth. Recent policy and media reports tend to "construct young men as a 'problem' on a number of fronts", and promote the idea that "being a young man in the UK today is somehow troubling, that there is something problematic about the state of young masculinity" (Robb, 2007: 110). Indeed, it was recently recognised that boys have now become more susceptible to academic failure than girls, with current concerns directed at how young men are able, or rather unable, to transition from school to work (McDowell, 2002). Signalling a 'crisis of masculinity' (McDowell, 2002), contemporary class relations forged by recent economic restructuring have also significantly contributed to extant concerns about working-class masculinity. As Linda McDowell (2003) suggests, masculinity does not simply exist as a socio-cultural position dichotomous to femininity. In the words of Anna Mehta and Liz Bondi, there "is no singular femininity or masculinity to identify with; rather there are a variety of femininities and masculinities, which are discursively and practically produced and maintained" (Mehta and Bondi, 1999: 69). Instead, then, multiple masculinities are socially practiced – cross-cut along axes of race and ethnicity, sexual orientation, and class (McDowell, 2003).

Pioneered perhaps by Peter Jackson (1991), the academic literature on the geographies of men and masculinities now includes theses on young white masculinities and the social exclusion of young working-class men (McDowell, 2002, 2003, 2006, 2007), masculinity and sexuality (Brown, 2000; Skelton and Valentine, 2005; also Skeggs, 1999), exclusion and youthful Muslim masculinities (Hopkins, 2004, 2006; also see Hopkins, 2007), and many others. For the purposes of this study, the interrelation of youth, class and masculinity is of paramount importance, as recent popular debates concerning youth often revolve around working-class young men and their problematic masculine identities. As Linda McDowell suggests, these concerns seem to stem from recent political-economic transformations: "In the context of economic restructuring that has devastated old industrial communities as manufacturing

employment declines, job markets increasingly dominated by service employment, and an emphasis on workfare and other employment-related schemes, the undereducated, troublesome young men who leave school at 16 with few prospects of secure employment have become the focus of government concern” (McDowell, 2002: 99).

Of course, men and problematic masculinities have been a common concern for policy-makers and sociologists over the years, and as I illustrated in section 2.2, the predominance of young working-class men in studies of subculture became a defining feature of the CCCS’s work (and indeed, many of the studies by the Chicago School in the early twentieth-century revolved around delinquent male youth). Around the same time as the proliferation of work on subculture by the CCCS, sociologist Paul Willis (1977) in his seminal study *Learning to Labour* enquired as to how working-class kids get working-class jobs⁸. However, it is “only relatively recently that geographers have turned their attention to the social construction of masculinity, its variants, and their relationship with place and locality” (McDowell, 2002: 97). Furthermore, times have changed rapidly, and the transition to Post-Fordism necessitates further enquiry into the lives and experiences of young men in Britain. As Anoop Nayak suggests:

“The post-manufacturing economy has seen an increase in ‘footloose’ industries, service sector economies, part-time work, fixed-term contracts and more ‘flexible’ patterns of labour. Rather, we must now ask how working class youth (and in this case boys) are adapting to insecure times and an expanding post-industrial economy in which the rich reservoir of labouring jobs has all but evaporated” (Nayak, 2003c: 147-148).

It seems that at the current juncture, working-class young men are socially and economically fated from very early on. Where in the past a range of employment opportunities for young working-class men abounded, and where the transition from school to work could be made without gaining so many qualifications (i.e. through trade apprenticeships, non-skilled manufacturing jobs etc.), the current labour climate requires a completely different set of skills and qualifications. Increases in the professional / managerial sphere have opened up employment opportunities only to those who achieve relevant qualifications in further education, whilst the burgeoning service sector, although requiring less qualifications, increasingly seeks a set of ‘feminised’ skills traditionally unfamiliar to working-class young men. As McDowell suggests:

⁸ See also Corrigan (1979) for a similar study involving groups of young working-class men.

“Those older forms of acceptable ‘macho’ behaviour among working-class men that used to be a key feature of male manual employment are now a positive disadvantage in the labour market, where self-presentation, punctuality, attitude, and demeanour to customers and superiors are increasingly important attributes. Deference and docility are highly valued skills in the bottom-end service sector jobs that may be the only employment options available to working-class men in former industrial areas, and yet it seems that male socialisation in schools and in localities continues to emphasise traditional male ways of doing things, increasingly excluding young men from the only labour-market opportunities that are open to them” (2002: 104).

The turbulence that marks current school-work transitions and labour masculinities also has wider ramifications. Exclusion from the labour market through economic restructuring has facilitated the forging of new gender roles, and masculine identities once unproblematic in industrial times have now been reconfigured and demonized through class-specific discourses of academic failure and economic redundancy. In an earlier time work once assured masculinity, “the world of work was the world of men, and masculinity was almost synonymous with employment participation. A man’s worth, his very identity as a man, was inextricably linked to his occupation and social class ... Whether part of the cerebral world of rational masculinity inhabited by middle class and well-educated men or the rough and tumble masculine camaraderie of high-risk, embodied manufacturing work, being a man meant being a worker” (McDowell, 2006: 832). Current labour relations thus have significant implications for the status of young working-class masculinity in contemporary Britain, which has effectively been reconstituted alongside wider social and economic transformations, alienating and socially excluding a large stratum of the population from an increasingly fragmented and feminised labour market (McDowell, 2002). Rather than a crisis of masculinity, the present times point to a crisis of working-class masculinity subjugated by a dominant middle-class version commensurate with the contemporary political-economic climate. As I show in chapter 4, young working-class masculinities, if not performed through work and employment, are performed through alternative social spaces – nightlife for example being an evermore significant space through which to do this (Hollands, 1995; Nayak, 2003a).

These new gender roles, though, are also forged through the perpetuation of historical representations of deviance and delinquency. If youth is socially constructed as troublesome and deviant at the current juncture, working-class male youth is constructed especially so. In recent periods of civil unrest, media images “were predominantly of young, apparently violent men” and were followed by “debates about the problems of youth unemployment ...

but also about the erosion of parental discipline, the ‘decline’ of the family, and the need for ‘firm’ policing in these areas” (McDowell, 2002: 98). New Labour policy pronouncements (as I discuss in the next chapter), through discourses of ‘yob culture’, continually reinforce the idea that young working-class men are out of control, and punitive reactions are shaped to deal with what seems to be a major national problem, despite rhetorics which dishonestly conflate “delinquent behaviour with more serious problems of violent crime” (ibid. p. 99).

Class has once again, then, become a central constituent in the creation of troublesome youth, if it ever went away in the first place. Young working-class masculinity, in the form of “the problem of boys / yobs” (McDowell, 2007: 276), has “come to dominate the popular imagination and the policy planning of the New Labour Government in an even more significant way than in earlier years” (ibid.). And to some degree, this has influenced the coercion and exclusion of predominantly young working-class men from a multitude of different socio-spatial contexts. As I show in chapter 3, escalating government and media fears of a growing yob culture strongly associated with the lower income classes prompted a series of reprimands in the form of shutting down ‘thug pubs’, proposing new on-the-spot fine powers for the police, and the introduction of the anti-social behaviour order (Asbo), exemplifying a “cascading scale of increasingly selective and targeted exclusions” (Cameron, 2007: 3).

Review

Through the recent body of work on the geographies of childhood and youth, it becomes evident that young people continue to be subjugated and controlled by an adult hegemony of space. Young people remain subjects problematic to society, culminating in a wide range of systematic regulations which often result in spatial curtailments and exclusions. It is evident that young people are understood as a threat to the possibilities of the post-industrial city. Many are conceived as non-consumers and out of place in consumption-oriented space. Some are criminalised, and some are punished through exclusionary mechanisms as a result. Working-class youth seem to be especially vulnerable. What was once a masculinity unproblematic to urban labour relations has become the object of media and government concern, and those who at one time were near assured employment after leaving school have largely been excluded from participating in extant systems of production. This, coupled with a rising public and state anxiety about yob culture, has precipitated further punitive measures and spatial restrictions.

Also, through current constructions of troublesome youth, old fears of deviance and delinquency have become resurrected, and brought into line with current discourses regarding a social morality commensurate with neoliberal ideologies. In other words, where once urban Britain was threatened by the juvenile delinquent subculture, then the teds, the mods and rockers, and indeed the ubiquitous ‘mugger’, it is now thought to be threatened by violent working-class boys and those unable to consume properly in the post-industrial city. Ultimately, then, transforming socio-economic dynamics have changed the way society understands contemporary troublesome youth groups – the yob, and as I come to show in the next chapter, the ‘chav’.

2.5 Conclusion: Theoretical Contexts

The literature explored in this chapter has a lengthy span, in terms of both history and theoretical lineage, so in this concluding section let me first briefly sum up the main tenets, and second, illustrate how they inform the theoretical context of the study. First, this study is situated in changing urban forms and how the shift into post-industrialism engenders a range of exclusionary scenarios. The onset of neoliberal economics, which followed from severe industrial turbulence as political-economic globalization developed apace, brought with it a huge number of transformations at various entangled scales. At the city level, deindustrialization prompted an entrepreneurial shift in governance, where urban states partnered with private sector institutions actively sought to attract capital back to the city. With a national neoliberalization of politics and economics came cultural shifts, where emphasis was placed on consumption and increasingly, aesthetics, and in doing so, much of the redevelopment that followed focussed on re-aestheticizing the city through a preoccupation with large-scale gentrification and the building of festival marketplaces and shopping malls. Contemporary Marxian urban commentators have identified this as the ‘commodification’ or ‘domestication’ of urban space, which, in short, shifts power relations and cultural norms for the increased benefit of capital, and normalises new class-based consumer ideologies and practices. Smith (1996a), in the case of New York City, refers to this as revanchism, and related, Mitchell (1997) – in various cities – as the annihilation of space. But the central theme of this contemporary urbanism, notwithstanding its various terminologies, is the power of the state and the private sector to define what, or more importantly *who*, is ‘good’ and ‘right’ for a particular place. Of course, notions of good and right at the current juncture are defined in accordance to late-capitalism, but so are conceptions of deviance.

Second, then, this study utilises a specific conception of deviance. It is not understood as an intrinsic feature of the individual or indeed the group, but rather a complex relationship through which persons come to be identified as deviant in particular socio-spatial contexts. Deviance is represented, but only through its operation, and it works at a number of levels. In the case of the mods and rockers, representations of deviance constructed by the mass media worked to create folk devils and moral panics (Cohen, 1972), a similar process to that of mugging demonstrated by Hall *et al* (1978), which, in turn, became used to legitimize more punitive reactions and sanctions against the perceived offenders. In the post-industrial era, it becomes clear that the urban poor, the homeless, and even the working classes are constructed as deviant through their lack of participation in neoliberal capitalist culture. At the city scale, these representations of deviance work in similar ways, pointing to the construction of social groups as deviant vis-à-vis entrepreneurial urbanism. Groups who do not fit in to contemporary capitalist culture are constructed as out of place within its urban spaces, seemingly legitimating the deleterious consequences illustrated by gentrification, ZTP and increasing surveillance capabilities. This reveals a “hyperpunitive” political agenda that seeks to eradicate any threat to economic development according to neoliberal rule (Herbert and Brown, 2006).

Third, this study is also concerned with the ways in which young people affect and are affected by neoliberalized urban space. Through the recent body of literature on the geographies of youth, it is evident that young people have been subordinated for centuries. Coupled with fears of troublesome youth over the years, this subjugation has also had a major bearing upon the spaces in which youth culture is allowed to be performed. Influenced by work in cultural studies, much of the geographical study of youth illustrates a continual construction of young people as deviant, which legitimates sensibilities to control and exclude. In the post-industrial city, exclusions are predicated on the belief that young people, and especially working-class youth are out of control, threatening, and intimidating. Also perceived as non-consumers, their spatial freedoms are increasingly curtailed in the surrogate private spaces that pervade much of the entrepreneurial city. Similar to other urban undesirables, the presence of young people is regulated so as to ensure the profitability of urban space. Furthermore, with transformations in class and gender configurations encouraged through economic restructuring, working-class male youth seem to be especially vulnerable at the current juncture. What was once a masculinity unproblematic to labour relations has become the object of media and government concern (even scorn), and those who at one time were near assured employment after leaving school have largely been excluded from participating in contemporary systems of production. Coupled with rising anxieties of ‘yob culture’, this has prompted further punitive measures and spatial

encumbrances. Not disregarding the problems posed by troublesome youth, this study incorporates these theories of the geographies of youth to position young people and their spatialities as regulated according to contemporary youth / class politics and the neoliberalization of urban space.

And so to the central theoretical framework of the study: that the political-economic restructuring of the city over the last thirty years or so has reconstituted many social identities, but particularly ones that revolve around youth and class. Through current constructions of troublesome youth, older anxieties of crime, deviance, and delinquency are perpetuated by being brought into line with current discourses of morality commensurate with consumption-oriented late-capitalism. In other words, where once British urban space was threatened by the delinquent subculture, the teds, the mods and rockers, and the mugger, it is now threatened by those unable to both properly produce and consume in the post-industrial city. Changing socio-economic dynamics have thus changed the way society understands contemporary troublesome youth, and how to deal with them as a real phenomenon.

From these literatures it is possible to start to see how groups of young people are being reconstituted as the new delinquent in the current entrepreneurial urban economy and what effects these new configurations have on young people's access to various urban spaces. To deepen this understanding, Chapter 3 investigates further the cultural context of this study, before illustrating the geographical and temporal context in Chapter 4.

Chapter 3

Contemporary Representations of Troublesome Youth: Cultural Contexts in Post-Industrial Britain

3.1 Introduction

Here I want to expand upon the previous chapter with a brief discussion of the cultural context of post-industrial Britain. I begin by documenting some of the characteristics of the current British government and how these are helping to reconstitute youth identities in conjunction with contemporary political-economic and social processes. New Labour, comprised of numerous politico-philosophical ideologies, propagate both an economic neoliberalism rooted in recent Conservative practice and community-based regeneration strategies more familiar with the putative liberal 'left'. However, whilst a new well-used discursive lexicon of social exclusion and anti-social behaviour has emerged to characterise those left behind in the wake of economic restructuring, other more denigrating vernaculars of 'yobs' and 'yob culture' have simultaneously arisen in the mass media, perpetuating long-standing fears of working-class youth.

Exploring news media coverage of recent events such as the murders of Damilola Taylor and Phil Carroll, in section 3.2 I first show how young working-class men from deprived communities are understood as dangerous and as a national problem in a way similar to the kinds of deviant precedents explored by Geoff Pearson (1983). Second, I show that with the establishment of New Labour in 1997, particular youth groups remain deviant in relation to neoliberal economics, entrepreneurial urbanism and their latent marginalising effects. With a rapidly expanding array of new 'ameliorative' strategies that aim to instil respect and civility while combating anti-social and yobbish behaviour through new assemblages of social and spatial control, it is evident that some youth groups are becoming increasingly criminalised. Third, I examine how recent nightlife culture is permeated with ideas of yob culture in both media and political rhetoric. Increasing recognition of health problems and violence associated with the consumption of alcohol culminated in a massive attack on government Alcohol Licensing Reform proposals by the conservative media in 2003 and 2004, with a significant focus placed upon the criminogenic representation of urban centres at night. Night-time economies and representations of the night-time city centre as a 'no-go area' as a result of troublesome youth are thus the focus of the final part.

In section 3.3 I expand upon contemporary understandings of youth and class, and how these have been reworked to form the cultural phenomenon of the 'chav'. Here I illustrate that the

chav is a continuation of the underclass discourse made popular in the 1990s, but also how these discourses have been reconfigured around a locus of consumption rather than production. Those at the bottom of the social ladder, along with idleness, fecklessness and promiscuity, are now identified and categorised through a vast array of consumer symbols, which have, in turn, become symbols of deviance. A contemptuous signifier of contemporary class relations, the chav has also come to symbolise an increased social, cultural and spatial separation of the classes.

I conclude this chapter by illustrating how these contemporary representations of troublesome youth are entangled in the political-economic practices of post-industrial Britain. Whilst the mass media and the state promote specific socio-economic dynamics, they simultaneously demarcate the dynamics of delinquent youth, where young people are increasingly criminalised through economic restructuring and its related cultural politics.

3.2 New Labour and Yob Culture

Whilst neoliberalism has been (and continues to be) a key ideological feature of modern conservative governments, the latest Labour government has continued to operate the neoliberal machine. Inaugurated in 1997, Tony Blair's New Labour gave "prominence to the transformation away from the Keynesian welfare state to more neoliberal arrangements and has sought to develop strategies that support the power of capital, adapt the state apparatus to prioritise capital accumulation, and reconfigure the welfare state" (Fuller and Geddes, 2008: 257). Indeed, as Neil Smith (2005: 888) argues, "Blair was not the answer to Thatcher ... Not only did he not roll back Thatcher's travesties but he sought to complete various ambitions of the Thatcher government in a way that neither the Iron Lady nor her successor John Major could ever have hoped for".

New Labour, though, is a curious assemblage of political and philosophical ideologies. Emanating from a diverse range of traditions, "namely conservatism, social democracy, socialism and liberalism" (Fuller and Geddes, 2008: 258), both market-biased and community-based policy experiments have been simultaneously performed by New Labour since 1997. Their approach to economic and social restructuring is state-sponsored but market conforming, which has often been heavily negotiated with those in the corporate sphere; and there is a continued emphasis on the use of the third sector in economic development and social cohesion (Fyfe, 2005). In typifying this amalgamation of political philosophies enacted at the urban scale, consider, for example, the New Labour state programmes Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) and New Deal for Communities (NDCs).

An extant form of entrepreneurial urbanism, LSPs are “a major recent innovation in the pattern of local governance in England, which bring together at a local level the different parts of the public sector as well as the private, business, community and voluntary sectors” (Fuller and Geddes, 2008: 254). Focussing more on neo-communitarianism (Fyfe, 2005), the NDC programme “involves 39 “community led” neighbourhood-based partnership initiatives to regenerate deprived areas in the country” (Fuller and Geddes, 2008: 254).

Along with neoliberalizing economics and more social democratic forms of neighbourhood regeneration, a new state-sponsored lexicon of social cohesion, inclusion, and empowerment has also emerged, and with it, a new set of exclusionary mechanisms aimed to curb disrespect and anti-social behaviour, particularly in the young. In this section I concentrate on the latter of these, examining how state tactics and specific legislation aimed at resolving some of the problems of socially excluded communities promote specific “principles of ‘respect’ and ‘civility’” (Cameron, 2007: 2). However, these also seem to “enforce particular modes of civic engagement and participation”, effectively reconstituting youth identities and their position within contemporary cultural politics (ibid.). First though, I want to briefly map out the terrain of contestation which demarcates particular youth groups as troublesome, problematic and deviant, illustrating how contemporary fears are sometimes used as the justification for control, punishment and spatial curtailment.

Britain, Crime, and ‘Yob Culture’ in the 21st Century

In late 2000, 10-year-old schoolboy Damilola Taylor was found dead in a stairwell in a run-down housing estate in Peckham, London as a result of being stabbed with a broken bottle by a group of teenagers. His murder gained widespread attention in the press and the broadcast media, and also raised much concern within the political sphere. Discussing then current government law and order proposals, the Daily Mail argued the murder was symptomatic of a new and pervasive ‘yob culture’ sweeping through Britain. As stated on the 19th January 2001, “A crackdown on ‘yob culture’ – blamed for the death of Damilola Taylor – will be at the heart of a new law and order Bill published by the government today” (Daily Mail, 2001: 19 Jan). The subsequent public outcry was predicated on both Damilola’s young age and those of his assailants. It was also, perhaps, due to the nature of the coverage in the media, which resembled the sensational and fear-inducing reporting styles akin to previous moral panic episodes such as that instigated by the murder of Jamie Bulger in the early 1990s (see Valentine, 1996). In the following days, the moral panic surrounding Damilola Taylor’s murder developed apace. Damilola’s father was quoted in the Daily Mail claiming Britain was in need of “moral repair” to overcome the “lack of discipline which he believes led to his

son's death" (Daily Mail, 2001: 24 Jan). The Daily Telegraph featured similar responses, highlighting the problematic areas in which social and moral order is purportedly breaking down: "A breakdown in moral values has taken place in parts of Britain, where children roam the streets in gangs with knives and dangerous weapons, the father of Damilola Taylor said yesterday" (Steele, 2001: Daily Telegraph 25 Jan).

Another incident which has gained widespread attention in the past decade was the assault on 48-year-old Phil Carroll in 2005 after he verbally responded to a "gang of youths" who threw a stone at his car (Daily Mail, 2005: 17 May). The attack, used to illustrate declining social morality in Britain, was later referenced alongside an incident where another "teenage gang" smashed the window of a funeral car, and used by the Daily Mail to describe how "yob culture plumbed new depths" (Rayner and Finney, 2005: Daily Mail 19 May). In another article it was used to exemplify how Britain may be turning into a "moral wasteland":

"With sick savagery, teenage tearaways attack a funeral procession in Widnes, smashing the windscreen of a limousine full of mourners. In Blackpool, a school is daubed with paint that will take £20,000 to clear up. The vandals responsible are between three and six years old. *In Salford, Phil Carroll fights for life after being assaulted by mindless yobs...* These are snapshots of a moral wasteland. In the words of a top police officer...feral gangs with no regard for the law and no experience of parental control are reducing whole neighbourhoods to fear" (Daily Mail, 2005: 19 May, emphasis added).

This idea of a new and pervasive yob culture emerging from the past two decades has become a powerful articulation of contemporary troublesome youth, where those disaffected by changing class and gender relations have become postmodern pariahs. Originally thought to be Victorian slang for boy, yob is now a pejorative term used in the categorisation (and castigation) of troublesome, and predominantly working-class young men. As Leapman, writing for the Daily Telegraph explains, "They are the menacing youths who hang about in gangs, causing trouble. For decades they have been known as "yobs". It has been rare for anybody to have a good word to say about them" (Leapman, 2006: Daily Telegraph 30 Sep). Indeed, in the media the term is used to describe young working-class men variously depicted as 'unruly youths', 'teenage louts', 'youngsters out of control', 'drunken hooligans', 'lawless teenagers', 'young thugs' and so on. In one commentary the yob is described as the "scourge of our times" (Key, 2005: Mirror 27 Jan). In another article the figure is described as "making our lives a misery" (Prince, 2006: Mirror 20 Nov), and in another, described as spoiling "the quality of everyday life" (McSmith and Sparrow, 2001: Daily Telegraph 24

Apr). As media commentator Ros Coward, in her observations of 1990s press rhetoric, explains:

“‘Yob’, once a slang insult, is now a descriptive category used by tabloid and quality newspapers alike...yob is a species of young white working class male which if the British media is to be believed is more common than ever before ... The yob is the bogey of the Nineties, hated and feared with a startling intensity by the British middle class. Janet Daley describes such men as ‘drunken Neanderthals’, while Jeremy Kingston, also in the *Times*, reckons they are ‘crapulous louts’. Simon Heffer of the *Telegraph* claims, like Peter Lilly, not even women of their own social class can tolerate such ghastly specimens: ‘Nobody wants to marry a yob because he is boorish, lazy and unemployable’” (Coward 1994, quoted in McDowell, 2003: 63).

The yob has also become equated with the newly-constructed Labour idiom ‘anti-social behaviour’ after its political inception in the late 1990s. However, the term is mostly used to contextualise the more violent of crimes committed by young working-class men. For example, in April 2005, the *Telegraph* writes of a man “stabbed after challenging yobs” (*Daily Telegraph*, 2005: 29 Apr), and in May 2005, an attack on a middle-aged man outside his home led to headlines such as *Father of four ‘critical’ after confronting yobs in street* (Bunyan, 2005: *Daily Telegraph* 17 May), and *Nail these feral yobs* (Disley, 2005: *Mirror* 18 May). Yobs in this context are portrayed as “‘feral’ gangs plaguing law-abiding families”, and carrying out a “reign of terror” (ibid.). Whilst violent crime remains a social problem, of concern here is how working-class youth are categorised and complexly mixed up within these debates. The yob is used to represent both insignificant misdemeanours and the most horrific of violent crimes, conflating a range of offences which consequentially emblemize the young working class as a dangerous and out of control social stratum (McDowell, 2003). The term thus generalises the status of young working-class masculinity as problematic in a number of socio-spatial arenas:

“The yob – generally but not always masculine (the term is merely the reversal of boy) – is the iconic figure at the centre of media reports and New Labour policy debates, a mindless disaffected vandal engaging in violence in city centres and on football terraces, in threatening behaviour in the streets and increasingly in school playgrounds, in need of both guidance and punishment” (McDowell, 2007: 278).

Generalising the state of young working-class masculinity is also achieved at various scales, where the yob is used to exemplify the national problem of youth crime and disorder, but also, how local places are affected. As Carroll (2006: *Mirror* 4 Oct) argues in the *Mirror*: “An

OAP has this week been forced into hiding after shopping to police a gang of youths who threatened to firebomb her home in Liverpool. If this was an isolated incident it would be appalling enough. But it's not. It's just a microcosm of life on British streets hijacked by gangs of feral, jobless, violent yobs". Constructed as wild, uncivilised and violent, working-class young men caught under the yob canopy are making spaces throughout Britain dangerous places to occupy. Understood also to be a very local problem, yobs are said to terrorise localities at the neighbourhood and community level.

These violent crimes by the young, and the apparent pervasiveness of them, have also led to many in the media arguing for the existence of a rapidly growing fear of crime in Britain, with older generations afraid to leave their homes (Daily Mail, 2003: 21 May). Most of Britain is described as "in fear of teenagers" (Daily Telegraph, 2006: 24 Oct), as the Daily Telegraph explains:

"The Craylands estate in Basildon, a sprawling warren of post-war flats and maisonettes, has been blighted by crime and vandalism. Graffiti defaces stairwells, and shops are fitted with heavy steel shutters to stop intruders. Some of its 2,500 residents are so intimidated by gangs of drunken youths who congregate on street corners that they dare not go out at night" (Martin, 2005: Daily Telegraph 25 March).

Overcoming this fear, it might seem, is almost certainly made more difficult when key politicians such as David Blunkett admit that previous crime-reducing policies have been ineffective, proclaiming that the streets of Britain are "no longer safe" (Clarke, 2002: Daily Mail 18 Mar)⁹.

Whilst it would certainly be unfair to suggest that the above kinds of sentiment are representative of *all* social, media and state understanding, it nonetheless illustrates that specific events are used as platforms – by both media and state – to intimate that young people are threatening, violent, dangerous, without morals or remorse, legitimizing further controls at a variety of scales. The point here is that the representation of young people, crime and violence, their appropriation of public space, and the construction of places of fear as a result, are used to articulate and justify punitive and restrictive reactions such as curfews, Asbos, and the prohibition of wearing specific items and brands in certain places (as I subsequently discuss in section 3.3). The cultural context of post-industrial Britain is thus

⁹ Some have also argued that this fear has contributed to a "walk-on-by society", with less and less people taking a stance against unruly and violent behaviour (Slack, 2008: Daily Mail 19 Jun).

suffused with pervasive representations of troublesome youth that serve as prerequisites for increasing socio-spatial control.

CRACKDOWN: Curfews, Asbos and the Respect Agenda

“Police are drawing up plans to ban youngsters from part of a town at night in a bid to cut crime and disorder ... It will be the first time an English town has banned youngsters from its streets in an attempt to control a steadily rising tide of minor criminality and public disorder offences” (Daily Mail, 2002: 26 Mar).

“All-night curfews for under-16s could help combat crime in blighted areas, the Prime Minister’s official spokesman has suggested ... The move comes in the wake of the murder of 10-year-old Damilola Taylor on a London estate ... Asked whether they would be extended to under-16s, [Prime Minister’s official spokesman] said: “We believe it is a very good idea to give the police and communities the power they need to rebuild communities”” (Daily Mail, 2000: 04 Dec).

“[The Asbo] is about the protection of the communities, it is about the witnesses, it is about the individuals whose lives have been made miserable. It establishes the line that must not be crossed, sets down the things that the perpetrator cannot do, the harm they cannot repeat and puts the community back in the driving seat of reasonable aspirations and expectations” (Bill Bitt of the Home Office quoted in Prince, 2004: Mirror 31 Aug).

“A town has become the first place in Britain to impose a curfew on teenagers, banning children under the age of 15 from the streets between 9pm and 6 am ... Police said that a rising tide of juvenile crime had forced them to act ... Insp Garry Forsyth said: “It is about parents having to take more responsibility for their children’s whereabouts. I don’t suppose Corby is that much worse than anywhere else but there is a fear of crime out there. This is a quality of life issue”” (Britten, 2002: Daily Telegraph 26 Mar).

Figure 3.1 Reporting curfews in the press

Revolving around contemporary representations of troublesome youth, then, recent policy reactions – both speculative and operational – seek to control the movement, mobility and spatialities of young people. These kinds of state actions, particularly curfews, seek to re-appropriate or reclaim spaces thought lost in order to reinforce and reproduce an adult hegemony corresponding to extant cultural norms. They also seek to inculcate specific practices in parents thought unable to bring up their children in ‘appropriate’ ways (see Collins and Kearns, 2001). The accounts in Figure 3.1 illustrate the direct relationship between the regulation of the young through the implementation of curfew policies and Asbos, and the idea of giving communities back power, a power lost to troublesome youth

symptomatic of the times and bereft of civic responsibility. But they also show that in those areas most affected by poverty and deprivation, crime is better prevented through spatial injunctions, affecting the spatialities of those not necessarily criminal as defined under current legislation.

Another recent state-conceived apparatus that similarly enlarges the parameters of crime is the Anti-social behaviour order (Asbo). Introduced in the 1998 Criminal Justice Act, and described as “the cornerstone of New Labour’s campaign to restore a culture of “respect” to British society” (Rowland, 2005: 1 quoted in McDowell, 2007: 280), they were to allow “police forces, local authorities, housing associations and community organisations to tackle waves of petty or ‘sub’ criminal behaviour by delinquent families, gangs of unruly teenagers, graffiti ‘taggers’, binge-drinkers, noisy neighbours, fly-posters, ‘nuisance’ beggars, and an expanding lexicon of the ‘anti-social’” (Cameron, 2007: 2). In other words, the Asbo was designed so as to allow a form of punishment to people acting disorderly or anti-socially, without having been convicted of an actual crime. Used also as a putative tool for community regeneration, discourses surrounding the implementation and use of Asbos, however, are again strongly associated with impoverished areas. Linking the Asbo to the “spatial construction of social exclusion as a feature of poor localities”, its restrictions are often placed upon those categorised as yobs, imposing predominantly spatial curtailments on young people not necessarily guilty of actual criminal acts (Cameron, 2007: 2). And in their spatial capacity to punish and control, they can both confine individuals to their home but also restrict access to parts of their locality:

“ASBOs embody not only assumptions about the association between social behaviour and certain areas of cities that have a long tradition in dealing with ‘hooligans’ and ‘yobs’ but also introduce spatially-specific restrictions. Thus, under the orders any individual 10 years of age or over can be banned not only from carrying out specific acts but also excluded from certain geographical areas for a minimum period of two years. ASBOs restrict access to specific areas of a town, a street or an estate” (McDowell, 2007: 280).

These spatially-specific restrictions have been largely embraced by some (especially the right-wing media) – their curbing abilities described as “innovative and legitimate” for example (Daily Mail, 2006: 10 Apr). Here, the Asbo is praised when more punitive measures are not possible, promoting the idea that some punishment is better than none. However, at the same time they are criticised for not being restrictive enough, and insistent on their failure, the Daily Mail suggests that Asbos “don’t work because thugs think they’re cool” (Owen, 2006: Daily Mail 12 Mar). In another article it was reported that:

“Tony Blair’s ‘respect’ agenda was dealt a hammer blow last night as it emerged that Asbos are being routinely broken by arrogant thugs ... Critics said the figures showed the Anti-social Behaviour Orders, intended to make the streets safer, were nothing more than a ‘badge of honour’ for yobs ... Shadow Police Reform Minister Nick Herbert said: “This totally undermines Tony Blair’s respect agenda, which proposed a further extension of Asbos. It is further evidence that the agenda is a collection of gimmicks and not a serious attempt to deal with the causes of crime and anti-social behaviour” ... If more were jailed, the number of breaches would be much lower” (Slack, 2006: Daily Mail 14 Jan).

However, the Asbo remained an integral part of the respect agenda along with parenting orders and on-the-spot fines. And other recent manoeuvres aiming to tackle the problem of deviant youth again took on direct control practices, including, for example, the proposed plans to identify ‘potential criminals’ at a very young age. This came after the Metropolitan Police announced setting up a secret database of children as young as three who could potentially grow up to be criminals (Bamber, 2001: Daily Telegraph 24 Nov). The plan apparently grew out of the Damilola Taylor murder investigation, after police came across “dozens of wild and unruly children who ... were in danger of becoming criminals” (ibid.). Persons on the database could then be monitored at school and on the streets by special police squads and social workers. Later, the same issue cropped up again but instead focussed on David Blunkett’s similar claims that “teenage criminals can be identified, and intercepted, in nursery school”, in an effort to prevent teenage crime and delinquency (Johnston, 2002: Daily Telegraph 19 Apr).

What is of paramount importance here is the conception of ‘respect’ referred to by Blair and other state members, and the ways in which state-inferred exclusions operate. Linda McDowell (2007) makes a distinction between ideas of ‘respect’ and ‘deference’, and argues that Blair’s respect agenda conceives respect as an explicitly “one-way relationship in which the inferior must obey the injunctions of a superior and includes ... the notion of young people as vessels to be filled with guidance, advice and hegemonic codes of conduct” (ibid. p. 283). It is evident that through sanctions such as the Asbo, an increasing rhetoric of delinquency and the reconstitution of working-class youth identities, the kind of respect sought by the government is one more of complete deference. Furthermore, processual social exclusion has become legislatively normalised through the Asbo to encompass and retain the already socially excluded, unless its subjects modify their behaviour. As Angus Cameron explains:

“The result of policies such as the ASBO is the establishment of a cascading scale of increasingly selective and targeted exclusions. What began life as a blanket, normative concept, social exclusion is thus gradually being reified (statized in Painter’s terms) by

differentiation and incorporation into a series of legal and semi-legal spatial domains in which behaviour, movement, voice and presence are severely constrained. Breaching an ASBO can lead to a custodial sentence, thus linking the new series of 'lesser' exclusions created by the ASBO to the state's ultimate exclusionary power – imprisonment" (Cameron, 2007: 3).

A Night Out in 'Yob UK'

Another situation which has become the object of state, media, and public concern is young people's consumption of alcohol, particularly when located in the burgeoning night-time economy. Andrea Finney, writing for the Research, Development and Statistics Directorate of the Home Office, suggests that "Violent behaviour in and around pubs and clubs on weekend nights presents a significant public health, criminal justice and urban management problem" (Finney, 2004). Violent behaviour here is associated with young men who have consumed large amounts of alcohol, particularly situated in areas defined as 'entertainment districts' where pubs and clubs abound, and particularly on weekend evenings and early mornings. Further concerns are put forward by social scientists who have found similar problems through various pieces of research. In a study carried out by Colin Thomas and Rosemary Bromley in Cardiff and Swansea, it was found that the night-time economy, whilst being restricted to mainly youth groups, has created a sense of fear for personal safety, particularly for women, the elderly, and the 'better-off suburbanites', subsequently deterring these groups from visiting the city centres at night (Thomas and Bromley, 2000; a similar argument is put forward by Hobbs *et al* (2000)). In the media, though, these concerns are articulated through rather more sensational discourses which use current semantics of troublesome youth and their intrinsic castigatory potential. Using vivid accounts and often relying on notions of disgust, youth, violence, drinking and the urban converge into another contemporary anxiety in need of immediate remediation. In Nottingham:

"They'll know what to expect tonight, although it will bring little comfort. A city bracing itself for another weekly onslaught of debauched bedlam as more than 60,000 drinkers hit the bars and clubs in the UK's biggest – and most notorious – party town ... Not everyone is enjoying the party, though. Nottinghamshire police are stretched to breaking point. Their Chief Constable, Steve Green, is fiercely opposed to government plans for 24-hour opening, and is spearheading a national crackdown on binge-drinking. "I am sick of my officers being used as punchbags by drunken *thugs*," he says. "And I am ashamed of the *drink-punch-smash-vomit culture* which has spread like *an ugly acne* on the face of our once proud towns and cities"" (Ridley, 2004: Mirror 25 Sep, emphasis added).

And in Newcastle:

“Young thugs brawl in the street, glasses are hurled at cowering doormen while stag night revellers vomit nearby. Welcome to *yob* Britain. It’s just a normal weekend, one that exposes the grim reality of our *drink-fuelled culture*. As the country prepares for round-the-clock pub hours, towns and cities are struggling to cope with binge-drinking’ (Lakeman *et al*, 2005: Mirror 31 Jan emphases added).

Reports of ‘crackdowns’ on drink-fuelled violence and misbehaviour also reinforce these concerns of the problems of alcohol and the night-time economy. A special government-led clean-up in the summer of 2005 was widely documented in the press and framed in a familiar language (see Figure 3.2). But concerns for young people, alcohol and crime came under even more scrutiny by the press and public during the development of government proposals to reform alcohol licensing laws in 2003 and 2004, culminating in widespread condemnation of the planned changes. There was fear that licensing changes would generate ‘24-hour drinking’ and a proliferation of alcohol-induced crime. Initially, however, the reforms were welcomed, with both Conservative party members and the police (and through their rhetoric, it seems the Daily Mail too) in favour of changes that would allow greater control of what was already thought a problematic economy:

“Licensing laws in England and Wales were facing their last orders as new alcohol sales proposals were due to be unveiled this week. Plans for the new laws – the most radical overhaul of the licensing system for more than 40 years – were due to be revealed by Home Office Minister Mike O’Brien this week. The proposals would allow pubs, bars, restaurants and shops to sell alcohol around the clock in a move likely to prove a hit with voters ahead of the General Election, widely expected on June 7 ... Shadow home secretary Ann Widdecombe said of the proposals: ... “We said at the time we were in favour of the principles although we have some reservations about the mechanics of allowing local councils rather than magistrates to police the licensing”. A spokesman for the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) said the move would help police to control troublemakers. “We support reform of the licensing hours and we think it will help to avoid so-called binge-drinking, when people consume large amounts of alcohol and come out onto the streets and cause problems,” he said” (Daily Mail, 2004: 30 Apr).

And in another article, the reforms were said to be beneficial to the national economy, promoting more sensible drinking patterns, as well as boosting tourism:

“The announcement was also welcomed by industry group Business in Sport and Leisure and the All Party Parliamentary Leisure Industry Group. John Brackenbury, chairman of the former, said: “We see enormous merit in the proposals for a split licensing system and a new administrative procedure for obtaining a personal and premise license. Individual members

who own pubs, casinos, bongo clubs, nightclubs, ten-pin bowling, restaurants and sports centres will be able to reduce their costs substantially. The relaxation in opening hours will be a huge boost to tourists who cannot understand our antiquated laws". Labour Brent North MP Barry Gardiner, chairman of the All Party group, said: "This is a real breakthrough. Flexible opening hours will stop a lot of the public order problems around the old closing time. The legislation will create a more friendly family environment in many pubs and most importantly of all it will give local people a real say in the licensing of pubs in their area"" (Daily Mail, 2001: 02 May).

"Ministers have ordered the Army on the streets to join an all-out summer campaign against anti-social drunken and violent behaviour by yobs. Military police and ordinary uniformed soldiers will help keep youths under control in up to 20 towns and cities near military barracks. The strategy comes as police forces in more than 230 towns and cities begin a clampdown on disorderly behaviour by alcohol-fuelled youngsters, in response to a Home Office survey showing a disturbing rise in youth crime" (Bamber, 2005: Daily Telegraph 19 Jun).

"Police are preparing for a summer crackdown on drunken yobs today, aimed at halting alcohol-fuelled violence in pubs and town centres. Officers will target irresponsible drinkers and licensed premises which encourage binge-drinking and other loutish behaviour under the national campaign, which begins on July 8" (Daily Mail, 2004: 05 Jul).

"Police are launching a blitz on drunken yobs in 77 areas across England and Wales in a bid to reclaim town centres for decent law-abiding citizens. Police officers said the 77 areas have volunteered to take part in the Home Office's crackdown. The Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) warned that the eight-week campaign could lead to a rise in violent crime figures as police tackle unruly binge drinkers who make town and city centres "no go areas" on weekend nights" (Daily Mail, 2004: 08 Jul).

Figure 3.2 Reporting "crackdowns" on night-time consumers in the press

However, coverage of the reform soon turned full circle when other members of the police and judiciary spoke about concerns of increased disorder in town and city centres, and when doctors spoke about the potential of escalating health problems:

"Pubs were given the green light for 24-hour opening yesterday despite fears of an explosion in drinking. Culture Secretary Tessa Jowell defied police chiefs and health experts to signal the end of the traditional 11pm closing time. Police say there will be an increase in drink-fuelled fights, robberies, domestic violence and assaults on officers. And doctors warned that 24-hour licenses will lead to round-the-clock drinking, destroying efforts to cut increasing alcohol problems" (Marsh and Merrick, 2004: Daily Mail 24 Mar).

Some news institutions, it seemed, waged a moral war with New Labour, claiming they had given a “license for the yob culture” (Daily Mail, 2004: 09 June), often employing rather sensational rhetoric as well as citing the growing concerns for ‘binge drinking’ in order to articulate a social problem that is widely blamed on young people and their activities (see Eldridge and Roberts, 2008):

“It is a telling comment on how naïve, arrogant and out-of-touch our politicians have become when it takes a judge to enunciate a truth that eludes the Government but is screamingly obvious to millions of helpless voters: *much of Britain is at the mercy of drink-fuelled ‘urban savages’ who are turning towns and cities into “revolting and dangerous places at night”*...Nobody who lives in the real world will be remotely surprised by the bleak picture Judge Harris paints. Not when such *sodden, brutal excess can be seen any night of the week; not when town centres are no-go areas for families and the vulnerable; not when pavements outside pubs and clubs heave with raucous, intimidating mobs; not when gutters are awash in blood and vomit*...New Labour is alone (apart from the drinks industry) in refusing to recognise this ugliness – and now with scarcely credible perversity seems determined to make matters worse. With its plans for 24-hour drinking, which come into force in months, the binge is about to become an uncontrolled riot of drunkenness” (Daily Mail, 2005: 13 Jan, emphasis added).

Indeed, as Roberts observed, in “2004 the national press started to publish articles about the state of British town centres after 9 p.m. at night. In January 2005 this blossomed into a full blown ‘moral panic’ with the country’s leading popular daily newspaper, the *Daily Mail*, mounting a campaign against ‘binge drinking’ Britain” (Roberts, 2006: 334).

3.3 Identifying Class: Youth, Consumption, and the ‘Chav’ Phenomenon

Whilst young people, particularly young working-class men, have been castigated for centuries, these recent cultural politics point to a reconstitution of their deviance. Those captured under the yob banner have been re-articulated as contemporary pariahs, subject to more and more policy interventions, and expressed through current public, government, and media discourses of anti-social behaviour, social exclusion, and a lack of respect in a multitude of different spaces. However, other contemporary representations of troublesome youth revolve around a new visual array of aesthetics shot through with notions of a flawed consumer ‘underclass’. Whilst the yob – located at the centre of debates concerning violent and criminal, unrepentant working-class young man – has come to epitomize the increasingly antagonistic class / youth social relations from the early 1990s, in the 2000s, class condescension and segregation have become more vividly illustrated through the ‘chav’

phenomenon, the term gaining popularity in 2004, “coined to describe the spread of the ill-mannered underclass – a rival to the American trailer trash – which loves shellsuits, bling-bling jewellery and designer wear, especially the ubiquitous Burberry baseball cap” (Daily Mail, 2004: 19 Oct). However, this “awful mocking discourse” as McDowell (2006, 2007) puts it, concerns not just young men of a lower social stature, but also young working-class women who are also “figured as the constitutive limit – in proximity – to national public morality” (Skeggs, 2005: 965). As contemporary academic commentators suggest, the rise of the chav in the early 2000s “is suggestive of a heightened class antagonism that marks a new episode of class struggle in Britain”, used to distinguish a tasteless, feckless, sub-stratum of youth (Tyler, 2006: 1). Jemima Lewis, writing for the Daily Telegraph, provides us with a more detailed and thoughtful definition:

“They are the sullen, pasty-faced youths in hooded tops and spanking-new “prison white” trainers who loiter listlessly on street corners; the slack-jawed girls with mottled legs, hoop earrings and heavily-gelled hair who squawk at each other in consonant-free estuary English and frighten old ladies on buses. They are the *non-respectable working classes*: the dole-scrourgers, petty criminals, football hooligans and teenage pram-pushers” (Lewis, 2004: Daily Telegraph 01 Feb emphasis added).

Characterised by ‘bling’ (large gold-coloured jewellery), sports and designer wear, and the now-infamous Burberry-style check baseball cap, the chav has “become synonymous with ways of representing social class”, supplanting “representations of the ‘underclass’ that dominated the late 1980s and early 1990s ... creating a new framework through which to conceptualize, castigate and revile the white, urban poor” (Johnson, 2008: 66). It is a continuation, an overlap, where those once categorised as members of the underclass have been reconstructed as chavs for the same definitive purposes – the creation of a new underclass through a criminogenic representation as unproductive, over-reproductive, delinquent youth¹⁰.

Chavs have come to epitomize ideas of the “non-respectable working classes”, the “dole scrourgers”, “petty criminals”, and “teenage pram-pushers”, and increasingly demarcated by

¹⁰ The term ‘underclass’ was made popular in the late 1980s and early 1990s by the right-wing political scientist Charles Murray (see Murray, 1996), who was brought to study the UK’s class divide by the Times newspaper. The underclass according to Murray describes a population stratum with three principle characteristics: first, unemployment and a chronic dependence on state welfare benefits, although not through failures of the presiding labour market, but, rather, on the *choice* of the individual seeking benefits; second, high illegitimate births and fatherless families; and third, increasing crime rates, especially youth crime rates. These three features, the ‘unholy trinity’ as they have been dubbed, gave rise to Bagguley and Mann’s satirisation of Murray’s underclass idea as “idle, thieving, bastards” (Bagguley and Mann, 1992 cited in MacDonald, 1997: 9).

disruptive, feckless, perhaps “anti-social” behaviour. As stipulated in the Mirror, delinquent behaviour is a key characteristic of ‘chav culture’:

“The rise of “chav” youth culture is disrupting school lessons and encouraging bullying, a study claimed yesterday. The anti-authoritarian street fashion of Burberry baseball caps, bling-bling jewellery, tracksuits and trainers or Rockport shoes is about to be celebrated in a movie ... But researchers said many 15 to 18-year-olds are picked on by chavs for doing well in exams. Chavs gain credibility for being sent out of class, not attending detention and being excluded from school” (Armstrong, 2004: Mirror 17 Sep).

However the concept of the underclass vis-à-vis the chav has been reconfigured around the locus of consumption rather than production (Hayward and Yar, 2006). In addition to fecklessness, disorderliness, and their lack of labour participation, chavs are defined through their deviant consumer sensibilities where the Burberry, bling and sportswear have come to denote this new underclass more significantly than their absence of labour. As Keith Hayward and Majid Yar put it:

“Where previously the inability or unwillingness to *work* assured exclusion from social membership, now the inability or unwillingness to *consume* furnishes the grounds marginalisation to the hinterlands of normality. However ... something rather different is currently occurring in the construction of a new underclass qua ‘pathological’ consumers. Current popular discussion of the ‘chav’ focuses not on the inability to consume, but on the *excessive* participation in forms of market-oriented consumption which are deemed *aesthetically* impoverished. The perceived ‘problem’ with this ‘new underclass’ is that they consume in ways deemed ‘vulgar’ and hence lacking in ‘distinction’ by superordinate classes” (Hayward and Yar, 2006: 14).

Associations are also drawn between class and the embodied, gendered subject, where a number of bodily performances are increasingly categorised according to gender and class statuses in late-capitalism. As Bev Skeggs (2005: 965) suggests, where the single mother was once the “source of all national evil, we now have the loud, white, excessive, drunk, fat, vulgar, disgusting, hen-partying woman who exists to embody all the moral obsessions historically associated with the working class now contained in one body; a body beyond governance”. Indeed, as McDowell argues, those at the bottom of the social ladder, whether man or woman, along with fecklessness and impoverished aesthetics are also distinguished by embodied performances:

“New markers of class identification, such as weight, skin colour, accents, intonations and gestures, are used to distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable class-specific performances and to mark working class bodies as increasingly unacceptable in the tanned, toned world of the new service economy and in commodified forms of consumption and entertainment” (McDowell, 2006: 836).

Whilst some geography commentators suggest that the body and its movements have become increasingly important in contemporary social analysis, where performance can illustrate the non-cognitive and ‘non-representational’ aspects of socio-spatiality (for example Thrift, 1996, 1999, 2003a, 2003b; Thrift and Dewsbury, 2000; Rose, 1999; Rose 2002a, 2002b; Dewsbury et al 2002) and a sense of place in which “nothing signifies” (Thrift, 1999; 296), the mounting emphasis of embodiment in extant class relations points, rather, to a series of bodily performances that are visually sought out and demarcated as deviant and delinquent. In this way, the embodiment of working-classness is itself a signifier of social deviance, where representational processes are intrinsic in the “production of ‘correct movement’” (Cresswell, 2006: 56). Therefore, it is not the embodiment of class as a non-representational feature of socio-spatiality that concerns me here, but the way in which “human bodily mobility is a set of culturally and socially laden actions that exist within contextual systems of meaning and power” (ibid.). As I illustrate in chapter 6, the embodiment of a specific class-based delinquency serves to justify the increased spatial coercion of those who fail to perform correctly in the night-time economy. As cultural geographers examining spatial inequality, we therefore need to continue to take embodied subjectivities seriously, and relevantly incorporate them into such analyses.

Class Identity, Derision, and Exclusion

The cultural terrain in which these signifiers circulate is suffused with growing divisions as the middle and working classes continue to separate, both socially and spatially based on renewed class defamation. As Hayward and Yar observe, the word chav has become a “soft semantic target for those keen to rebadge the underprivileged and socially excluded among us as a new form of feckless underclass” (Hayward and Yar, 2006: 17). Subsequently enabling derision, condescension and prejudice, even the ostensible innocence of recent ‘chav comedy’ (‘Vicky Pollard’ from TV show *Little Britain*, ‘Kappa Slappa’ in the *Viz* publication etc.) is laden with normative class-based assumptions. As Imogen Tyler puts it:

“The emergence of the grotesque and comic figure of the chav within a range of contemporary British media ... has made class differences and antagonisms *explicitly* visible in contemporary

Britain. Class-based discrimination and open snobbery is made socially acceptable through claims that this vicious name-calling has a 'satirical' function ... laughter is boundary-forming; it creates a distance between "them" and "us", and asserts moral judgments and a higher class position. Laughter at chavs is a way of managing and authorizing class disgust, contempt, and anxiety" (Tyler, 2006: para.2 original emphasis).

The representation of the chav as non-productive, over-reproductive, delinquent, criminal, violent, intimidating, and consuming in ways deemed aesthetically impoverished thus legitimizes middle-class resentment against those of lower class status. It plays on the visual, making class, crime and deviance verifiable through an array of consumer symbols which, in turn, signify the chav as a "particular type of person (potentially or actually criminal, unintelligent, tasteless in every way) and as a social group (a violent, threatening rabble)" (Johnson, 2008: 66). And thus the operation of these representations as forms of classism, signify a more general marginalisation. As Linda McDowell – drawing on Bev Skeggs – argues: "Middle class disgust and resentment are ... key factors in contemporary forms of class representations, class struggles and significantly in a new hardening of spatial separation and segregation of the classes" (McDowell, 2007: 279). As I suggested in the previous chapter, recent neoliberalization policies have engendered multiple landscapes of exclusion, where groups such as the working class, the urban poor, and the homeless are continually being displaced, marginalised and excluded through a variety of redevelopment processes enacted by both the state and the private sector. Entangled in the cultural context of neoliberalized space, this exclusionary consciousness pervades the everyday practices through which working-class spatialities can be regulated and separation achieved. Delinquent behaviour coupled with notions of a distinct consumer identity and the underclass has thus given rise to an array of aesthetics which function as "overt symbols of deviance" (Hayward and Yar, 2006), which have in turn prompted a new, or perhaps developed an existing assemblage of social control practices, "from town centre pubs and night clubs refusing entry to individuals wearing certain brands within their premises ... to the recent 'zero tolerance' policy imposed on 'designer hoodies' and baseball caps by major shopping centres such as Bluewater in Kent and the Elephant and Castle in South London" (Hayward and Yar, 2006: 22-23). As reported by the Mirror:

"Yobs wearing baseball caps and hooded tops have been banned from one of Britain's smartest shopping centres. The crackdown on chav-style clothing which can obscure identity is part of a zero tolerance policy towards intimidating conduct...Police are backing the fightback against louts causing trouble at the huge Bluewater retail and leisure complex in Kent" (Williams, 2005: Mirror 12 May).

Roy Coleman (2005) found something very similar:

“[I]n cities in the counties of Essex, Hampshire, Cornwall and Devon, police and private security enforce a policy, soon to be tried nationwide, to ban young people wearing hooded tops, baseball caps and hats of various descriptions...In Liverpool an initiative of this kind is called ‘Hats off to beat crime’ because ‘there are connotations when someone is wearing a hood over their head or has a baseball cap on...As a media-driven symbol and proof of anti-social behaviour, headgear worn by young people has become problematic in the theatricality of the surveillance landscape as it aids the disguise of bodily identity” (Coleman, 2005: 139).

However, some of the commodities that have come to characterise the new underclass have been on the surveillance agenda before such wide recognition was afforded to the chav. In 2003, an article entitled *Yobs give Burberry a bad name* (Cramb, 2003: Daily Telegraph 11 Nov) details a now-familiar set of exclusions where those wearing a Burberry-style check were disallowed entry to town and city centre bars and pubs due to perceived links with violence and disorder. The distinctive check was reported to have been “adopted in the city by soccer “casuals” – football hooligans in expensive clothes” (Cramb, 2003: Daily Telegraph 11 Nov)¹¹. However, as I show in chapter 6, these exclusions in the night-time economy have become ever more predicated around the protection of consumers and capital, rather than concerns about crime and disorder. But as society is provided with mediated imagery, discourses, and representations of troublesome youth, they are increasingly used in the identification of crime and deviance. Being able to identify symbols of deviance makes it easier to exclude those who do not belong because they are deemed threatening, criminal, or simply defined as the ‘wrong consumer’. As Hayward and Yar (2006: 24) neatly put it:

“Thus we see that the ‘chav’ phenomenon partakes of a social process in which consumption, identity, marginality and social control converge; consumption practices now serve as the locus around which exclusion is configured and the excluded are classified, identified and subjected to (increasingly intense) regimes of management” (Hayward and Yar, 2006: 24).

3.4 Conclusion

At the current juncture, young people are given a lot of attention in the political and media sphere. If we were to believe some of the media reports, the current British situation has a very bleak outlook. As some accounts go:

¹¹ In another article the Burberry-style check is described as being “tarnished by ‘chavs’” (Hall, 2004: Daily Telegraph 28 Nov)

“Our entire social existence is being threatened by a *generation* of feral youngsters who are not merely immoral – they are amoral. You can’t reason with such individuals. That is why we *fear* them so much – we don’t know what they are capable of. Look into their eyes and you see something far more terrifying than anger, hatred or evil. You see nothing ... They have a complete inability to sympathise or empathise with anyone else. They have nothing to look forward to or aspire to ... From Newcastle teenage ASBO neighbour-from-hell Kerry McLaughlin ... to the youngsters who fatally slashed Damilola Taylor with a broken bottle on a Peckham council estate, these are the children with no souls” (Davies, 2005: Mirror 03 Jun, emphasis added).

But despite the continued occurrence of violent crime by the young, these are not really new concerns. As I have already suggested, Geoff Pearson has shown in his seminal text *Hooligan: A History of Respectable Fears* (1983) that young people have committed violent crimes throughout modern history, and censure, mostly in the form of moral panics, has been a frequent feature of the social consciousness since the 1960s. Youth, violence and their representation by the media and state are thus wholly unremarkable cultural processes. However, some of the ways in which young people are constructed as troublesome have changed, made contemporaneous through newer vernaculars and frameworks of understanding. Society now has ‘new’ folk devils which have come to emblemize contemporary social problems in Britain – something of which the term yob culture attests. In this way, the figure of the yob as a contemporary pariah is a continuation of the hooligan in the social consciousness. Many representational features are similar: both the hooligan and yob are disorderly, violent, and working-class, and both are represented through a perceived decline in social morality, a sense that they are ‘new’ problems threatening the moral fabric of a nation once strong and just in some ‘golden age’ of morality and citizenship (Pearson, 1983). But, conversely, there are also ‘new’ social problems that have become articulated through newer representations of troublesome youth (Vanderbeck, 2003). As Linda McDowell argues, the yob has come to symbolise the problem of the Labour-driven idiom anti-social behaviour. Society thus has new languages and new representations through which to articulate troublesome youth, and new ways of understanding them in relation to contemporary social problems.

Whilst the fear-inducing sensational reporting is certainly common in the red-top and right-wing media, it is not wholly reflective of all popular understanding of youth in late-capitalism. Indeed, some of the more liberal media omit the defamatory rhetoric towards youth so prevalent in other newspapers, instead seeking to outline some of the reasons for contemporary youth culture and its appropriation of public space. For example, the article

Where the street is a playground for bored youngsters (Chrisafis, 2002: Guardian 09 Dec) tells of Haslingden, Lancashire, young people who hang around on the street, and the implications of imposing curfews:

“Haslingden is a beautiful town, but there’s nothing to do there if you’re 12 ... So teenagers go out into the street at night and talk. They start aged 11 and keep doing it until 18, mostly congregating in groups of 20 or 30 in the market place, the park, the cemetery, the patch behind the swimming baths, the car park behind the garage or outside the chip shop. Some smoke, some drink beer. A few sniff solvents, some smoke joints – but for this they disappear into smaller groups ... But Insp Cameron does not believe in punishing teenagers for being bored ... “the police are good at short term, we just move the problem on, but we don’t solve it. We have to think of the future. Quick-solve measurers like curfews may just be like sticky plasters” ... The Haslingden teenagers turn ashen at the thought of staying in from dusk at 4:30pm in the winter. “They can stick that idea up their backsides”, said one. “I couldn’t live like that. I couldn’t be stuck inside with my little sister all night. It would be like being locked up.”” (ibid.).

However, whilst the issue of troublesome youth in public space in state, media and wider social imaginaries is not wholly imbricated with a raft of disparaging language, prescriptions for increasing punitive measures to alleviate problems, nor always articulated through current semantics of deviance (i.e. the yob, chav, hooligan etc.) which emphasise the moral failings of young people themselves, there does seem to be a common consensus that young people, and especially working-class youth are out of control. Representations such as the yob and the chav have come to define those unable to perform correctly in these neoliberal times, categorising the working-class as incapable to properly produce, consume and behave. As Fowler suggests, “categorisation is a discursive basis for practices of discrimination” (1991: 93). He continues: “But although it is the individual person who is at the sharp end of discriminatory practices, ‘justification’ for such practices, where offered, is given not in terms of the individual, but in terms of some assumed group to which the person allegedly belongs; and a stereotype which the culture has conventionally assigned to the ‘group’ is applied prejudicially to the individual” (ibid.). Therefore, in turn, categorisations and representations circulate so as to justify increasing control apparatuses, such as the Asbo, which effectively criminalise those who fall outside current legislative demarcations of crime.

Intrinsic to the reworking of these existing social concerns which dovetail with contemporary representations of delinquency, are recent processes of economic restructuring and developments in political governance. As David Harvey argues, neoliberalism has “become hegemonic as a mode of discourse, and has pervasive effects on ways of thought and

political-economic practices to the point where it has become incorporated into the common-sense way we interpret, live in and understand the world” (Harvey, 2006: 145). In this way, young people, as they mature into full social members, have to fit into the ongoing results of wider economic shifts – i.e. gain relevant employment and consume at all costs – otherwise they become constructed as problematic, and castigated as a result. The implication here is that new gender and class roles are being forged as neoliberalization helps transform not only economic practices but also cultural networks of normativity. As McDowell observes, the “shift in Great Britain and the USA, for example, towards a “workfare” model of welfare provision, in which both men and women are expected to work for wages, supported by what are euphemistically termed work / life balance policies and new forms of childcare support, provides a clear example of the new assumptions about gendered responsibilities ... as well as transforming class divisions” (McDowell, 2008: 23). Thus, as a consumption-oriented middle class continues to dominate the driving of the economy (and vice versa), those lower down the social ladder carry on struggling to consume in ways deemed relevant and appropriate, and in turn this becomes the basis for criminalization. In short, ongoing neoliberal processes persist in the emphasis of consumption as a means to citizenship, and failure to properly do so results in the demarcation of deviance. As Imrie *et al* observed in the 1990s:

“For successive Conservative governments in the UK ... their vision of citizenship is one of the ‘active consumer’, a purposeful individual taking responsibility for their own lives, providing for themselves, and exercising choice (their ‘citizenship’) through their purchasing power. This, though, is a vision of citizenship which fails to recognise the systemic social inequalities in society, or how the socio-cultural and institutional fabric of society serves to exclude or to mark particular people out as ‘the other’” (Imrie *et al*, 1996: 1258).

Such a statement could not be more relevant than now, when the ubiquity of the chav phenomenon in public discourse as a threatening underclass group of flawed consumers represents the foundations for new class antagonisms and class-based spatial separation.

Chapter 4

Newcastle and the Night-Time Economy

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter I begin to examine the Newcastle city-region from various aspects, outlining the geographical context of the research. In section 4.2 I start with a brief examination of Newcastle's economic history, illustrating how the city and surrounding region once heavily relied on manufacturing, coal mining and other heavy engineering industries. I explore how shipbuilding was once an integral part of Newcastle's economy, and how the Tyne River played a pivotal logistical role in the early wealth of the area. I then trace the contours of deindustrialization, illustrating how the eventual collapse of numerous industries in the late 1980s and 1990s severely affected the region's socio-economic prospects. Subsequently I look at the way in which Newcastle's economy has been transformed following deindustrialization. Newcastle, like many other British cities has since come to embrace a more entrepreneurial ethic in its economic development practices, and is now characterised by service-sector, cultural, and post-manufacturing industries.

Physical redevelopments commensurate with economic restructuring have also played a large part in Newcastle's transformation into a post-industrial city, with numerous developments changing the look and feel of various localities. By examining the latest policy documents in the form of Newcastle City Council's *Going for Growth* (1999) and *Newcastle in 2021: A Regeneration Strategy for Newcastle* (2006), I argue that recent political-economic agendas in Newcastle reflect the wider transformations of British urban governance, which, through entrepreneurialism, aim to attract investment, capital, tourists, and labour through the re-branding and revitalisation of the city.

Because proliferating night-time economies also play a large part in this recent urban revitalisation, I then explore the ways in which night-time economies are produced, regulated, and consumed in the post-industrial era. Focussing particularly on the work done by Paul Chatterton and Robert Hollands (Chatterton and Hollands, 2002, 2003; Hollands and Chatterton, 2003 for example), I examine how nightlife is increasingly produced by large-scale corporate and branded chains as they continue to gain larger segments of night-time markets, and how night-time economies are regulated by private security and contemporaneous socio-cultural practices. Access restrictions based on venue admittance policies, dress codes, corporeality and behaviour help contribute to a fragmented and

segregated night-time leisure landscape on which a raft of class-oriented normative assumptions are imposed and enacted by operators and regulators.

In section 4.4 I conclude this chapter with a brief summary, before documenting some initial characteristics of contemporary urban nightscapes in Newcastle, showing how the night-time economy is now used as a central component in urban image-building and the attraction of tourists, but again, how Newcastle's nightlife may be becoming dominated by large corporate firms leaving its future uncertain in terms of composition and access.

4.2 Economic Transitions and Urban Transformations

Newcastle's Industrial Era

The Newcastle city-region was once famed for its resilient industrial prowess. Similar to other northern British cities such as Glasgow, manufacturing and heavy engineering were central to the city's early wealth. Industrialists such as William Armstrong, Richard Grainger, John Dobson, Charles Palmer, and the Stephenson's all helped shape both the city's economic and physical landscapes. Whilst the Stephenson's were developing locomotive engines in the nineteenth century, Dobson and Grainger were rebuilding the city centre, with many of the city's present famed and prized locations – such as Grey Street, Grainger Market and the Theatre Royal – dating from this period (Newcastle City Council, 2004).

Shipbuilding in particular developed into one of the Newcastle-region's early economic strengths. The Tyne's riverbanks were once home to numerous shipyards, from Walker to Wallsend and North Shields on the north bank, and Jarrow in particular, on the south bank. The Swan Hunter shipyard is probably the region's most renowned, producing and launching ships such as the *Mauretania* and the *Carpathia*, used to rescue survivors of the *Titanic*, the *Dominion Monarch* – the largest diesel driven ship in the world when finished in 1939 – and numerous cargo liners, ferries, icebreakers, frigates, destroyers, supertankers and submarines over the years (Deighan, 2008: *Evening Chronicle*, 21 July). Shipbuilding on the Tyne was so prolific that by the first decade of the 20th century, the total of Tyne shipbuilding amounted to one quarter of *global* shipbuilding output (Tomaney *et al*, 1999).

Coal mining was also an intrinsic feature of the region's economic base (see Elliott, 1968), and is argued to be the foundation of the unique Geordie identity of the north-east of England (see Colls and Lancaster, 1992). The River Tyne again found itself central to the region's economy, used in the transport and export of coal mined from the region, with up to 20

million locally excavated tonnes being exported before the First World War (Elliot, 1968; also see Nayak, 2003a, 2003c). However, the last remaining pit in Ellington shut down in 1994, and in the previous year, the Swan Hunter shipyard was temporarily closed, signalling the very end of Newcastle's industrial success.

Deindustrialisation / Reindustrialisation

These are but two examples of a local economy failing to cope with changing national economic policy in an increasingly fragmented and competitive global economic culture. Where in the early 1960s the region employed double the proportion of employees in coal mining, ship-building and heavy engineering than anywhere else in England, in the 1970s and 1980s, 38% of jobs in the manufacturing sector were lost as deindustrialisation swept away the region's traditional economic landscape (Nayak, 2003c). This deindustrialization, however, was also tied to a "ruthless New Right agenda to shut down pits, quash the old Labourite NUM [National Union of Miners] and invest in business rather than manufacturing" (Nayak, 2006: 816). Indeed, as processes of neoliberalization in the 1980s progressed, the region would also become one of the first Enterprise Zones under Thatcher's Conservative Government.

Recognizing the problems of the Keynesian state and mode of regulation, Conservative politician Sir Geoffrey Howe became one of the first to support the implementation of the Enterprise Zones initiative, arguing that "the economic difficulties of Britain stemmed from an over-reliance upon state intervention, which in many ways thwarted the developments it sought to encourage" (Talbot, 1988: 508). Accordingly, Howe supported the execution of Enterprise Zones to achieve four objectives: "the alleviation of economic decline and environmental decay in inner areas, by removing the dead hand of the state which had caused much of the blight"; "the removal of excessive bureaucracy and taxation, thus freeing private sector initiative and enterprise"; "demonstrating a model of economic growth suitable for more widespread application"; and "to provide a practical refutation of the belief that only large scale state intervention can restore economic prosperity to the inner cities and to the nation" (ibid.).

Thus, the Tyneside Enterprise Zone – established as one of eleven in the first round in 1981 – was to facilitate economic restructuring through now-familiar neoliberal practices. A number of incentives were drawn up to attract new businesses, including "local authority rate exemption, 100% capital allowances for expenditure on industrial and commercial buildings, exemption from Development Land Tax, exemption from Industrial Training Board levies,

simplified and speedier planning regime, reductions in statistical requirements, inward processing relief on customs facilities, and exemption from Industrial Development Certificates” (from Talbot, 1988: 508). As Newcastle’s deindustrialization was met with remediation through the Enterprise Zone package, reindustrialization took form through service-sector and post-manufacturing economies, with a number of international businesses and regional SMEs seeking to take advantage of the abundance of cheap skilled and semi-skilled labour that remained in the wake of local manufacturing shutdown and flight¹². As Anoop Nayak states, “German multinational corporations such as Siemens in North Tyneside and Far East Asian companies such as Fujitsu near Darlington, Nissan in Washington and Samsung in Cleveland have come to represent a new moment in the region’s shift to a ‘branch-plant’ economy” (Nayak, 2003c).

However, mounting fiscal maladies and increasing competition forced yet more production relocation and employment turbulence. Newcastle’s recent economic transitions have become characterised by the footloose nature of these multinationals, as opposed to the embedded-ness and fixed natures of the factories, shipyards and collieries that were once central facets of the working-class communities of the region (Nayak, 2003c). As a result, where industrialism provided stable growth and assured workers employment – albeit to a point – the ephemeral disposition and fluidity of recent neoliberal economic movements continue to negatively affect the employment opportunities of the region’s workers. For example, both Siemens and Fujitsu left Tyneside in the late 1990s, leading to nearly 2000 job losses (ibid.; also see Pike, 1999).

Developing Newcastle’s Entrepreneurial Urbanism: Recent Enterprise / Governance

In recent years, local municipal powers have sought to counter relative socio-economic deprivation through the implementation of a number of policies. *Going For Growth* (Newcastle City Council, 1999), written by then Labour-controlled Newcastle City Council (NCC), sought to establish a long-term (20 year) holistic plan for the economic, social and spatial development of Newcastle. The strategy linked “economic development, urban renaissance and the retention and growth of population within the city to the future of deprived and stigmatised neighbourhoods characterised by population loss and low housing demand” (Cameron, 2003: 2369). What was distinctive about this proposal, as opposed to previous development strategies, was the *city-wide* approach rather than the smaller-scale

¹² However, as Talbot suggests in his study of the effectiveness of the Tyneside Enterprise Zone, local firms were “attracted to the zone primarily because of the attractiveness of sites and premises, rather than because of the attractiveness of the zone incentives” (Talbot, 1988: 512).

neighbourhood approach to regeneration. However, the proposed comprehensive redevelopment of some of the city's residential areas, particularly those in the West end of Newcastle's city centre long associated with poverty and crime, was met with considerable protest. Concerns were raised as some residents interpreted the plans as clearing already socially cohesive working-class communities in favour of 'yuppie villages'. The result was a march on the Newcastle Civic Centre, and the eventual withdrawal of Lord Richard Rogers, chair of the Urban Task Force – appointed as consultant on the master planning-process – from involvement in further planning stages (Cameron, 2003).

Although *Going For Growth* was abandoned with the inauguration of the Liberal Democrat council administration a few years later, its replacement *Newcastle in 2021: A Regeneration Strategy for Newcastle* (Newcastle City Council, 2006) followed a similar holistic path for the city's renewal and developed further the central features of the *Going For Growth* strategy. *Newcastle in 2021* recognises the unstable and highly competitive nature of the late-modern global economy, and, through specific regeneration strategies and public-private partnerships which characterise entrepreneurial urbanism, seeks to position Newcastle within it so as to assure long-term economic development for the city-region:

“Raising the competitiveness of cities – not just in narrow economic terms but also in quality of life, social cohesion and diversity – is the key to prosperity in a global economy. Faced with the emerging economies in an enlarged Europe and beyond, the UK can no longer compete effectively in many low-cost, lower-skilled industries. In future, the most successful European cities will be those that are dominated by knowledge industries, are home to a diverse population, and offer a high quality of life” (Newcastle City Council, 2006: 13).

Newcastle in 2021 thus sets out a number of socio-economic development and regeneration strategies to fulfil this agenda. These include strengthening the economy, promoting safe, inclusive and cohesive communities, building the 'right' types of houses, improving transport, improving education and skills, promoting healthy living and reducing socio-cultural inequalities. Building upon the latest findings from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Territorial Review of Newcastle in the North East, and TBR Economics (a Newcastle-based firm) Local Economic Analysis Profile of Newcastle, *Newcastle in 2021*'s most important target, however, seems to be the economy. Indeed, NCC stipulate that a “strong economy that creates wealth and attracts investment and talent, as well as providing employment opportunities to suit a wide range of skills and interests, *is the basis for regeneration in Newcastle*” (p. 27, emphasis added). Accordingly, NCC acts as both a mediator and collaborator in a local / regional entrepreneurial political economy, promoting

specific industries and locations befitting the city's contemporary neoliberal fiscal schema. Newcastle now trades, or at least seeks to trade, in knowledge-based and cultural commodities, and in the experience of *being in* the post-industrial north-east – now a city of science, arts and culture, retail, business services, and nightlife.

In outlining the projects aimed to develop Newcastle's economy, *Newcastle in 2021* heavily emphasises the role of science and technology-based industries. According to the proposals, higher education institutions have a great deal of potential in converting scientific research and design processes into “commercially relevant products and practices” (p. 35). The main development is the Science City project, partnered by Newcastle University, Newcastle City Council and One North east¹³, and is described as a “driver for the regeneration of Newcastle” (www.newcastlesciencecity.com). However, the planning process of this particular development has come under increasing attack more recently, with one of the leading regeneration experts in science and technology industries resigning from his post in the project. Professor Henry Etzkowitz of Newcastle University worked to bring ideas on how to “create a science-based workforce and turn the city into a world leader”, emphasising job creation in science-based commerce (Pearson, 2009: Newcastle Journal, 29 Sep). His standing down was prompted by superiors in the partnership who allocated funds to physical infrastructure rather than increasing employment opportunities in a “build it and they will come” policy, despite not attracting any major research companies to date (ibid.). Whether the Science City Project will become a success, then, is open to debate.

Also stipulated in *Newcastle in 2021* is the potential of Northumbria University as a successful design institution. The plan is for it to be placed in a ‘design corridor’ which will provide “a spatial focus for the development of design-oriented business clusters in the urban core” (Newcastle City Council, 2006: 36). Northumbria University recently completed their latest built development, opening their new design campus, accessible by a purpose-built footbridge, to the east of the city centre opposite the Manors Metro station. And Newcastle University are also in the process of adding to their built form and redeveloping much of their existing campus.

In addition to science and technology oriented economies, *Newcastle in 2021* also seeks to build upon the strengths of the existing cultural and leisure-based economies of which Newcastle is famed:

¹³ One North East is a Regional Development Agency (RDA) comprised of representatives from local authorities, trade unions, the voluntary sector and the private sector, and aims to encourage entrepreneurs, innovation and business growth in the Newcastle city-region.

“NewcastleGateshead has built an international reputation for the visionary use of culture as a catalyst for change, which has strengthened the city’s already distinctive identity. Seven Stories (The Centre for the Children’s Book), the new Dance City and regeneration of Grainger Town have transformed the city’s landscape, complementing the ambition of Gateshead delivered through such iconic developments at the Sage Gateshead, the Gateshead Millennium Bridge and BALTIC” (Newcastle City Council, 2006: 37-38).

This latest strategy also seeks to develop the retail potential of Newcastle as a regional shopping destination. Of particular importance in recent years is the development of the massive Eldon Square shopping centre (see www.eldon-square.co.uk/transforming_eldon) but also the developments soon to take place adjacent to East Pilgrim Street. Developments such as the recently completed Gate complex have also served to attract the leisured consumer, offering a cinema, casino and a multitude of restaurants and bars. Other recently proposed and underway developments include rebuilding the City Library, Blandford Square, which houses the Discovery Museum, and the Stephenson Quarter. As stipulated by NCC:

“[The Stephenson Quarter] of some 3.5ha is located directly behind Central Station. It is rich in heritage associated with the railway companies and engineers Stephenson and Hawthorn. It contains a number of listed buildings including 20 South Street, a grade II listed structure that contains the former drawing offices of Robert Stephenson. However much of the area is in a disused and dilapidated condition. The developers Silverlink plc acquired the site in 2005 and are now working closely with the City Council to produce a masterplan leading to the mixed use redevelopment and regeneration of the area that focuses on the retention and refurbishment of all the listed buildings in the area. It represents one of the largest proposed physical redevelopment projects in the City Centre with a development programme likely to commence in 2010 and finish towards 2015” (www.newcastle.gov.uk/core.nsf/a/cc#bs).

Other developments represent further public-private efforts to regenerate and revitalise economic activity in the region. These include, Trinity Gardens, a recently completed development adjacent to the Quayside that has provided office space alongside 58 apartments, a multi-storey car park, a hotel extension and ground floor retail services and restaurants. The Grainger Town Project, located in the very heart of Newcastle city centre, also aimed to attract investment through the public-private partnership during its course:

“Grainger Town is the historic heart of Newcastle upon Tyne, based around classical streets built by Richard Grainger in the 1830s and 1840s. 40% of buildings in the area are listed as being of historical and architectural importance. In the 1980s and early 1990s, this once prosperous area of the city was overtaken by new centres of retail and commercial activity

which eroded the economic base and left properties to fall into disrepair. Around one million square feet of floorspace was unoccupied and the area's residential population was falling. The Grainger Town Project was established in 1997 in partnership with Newcastle City Council, English Partnership and English Heritage with the aim of reversing this trend. A £120 million regeneration programme began and continued until the end of March 2003. It was anticipated that £40 million of public sector investment would be bolstered by a further £120 million from the private sector, but the latter reached £160 million! Since the start of the project, great strides were made in regenerating the area, improving the environment and revitalising business, social and cultural life. On 31st March 2003, the Project closed down, having achieved and exceeded its objectives"

(www.newcastle.gov.uk/core.nsf/a/cc?opendocument#grtown).

Concomitant with science and technology based industries, and leisure / retail developments, tourism is also seen as a highly lucrative dimension of Newcastle's new economy, again driven by local / regional public-private governance:

"Together with the thriving night-time economy, Newcastle's cultural renaissance has formed the basis of a rapidly growing tourism industry. In 2004, tourism expenditure in NewcastleGateshead was worth over £425m, a five per cent growth on the previous year – making it one of the city's fastest-growing industries – and accounted for over 7,750 jobs. Continuing development – of new hotels and other amenities and of international connections through Newcastle airport – will strengthen Newcastle's offer" (Newcastle City Council, 2006: 38).

Recent developments that constitute the regeneration of the Newcastle city-region, then, exemplify contemporary practices of post-industrial urban entrepreneurialism. Like other British cities, deindustrialisation severely affected the area, contributing to massive unemployment levels and related socio-economic deprivation. Instigated at first by the Enterprise Zones scheme, the management of Newcastle subsequently shifted from urban government to governance, where public-private partnerships practice in myriad ways to counter unemployment through the invitation of business, to attract tourists through the provision and development of leisure and retail-based infrastructure, and to combat social deprivation, population loss and low housing demand through housing and community developments. However, despite efforts, the bricks and mortar approach to economic development does not guarantee an influx of business, exemplified by the Science City Project. Also, the housing developments proposed by then Labour-Controlled Newcastle City Council in *Going for Growth* (1999) in some ways reflected the kind of gentrification processes examined by Neil Smith in New York City where working-class neighbourhoods

were planned to be rejuvenated to attract more middle-class residents (1992, 1996a, 1996b). Whilst these proposals in Newcastle may not have exactly been reflective of a revanchist urbanism, they nonetheless raise some concerns about the focus for regeneration policies in Newcastle and how exactly they will meet their objectives in securing a more successful future for the city's residents.

For the purposes of this study, Newcastle ultimately continues to be constructed as a cultural, entertainment and leisure hub. The night-time economy in particular, plays a fundamental role in attracting people to the city centre, and its success has led to accolades describing Newcastle as a 'Party City' or 'Party Town', with the city now renowned, both nationally and internationally, for its nightlife. The next section begins to explore the role of the night-time economy in the post-industrial city more generally, then turning to a brief examination of Newcastle's night-time economy in the concluding section.

4.3 Constructing Contemporary Nightscales

"Social and economic restructuring over the last three decades has resulted in the development of a new urban 'brand' which has reshaped many parts of city landscapes into corporate entertainment and leisure hubs ... While urban areas have always been sites of pleasure-seeking, a central focus of recent rebranding has been the promotion of the night-time economy, much of which is characterised by the ritual descent of young adults into city-centre bars, pubs and clubs, especially during the weekends" (Chatterton and Hollands, 2003: 2).

Alongside recent developments in science and technology, culture, retail, and other service sector industries, Newcastle – like other cities across the UK – has also experienced a burgeoning of nightlife activity¹⁴. This development is also entangled with the neoliberal / entrepreneurial agenda. As cities continue to diversify in their commitment to capital, many urban administrations now position the night-time economy as an accepted form of urban renewal strategy, partly as a counterbalance to the loss of a manufacturing base. As such it has become a "central rather than add-on part of urban economic growth and employment", and proportionate obligations to urban image-building and identity construction (Chatterton and Hollands, 2003: 9). As Dick Hobbs *et al* state:

¹⁴ Although the night-time economy encompasses a multitude of premise types – including restaurants and cafes – bars, pubs and nightclubs (i.e. licensed premises whose sales are typically comprised of alcoholic drinks and what have become known as vertical drinking establishments) are the focuses here.

“The construction of centres of leisure consumption to physically replace nineteenth-century centres of production and their commercial and bureaucratic infrastructures, is a marked characteristic of late twentieth century British cities ... The velocity of the capital hitting these old industrial and commercial centres has been quite remarkable, and its trajectory ricochets around cities built on the rhythms of industrial production as the configuration of the night-time economy continues to evolve” (Hobbs *et al*, 2000: 704).

This burgeoning can also be attributed to socio-cultural transformations that have occurred alongside economic developments. For example, the augmentation of service-sector industries in the north-east has given rise to entirely new gender and class roles in the labour market. Once characterised by a male dominated labour force, Newcastle’s economy now employs nearly as many women as men, and its dominant service-sector, like other UK urban parallels, value skills such as keyboard proficiency and communication expertise rather than the traditional masculine qualities associated with manual labour and heavy industry – qualities once predominant in Newcastle’s male-oriented labour force. Where identities were once predominantly forged through the industrial production process, they have been reworked as neoliberalization becomes ever more entrenched in the daily urban fabric (Nayak, 2003a). Certain groups defined in specific terms of class, race, and gender have found ways of expressing their social identities outside of production. As a massive constituent of postmodern hyper-consumerism, nightlife has become an ever more significant proxy through which to articulate these group memberships and belongings (Hollands, 1995). For example, as Anoop Nayak (2003a) suggests, many young white working-class men in Newcastle ritually participate in nightlife and circuit-drinking to enunciate their locally-specific working-class masculinities once forged through older industrial labour relations.

Other recent expansions in the provision of nightlife can be attributed to structural changes in the leisure industry. These, coupled with the relaxation of licensing laws have contributed to a massive rise in licensed premises in city and town centres across the UK. At the same time (before the most recent economic downturn), the latest Labour government, through an increase in public spending, had created almost full national employment (compared to previous years) and thus a population with a higher disposable income, also seen as a driver of the burgeoning night-time economy (Roberts, 2006)¹⁵. Writing several years ago, Dick Hobbs *et al* reveal that:

¹⁵ Although, as some of the interviewees in this study suggested, the recent global economic downturn has severely affected the profitability of night-time economies.

“There are 78,000 pubs and bars in the UK, and in 1997 there were 185 million admissions to nightclub premises, with consumers spending over two billion pounds in those premises. In 1998 the industry reported 199 million nightclub admissions. This was up from 142 million in 1993, and it is predicted that by 2002 there will be 238 million admissions, generating a predicted turnover of 2.5 billion pounds” (Hobbs *et al*, 2000: 704).

However, this increase has halted recently. The economic downturn in the UK in the past two to three years has reversed previous growths as consumers cut their spending in the leisure sectors. In July 2009 the British Beer and Pub Association reported that pub closures rose to 52 a week, totalling 2377 pub closures in the 12 months previous to that, equating to £254 million government losses in tax. However, these particular closures are concentrated mainly in the community pub sector, whilst the large branded pubs and café style bars were actually increasing in numbers at the rate of 2 per week (www.beerandpub.com/newsList_detail.aspx?newsId=289).

In March 2009 it was reported that nightclubs were also suffering due to the recent economic downturn. The chief executive of Luminar Leisure, Britain’s biggest nightclub operator, was quoted in the Times newspaper saying that 20 to 30 clubs had recently closed, with perhaps fifty percent more nightclubs potentially going out of business in the next 12 to 18 months. According to market research group CGA Strategy, of the 2,700 nightclubs in Britain, recent stagnation could leave only 2,200 open in 2013 (Walsh, 2009: The Times, March 18).

Producing Night-Time Economies

As Hollands and Chatterton (2003) argue, the production of nightlife in UK cities seems to be increasingly dominated by large national and multinational corporate firms who often roll out brands to attract potential consumers. Having become a significant characteristic of contemporary nightlife, it is not just products such as beer that are now branded. Instead, firms are able to represent nightlife spaces and with it promote wider ‘lifestyle experiences’ through the marketing of images pertaining to different social groups, particularly those with higher disposable incomes. In Chatterton and Holland’s words:

“While branding involves market differentiation based around certain groupings and may even involve attempts to brand versions of the ‘traditional pub’ (Scottish & Newcastle’s John Barras brand and J D Wetherspoon’s ‘just a pub’ philosophy are two examples here), one clear trend is towards branding upmarket premises, targeting ‘cash rich’ and high disposable income groups” (Hollands and Chatterton, 2003: 376).

One of the reasons for this is that premium markets, though smaller, are potentially more lucrative in terms of profit margins. This is argued to be the result of an increase in middle-class city dwellers fuelling demand for heavily styled bars and clubs offering premium, more expensive products and services in order “to re-distinguish themselves from the mass nightlife market” (Hollands and Chatterton, 2003: 376). Other developments also appear progressive, “especially in terms of opening the nightlife sector up to different social groups (especially young women), as well as attempts to ‘design out’ problems of excessive drinking and violence through the use of mixing food with alcohol, more seated areas and high quality interiors” (Hollands and Chatterton, 2003: 376).

However, this increased stylisation has produced “a displacement of lower-order activities and working-class communities by high-order activities aimed at cash-rich groups” (Chatterton and Hollands, 2003: 10), with “branded and stylised environments [representing] attempts by national and multinational capital interests to maximise profits for shareholders by targeting the most lucrative groups of young consumers” (ibid. p. 102-103). Simultaneously, other groups of young people, not seen as lucrative enough consumers, are becoming increasingly excluded from these leisure spaces, marginalised to peripheral community pubs, social clubs and estates (Chatterton and Hollands, 2002, 2003). The dominance of mainstream nightlife spaces that characterise urban nightscapes thus reflects contemporary processes of gentrification through the displacement of lower-order nightlife spaces and their users. As Hollands and Chatterton argue:

“Gentrified nightlife environments, then, consciously sanitize and exclude the poor and disenfranchised ... They not only reaffirm existing structures in the labour and educational markets ... but also hide the ‘dirty’ back regions of entertainment production by constructing the illusion of a wealthy urban oasis – which in terms of nightlife are reinforced through subtle demarcations based around dress and style codes, interior design, drink prices and entry requirements’ (Hollands and Chatterton, 2003: 369-370).

It therefore seems that the production of contemporary night-time economies reflects the broader processes of post-industrial urban change, where particular spaces become appropriated by the cash-rich and others are marginalised. However, as Hollands and Chatterton note, within nightlife circles there is no real definitive correspondence between class, space and consumption, but, there are general trends where the “upper classes, celebrities and their wannabes continue to colonize the most exclusive and expensive nightlife destinations” (2003: 368). Whilst the more cash-rich are helping to drive this process of fragmentation, other less affluent social groups are increasingly denied access to the more

fashionable nightlife locations. As Hollands and Chatterton suggest, the “unemployed, low income and welfare dependent groups literally have no space here and instead are objects of suspicion and surveillance” (Hollands and Chatterton, 2003: 369).

Contemporary night-time economies are thus hierarchical in their fragmentation, loosely corresponding to the profitability of urban nightlife spaces¹⁶. The most profitable are the branded, trendy, stylised, mainstream clubs and bars which cater for the mid-upper end of the market and which seem to increasingly dominate current urban nightscapes. Below are venues with a more ‘niche’ market – i.e. clubs and bars which provide specific types of music or scenes that differ from the mainstream, including those under the gay and lesbian banner (although these themselves are argued to be marginalised). And at the very bottom of the hierarchy are community pubs, social clubs, bars and nightclubs that provide cheaper products and services for the more underprivileged consumer. Chatterton and Hollands (2002, 2003; and Hollands and Chatterton, 2003) refer to these as mainstream, alternative, and residual nightlife spaces respectively. It is the first of these with which this study is most concerned (although the dichotomy of gentrified / residual nightlife is also of paramount importance – see Chapters 6 and 7). As I argue in Chapters 6 and 7, the dominance of mainstream nightlife spaces necessitates a number of exclusionary mechanisms which serve to exacerbate the fragmentation and segregation of contemporary urban nightscapes.

Regulating Night-Time Economies

Various extant processes of nightlife regulation also reflect and reinforce the ongoing fragmentation of contemporary nightlife. Regulation takes place through various forms, beginning with the state and its power to control the actions of the corporations / businesses that produce and regulate individual venues. As I illustrated in the previous chapter though, strict licensing laws have become relaxed more recently, with current leisure nightscapes being marked by a distinct de-regulation vis-à-vis the state (Chatterton and Hollands, 2003). Initial regulatory practices were traditionally orchestrated so as to control alcohol consumption by the working classes – particularly working-class young men – as they were seen as the predominant source of incivility and social decay, but also so as not to disrupt the function of the working week (Jayne *et al*, 2006).

¹⁶ This is not to say that night-time economies have not always been so, but rather, that the methods through which this hierarchy has developed have changed according to social / cultural / economic developments within post-industrial change.

At the current juncture, this de-regulation has transpired as a result of a reversal of previous understandings of alcohol-related crime and their causes. The temporally-fixed nature of alcohol-related crime i.e. immediately after closing time, prompted licensing changes that would allow a more staggered release of consumers after closing and thus potentially avoiding huge numbers of people onto the streets who would then cause problems for the police, the surrounding locales and themselves (Tierney, 2006). In giving premises increasing trading options in terms of opening hours, the licensing reform was also speculated to enable increased profit. However, its effects, in terms of alcohol-related crime and profit maximisation seem to be negligible. Despite an increase in choice for the consumer in how and when they want to drink, a common consensus is that people have only got a certain amount of money to spend, having no significant impact in profit margins. Alcohol-related crime has also not significantly altered after the reform. Although research findings have revealed some changes, violence, sexual assaults and criminal damage for example remain significant problems of contemporary night-time economies (Newton *et al*, 2008; Hobbs *et al*, 2005).

As the proliferation of nightlife continues apace, but with less municipal control, the regulation of nightlife increasingly takes place at the corporate level, where venues themselves control consumer access and some incidences of violence (especially if it occurs in the venue, but also sometimes, in the immediate vicinity). Here, door staff / security or who are more commonly referred to as ‘bouncers’ are instrumental in the regulation of admittance. Bouncers act as judges, choosing appropriate clientele, but also act as mediators of violence and confrontation and are able to eject anybody perceived to threaten the order of the venue. The key in maximising profit is to guarantee a homogeneity between consumers and the projected image of the establishment. In this way, bouncers are crucial to the venue’s turnover:

“In the absence of public police officers, bouncers take responsibility for incorporating night-time visitors into the disciplines and protocols of the late-night leisure market. Within this specific context of ‘policing beyond government’, bouncers are permitted wide discretion in their task of imposing commercially, rather than legally or morally justifiable behavioural codes ... Of the bouncer’s tasks, the vetting of potential customers at the door of the venue is one of the most important, and only those synonymous with commercially defined imperatives are judged suitable for access. In making such judgements bouncers become expert at reading signs of trouble and, with both their own safety and the interests of ‘business’ in mind, are willing to make decisions which can banish certain individuals to forever wander the night-time streets as part of the legion of the banned” (Hobbs *et al*, 2002).

Chatterton and Hollands observations correspond in that the “basic job of door staff ... remains deciding upon the suitability of customers in order to maintain order and the commercial viability of licensed venues, using both violent and non-violent tactics ... They are the definitive gatekeepers of the night-time economy, who ensure a connection between the ambience and clientele” (Chatterton and Hollands, 2003: 57). However, “different types of nightlife venues have their own set of entry requirements, expectations and subtle forms of discrimination at the door based on age, appearance, social class, gender, ethnicity and sexuality” (ibid.). In this way, the regulation of night-time economies from the street level serves to reinforce the fragmentation and segregation of different nightlives enacted through their construction at the corporate level, where the sanitisation of markets through increased stylisation, branding and upgrading are displacing other residual forms of night-time leisure. Regulation of consumers through norms, habits, dress, language, style and demeanour by bouncers appears “to favour the development of urban spaces aimed at the needs of the highly mobile, cash-rich youth groups such as young professionals, tourists, service workers and particular sections of the student, gay and female markets, while working against alternative / oppositional and older, community-based forms of nightlife” (Chatterton and Hollands, 2003: 46). The regulation of nightlife from the street level, then, helps advance the inequitable nature of the night-time economy as an entrenched feature of post-industrial urbanism.

4.4 Conclusion: Transforming Newcastle – ‘Party Town’

The case of Newcastle typifies the relatively recent urban transformations which I discussed in chapter 2. Its urban governance has changed from managerialism to entrepreneurialism; industrial manufacturing gave way to neoliberalized service-sector and post-manufacturing economies; and the construction of new retail, leisure and consumption space – along with the gentrification of outdated and dilapidated locales – represent the forging of a new local identity used to attract capital (investment, business, tourism, labour) back to the city. Whether or not recent efforts can be claimed as successes, and whilst on the whole unemployment has undoubtedly fallen, Newcastle nonetheless seems to lag behind other British cities. The 2001 census data shows that out of a population of nearly 260,000, nearly 9,000 (4.7%) of those remain unemployed, 50,000 have no car (45.2 %), and 28% of the population live in housing provided by the local authority (O.N.S, 2001 taken from www.newcastle.gov.uk)¹⁷. In the 2004 Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD), Newcastle was ranked 20th most deprived, dropping to 37th in 2007 (www.newcastle.gov.uk). This drop could be suggestive of improving socio-economic prospects ongoing in the region post-

¹⁷ Statistics of unemployment and car ownership here refer to those of working age only.

millennium, but it is important to note who actually gains and who loses out from specific developments. As I illustrated in the last chapter, contemporary efforts to revitalise urban space are often at the behest of market forces which significantly contribute to unequal landscapes of exclusion through processes of gentrification and the privatisation of space (for example Smith, 1996; Fyfe and Bannister, 1998). Whether or not this is the case in Newcastle is subject to debate; however, as Peter Rogers has shown in his study of skateboarding in Newcastle, there is a growing “gulf between commercial needs and those of young people” (Rogers, 2006: 121). And as I illustrate in chapters 6 and 7, the proliferation of nightlife and cultural industries as part of recent entrepreneurial agendas brings with it a number of exclusionary practices common in contemporary post-industrial urban economies.

In recent years, the night-time economy has become an ever more important source of capital for post-industrial cities. Whilst the economic rise of the night-time economy is apparent nationwide, Newcastle stands out as a frequently cited example of this expansion. Its gradual growth was accompanied by the construction of the ‘party town’ promotional imagery which amplified its attraction. Policy, too, shapes the nature, and possible expansion of Newcastle’s nightlife. One of the main aims of the current Liberal Democrat Council is to diversify the night-time economy – described as the “envy of the rest of the country and a major tourist attractor” (NCC, 2006: 119). In *Newcastle in 2021* (2006) the city council declare that they will “support this continued role, but also encourage new operators into the market, to make the city centre an attractive place in the evening for families and others who, at present, don’t think it’s for them” (NCC, 2006: 119).

In comparison with other UK cities, Newcastle does seem to have a good mix of nightlife venues catering for different tastes and preferences along various lines, and has a thriving gay and lesbian nightlife scene. And yet, whilst Newcastle’s nightlife “is a patchwork of activity reflecting different periods in its economic, social and cultural history ... traditional Geordie drinking culture tries to find a place amongst the new, glitzy world of corporate theme, style and chain bars ... the traditional ‘boozer’, community and alternative pubs continue to be squeezed to the urban fringes” (Chatterton *et al*, n.d.: 4). And whilst Newcastle seems to comprise a large proportion of local and regional nightlife operators compared to other UK parallels – as suggested by the operator of a local firm in the interviews – it may be the case that in the future, large corporations gaining power in night-time economies continue to take-over and dominate Newcastle’s contemporary nightscapes. As Chatterton *et al* (n.d.: 4) suggest, what Newcastle’s nightlife will look like in the future is open to debate.

Chapter 5

Methodology

5.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the methodology and research techniques employed in this study. I begin in section 5.2 by outlining the research context in terms of its epistemological approach, and consider the implications of positionality and situated knowledges. Whilst not a traditional ethnography, I use the term here in recognition that as the researcher, I am striving to document and understand the processes of exclusion that are enacted through the regulatory mechanisms inherent in Newcastle's night-time economy. In doing so, this approach enables me to uncover the entrepreneurial practices that drive and rationalize the filtering, channelling and redistributive processes that govern the spatial characteristics of Newcastle's nightlife. It also enables me to uncover the ways in which these processes are articulated through current value-laden semantics of troublesome youth, and how these reconstitute particular youth groups as deviant and delinquent. Related to this, I use a case study approach to demonstrate the wider socio-economic features and spatial practices pertaining to contemporary urban space under entrepreneurial governance.

In section 5.3 I then discuss how I conducted the research. I open with a discussion on the interview procedure, beginning with a justification of how I selected participants (i.e. locations of bars, clubs, pubs, management, owners, operators etc.) before moving on to the merits of the interview technique itself. I then go on to elaborate on the type of questioning I used and what this aimed to reveal. In this discussion, I also outline some of my experiences and some of the limitations I came across. In section 5.4 I talk about the observation technique I employed. Whilst this was not an initial methodological objective, in some of the early interviews I was offered the chance to see how some of the regulatory procedures were practiced by the door staff at various bars and nightclubs. As I illustrate in this section, this particular work was very useful, helping to clarify a complex set of processes which were articulated with great difficulty by the interview participants. I then discuss what this data revealed, the limitations of the technique, and some of my experiences.

Finally, in section 5.5 I provide a brief conclusion, suggesting how ethnographic engagement through semi-structured interviews and observation techniques enables the answering of the research questions stipulated in the introduction to this dissertation. I illustrate how this methodology helps show how groups of young people are being reconstituted as the new

delinquent in the current entrepreneurial urban economy, and what effects these new configurations have on young people's access to urban nightlife.

5.2 Qualitative Methods

This study relies on two main methods: semi-structured interviews and observations (with some degree of participation as I explain later). I chose these primarily due to the qualitative nature of the research. Ideally, I would have liked to carry out an in depth ethnography of nightlife in Newcastle. However, time restraints and lack of sufficient funds did not allow for the depth required in an ethnographic approach¹⁸. Although this study's perspective is somewhat ethnographic, in that it "attempts to understand the world as seen through the eyes of the participants" (Kitchin and Tate, 2000: 212), it is not a traditional ethnography *per se*. Therefore, whilst unable to completely immerse myself in Newcastle's nightlife as a participant researcher, I used the principle tenets of ethnography in order to uncover the intricate spatial processes of the night-time economy from the perspective of those who orchestrate its inner workings (operators, managers, owners, bouncers).

As Steve Herbert (2000) suggests, ethnography in human geography, although remaining peripheralised as a research approach is a "uniquely useful method for uncovering the *processes* and *meanings* that undergrid sociospatial life", as humans "create their social and spatial worlds through processes that are symbolically encoded and thus made meaningful" (Herbert, 2000: 550 original emphases). The main facets of ethnography therefore seemed especially useful in that this study is concerned with both process and meaning: the ways in which entrepreneurial processes – those that shape the form of the night-time economy, which incorporate exclusionary processes – are symbolically encoded and rationalized through the meanings bestowed upon those denied participation. Quantitative approaches, such as the documentation and quantification of expulsions in the night-time economy, could not reveal the roles of representation and meaning nor explain how youth identities are reconstituted as delinquent. An ethnographic approach, comprised of interviews and observations, was thus chosen for its ability to do this.

This approach, however, is not without its criticisms. As Herbert (2000) points out, ethnographic methodologies have often been critiqued by positivists due to the lack of a 'true' scientific foundation, in that an ethnographic approach, which relies heavily on interpretation,

¹⁸ An ethnography was also not possible due to intrinsic dangers of participation. Due to legislation and risk assessment I could not, for example, work as a bouncer.

cannot provide 'value-neutral' and 'objective' conclusions. Furthermore, there are limitations in its ability to produce generalizations:

"Ethnographers typically focus on a single or very small number of cases to understand better processes and meanings. Ethnography requires an intimate familiarity with the study group(s) that develops only after sustained exposure. Many ethnographies, further, are filled with descriptions, perhaps a legacy from anthropologists, whose early ethnographies were the first catalogs of given peoples and their ways of life. Because of this intensive focus and this historical emphasis on description, ethnography is sometimes criticized for failing to provide few, if any, generalizable propositions" (Herbert, 2000: 560).

Indeed, this is supported by feminist geographers who encourage researchers to spell out the positionality of themselves, their participants, the situatedness of knowledges produced as a result, and to ultimately deny any claims to objectivity (Rose, 1997; England, 1994; Nast, 1994). Going against the criticisms of positivism and its universalising conclusions through 'objective science', knowledge is understood to be positioned and situated, produced "from specific locations, embodied and particular" (Rose, 1997: 308). As researchers, then, we thus have to situate our knowledges and limit our conclusions, rather than making grand generalized claims.

But despite this need to moderate generalizations, the ethnographic approach can take a case study form, where specific dynamics in one instance are similar in other places and contexts. This does not mean that case studies are completely representative of specific processes or meanings, but that they help illustrate similarities in a range of different contexts. As Noel Castree puts it:

"A case study usually involves investigating one or more phenomena in some depth in one place, region or country. What makes it an actual or potential 'case' is that the phenomena under investigation (e.g. workfare policies, flexible manufacturing technologies, postmodern architecture) can be found in other places, regions or countries: the case may thus be unique but is not singular ... Case study research in human geography thus serves an important function. It shows the world to be persistently *diverse* ... Yet it shows that this diversity arises out of multiscaled *relations* such that it does not emerge *sui generis*" (Castree, 2005: 541 original emphases).

In this study, then, Newcastle and the night-time economy act, in part, as a case study. Whilst the entrepreneurial night-time economy in Newcastle is particular to both the region and the type of economy (i.e. Newcastle and the night-time leisure economy), such processes also

occur elsewhere in other night-time economies and other contexts (day-time retail spaces for example, other cities also). Processes of exclusion, as I illustrated in chapter 2, have become defining spatial features of post-industrial urbanism as a result of a neoliberalized economy and the shift toward entrepreneurial governance. So, where David Sibley (1995), Gill Valentine (2004) and others have presented cases of marginalisation and exclusion in contemporary leisure spaces as a result of these socio-spatial transformations, this study also presents an account of exclusionary processes engendered by commercially defined imperatives. As such, this study, through an ethnographic perspective, enables these practices to be understood in the wider contexts of the entrepreneurial city and its latent spatial practices.

Ethnographic approaches raise other concerns though. Again, positionality and situatedness are essential in understanding these matters. As researchers, we should also be aware of the positions of ourselves and of our participants in terms of ethics and power relations. As Herbert suggests, ethnographies have been criticised because they sometimes uphold an imperialist perspective:

“A power differential typically exists between observer and observed, particularly when the latter belongs to a marginalized group. Ethnography can thus serve, wittingly or not, as a handmaiden to broader colonialist projects that inventory oppressed groups as a means of controlling them ... In both the colonial and ethnographic projects, the argument goes, the ‘natives’ are passive and powerless; the scientist’s gaze is just one manifestation of the wider skein of dominance relations in which they are enwrapped” (Herbert, 2000: 562).

Peter Jackson makes a similar observation, that “social scientists are often accused of having a predatory relationship with their objects of study, especially where these ‘objects’ are relatively powerless, poor people of low status, or members of ethnic minorities” (Jackson, 1983: 42). However, this was less of a concern in this study (although, as I illustrate shortly, basic ethical considerations remain absolutely necessary). The participants here (venue operators, bouncers etc.) occupied a much more powerful position and wielded far more economic and cultural power than myself as the researcher, and the consumers on which they depend. The major consideration though, as I illustrate later, was confidentiality. That being said, there are significant issues here in relation to studying elite groups. All except one of my interviewees were male; all were presumably middle-class in the taxonomic sense (being in management); most were reasonably young adults; and all except one were white. Their positionalities as the participants were thus very similar to my positionality as the researcher, as I myself am a white, middle-class, young adult man. However, in such a context where the

participants can be construed as a powerful or elite group, I found that I had to constantly emphasise my capabilities and capacity for understanding as an intellectual researcher, and as Winchester (1996) puts it, demonstrate and assert my status “by careful choice of dress and language” (p. 122). The participants I interviewed are also accustomed to having control and authority over others (England, 2006), and would therefore often guide the interview in terms of subject, and what *they* thought was relevant to my study. This meant that some discussions soon became completely irrelevant. It also often felt as if some questions were hastily answered in order to speed up the interview, and in some meetings, there was both the heavy usage of management speak and a distinct patronizing tone which seemed to reinforce the power relation of myself being an inexperienced graduate researcher and them being corporate managers who have got better things to do than entertain someone studying for their PhD. But not all interviews were like this. Indeed, I recall one interview in particular where a marketing manager, knowing of my position in relation to his (i.e. himself having significant expertise in the night-time leisure sector and myself having not so much), explained every issue in great detail, ensuring that I understood all management terminology, the processes, laws and management practices within the night-time economy, Newcastle’s city centre, and its recent history as a contemporary urban leisure hub.

5.3 Interviews

I gradually chose a variety of venue operators, managers, and owners as I familiarised myself with the current form of Newcastle’s night-time economy in the city centre. I avoided other locations, such as Jesmond Road (another nightlife hotspot), because I felt that this may complicate the study when analysing the redistributive processes at work. Most venues in the city centre are within walking distance of each other, whereas Jesmond Road, located a few miles north of the centre, is usually negotiated by taxi or the Metro system. If processes of filtering and channelling are operating to fragment Newcastle’s nightlife, it would be more effective to illustrate if I concentrated on the city centre and the movements within it.

Initially, I began approaching managers of venues which I knew something about from my previous experience of Newcastle at night: as an undergraduate, I spent three years living in Newcastle, and in my final year of study I worked as a waiter in two of Newcastle’s most upmarket establishments. After explaining the main objectives of the research, I eventually reached agreements with operators of three venues, all in different parts of the city centre and with completely different environments. One was a large-capacity nightclub on the Bigg Market, another a trendy bar on what I later found was called the ‘Diamond Strip’, and the other a high-style bar located within the Gate Complex. I wanted participants to represent a

diverse set of venues (e.g. high / mid / low market, style bars, 'charver venues', middle of the road etc.), which would hopefully enable me to examine the differences in regulation, which I suspected would be more intense in the highly stylised bars and clubs, and quite relaxed in the lower-end venues. The wide scope would also allow me to expose the fragmentation and segregation which seems to characterise the spatial composition of Newcastle's night-time economy.

In looking at these specific issues, along with notions of exclusion, filtering, channelling and redistributing different groups of consumers, the data I needed to fulfil the research agenda was available from those in the higher positions. In Kim England's terms, they are knowledgeable agents and "experts of their own experiences" (England, 2006: 288). Their position as informed subjects in the heart of nightlife in Newcastle meant that they possess a range of knowledges concerning the regulation of the night-time economy, the various different groups of consumers who ritually participate in it, the formulation of different admittance policies, groups who are rejected from particular bars, and the commercially-defined reasons for channelling and redistributing different groups to different spaces within Newcastle's contemporary nightscapes. They are also actors in a network which helps reconstitute social identities. As I illustrate in chapters 6 and 7, class judgements are a fundamental component in the regulation of admittance, where representations of contemporary troublesome youth are used to articulate and justify the filtering practices that mark the spatial characteristics of nightlife in Newcastle.

Some of this data could have been drawn from other people. Owners, shareholders, or frequent nightlife consumers might also be in a position to know and understand processes of exclusion and redistribution. However, initially I was doubtful as to the extent of the relevant knowledge of some owners and shareholders and related bodies involved with the regulation of nightlife (i.e. would the perspective of the city council allude to the cultural politics of exclusion in the night-time economy? Probably not). Furthermore, the hedonistic, wild, boisterous and sometimes unruly nature of Newcastle's nightlife discouraged me from requesting participation of consumers. As I show later in this chapter, I had innumerable informal conversations with consumers at various locations, helping me to gather a deeper understanding of the city's night-time culture, but some of these encounters were very uncomfortable. Perhaps not exactly abusive, some people that I approached were rather unfriendly when I either asked questions or began explaining my research. In the early stages of the fieldwork, I came to the conclusion that the more stable and knowledgeable position of venue operators, managers, door staff etc. would yield better and more consistent data. I was also able to schedule and conduct the interviews with a relative degree of ease and safety in

comparison with regular nightlife consumers; all of the interviews took place in the participants respective venue apart from one, which was scheduled in his other place of work (a restaurant in the west end). Included in the list below are details of the venues whose managers / operators I interviewed at some point during the 3 year research period¹⁹:

- Operator of mass-market, themed and branded superclub, owned by a national corporation, Bigg Market
- Manager of branded mid-market style bar, The Gate Entertainment Complex
- Manager of mid-market style bar, Mosley Street (“Diamond Strip”)
- Owner / Executive of leisure and design group, which retains a number (7 at the time of research) of different, non-branded, locally-operated bars, clubs and restaurants
- Manager of upmarket nightclub, recently refurbished, Quayside
- Operator of mass-market superclub, owned by national corporation, New Bridge Street West
- Manager of trendy cocktail bar, Pilgrim Street
- Manager of low-market bar and low-market nightclub, (both known locally as “charver venues”), Bigg Market
- Operator of themed mid-high market bar, recently refurbished and re-branded (previously a very exclusive style bar), Collingwood Street (“Diamond Strip”)
- Operator of mid-high market style bar (previously a low-market trebles bar ending up run-down, then empty), Nicholas Street (“Diamond Strip”)
- Operator of mass-market branded superclub, The Gate
- Operator of mass-market branded super-venue (encompasses a bar, VIP lounge, club and restaurant; also, previously very exclusive), Newgate Street (The Gate)
- Marketing manager of mass-market entertainment-led bar, Newgate Street (The Gate)

I chose the interview as a research technique due to its scope for expansion and its sensitivity to unravelling “complicated relationships or slowly evolving events” such as processes of exclusion and the meanings invested within them (Hoggart *et al*, 2002: 205). Focus groups, for example, could have generated similar outcomes. However, having already experienced some complications in interview scheduling (teaching commitments on my behalf and an incredibly hectic schedule on theirs for example), I decided against this method. With further consideration, I also thought that a group setting may have been inappropriate because of the rather ‘touchy’ subject of exclusion in the night-time economy. I was doubtful of the transparency between different operators at a focus group meeting, having already dedicated

¹⁹ The names of these venues are omitted to ensure anonymity promised to the research participants.

complete confidentiality to the participants. And some operators for example, requested that their mentioning was refrained in discussions with other participants. Moreover, if I had employed the focus group technique, the data produced could have been completely different to the privately-conducted interviews. With many operators in one room, and differing in the type of venue they manage, they could have withheld some of their opinions for fear of offence or argument. As I discovered when undertaking the interviews, many participants, especially those of the higher-market venues, would speak about the lower-market 'trouble' venues that cater for the 'charver groups'. I doubt that this kind of data, invaluable to this study, would have been revealed during focus group sessions.

Despite some of the problems that I mentioned beforehand, the majority of the interviews gave me in-depth, focused answers that related directly to the research questions. If the participants did digress from the subject, I could always go back to a topic and enquire further. The interview technique also enabled me to cover issues that I had overlooked when constructing the questioning. In seeking the merits of interview techniques, Hoggart *et al* state, "conducted sensitively, intensive interviews can facilitate the explanation of events and experiences in their complexity, including their potential contradictions ... This can lead to insight far beyond the initial imagination of the researcher" (2002: 206). And typically, this is what I experienced. Despite having lived in Newcastle in the past, and knowing the city's nightlife reasonably well, there were things brought to light during the interviews that I had not anticipated, and this would not have been possible if I had employed other methods. Thus the semi-structured nature of the interviewing technique I used provided me with opportunities for tangents and digressions that ended up being valuable to the research. And more specifically, the economic rationale for exclusion only became explicitly evident as I undertook more and more interviews, leading me to change questions, and enquire deeper into some of the intricacies of rejection, exclusion, and their relationship with commercially defined spatial practices.

The research process also allowed me to develop trust and rapport. Initially, gaining interview participants proved to be rather difficult due to the nature of their employment and working patterns. This also meant that some of the interviews were briefer than would have been ideal. There were also complications with gaining consent from some of the larger firms. As I illustrated in the last chapter, many of Newcastle's bars and clubs are owned by regional or national firms, and this meant that I often had to go through head offices for permission to speak to a particular venue manager. More times than not, head offices did not give me permission due to fear of negative publicity despite complete anonymity offered to the firm, the venue, and the manager I requested. For example, the national chain of *Revolution* vodka

bars refused to participate for exactly these reasons, and other venues such as *Living Room* owned by the national firm *Niche Hotels* either misplaced my multiple requests or failed to respond for similar reasons. In all cases though, complete confidentiality was assured to all participants to fulfil my duty as a researcher and, where appropriate, their needs to meet head office requirements.

Having three interviews scheduled in the earlier stages of the research, I began piloting the questions. Initial responses to underdeveloped questions about how media-based constructions of the job and chav might be driving door policies yielded little in the way of successful data. Operators dismissed the mass media as wholly inaccurate and sensational, especially when accounting for problems in the night-time economy. With experience on their side, the participants (especially those operating stylised, gentrified and highly exclusive venues) articulated the situation in a very specific way. It appeared that current representations of jobs and chavs are entangled in the regulation of the night-time economy but did not drive their decisions to exclude. Instead, the focus that was becoming increasingly evident in the interviews was on the economic incentive to exclude. Subsequent questioning abandoned any leading questions about the representational qualities of youth unless there was specific reference to them, or until the latter half of the interview. Most of the interviewees, though, raised the terms chav or charver at their own will, immediately pointing to the more visual tenets of exclusion. However, if the term had not been discussed by the end of the interview, I raised it. Investigating the ways in which youth identities have been reconstructed through these capital processes was indeed very difficult, with slightly different takes on venues, areas and social groups by the participants, but patterns began to emerge nonetheless. In some interviews, contemporary semantics of troublesome youth were used again and again in defining the ‘wrong’ type of consumer. Indeed, in some interviews it was this language that was used to define door policies and exclusion outright (see chapter 6). But in others, there was scant mention of problematic social groups, and I had to work these issues into later questions to tease out the cultural politics that may (or may not) be at play in the street-level regulation of the respective venue.

My questioning, as it evolved, sought data on the processes and meanings imbued in the regulation of nightlife and resultant exclusions. The opening questions related to the image of Newcastle as a city known for its nightlife and how the respective venue fits in with these images. Subsequently, I enquired into the similarities and differences within Newcastle’s nightlife, aiming to acquire as much of the operator’s personal knowledge from direct experience as possible. I also enquired into the business acumen of the venues i.e. how specific policies work to increase profit. This led me to questions surrounding venue’s

consumer bases i.e. who, in terms of age, class, gender, behaviour etc. are thought of as desired customers. Simultaneously, I also enquired into the kinds of people who are not wanted as customers. Anticipating certain answers here, I had prepared a number of follow-on questions to maximise the output which related directly to the research questions set out in the introduction of this dissertation. Here I also questioned the methods through which they regulate their clientele, how drinks prices and venue images may 'automatically' maintain specific customer bases, and how door policies work to include and exclude.

After gaining a real insight into the latent workings of the night-time economy from these interviews, a number of related issues became apparent, and for the purposes of this methodology, are worth elaborating on here. Some of the participants had only been in Newcastle as operators for a relatively short period of time, but had acquired a sense of recent history through colleagues, friends, and regular customers. They knew the venue's recent past and its place in Newcastle's nightlife in as intimate a way as those operating in Newcastle for a significantly lengthier period. But all had an intricate understanding of the city, other venues and the relationships between them, and on wider issues such as tourism, urban policy, and associated violence issues, enabling me to cover more ground than anticipated, and raising important issues that could be collectively incorporated into the analysis.

I made another distinction however. Through the interviews, I gained a sense of the participants' specific position in relation to their level of responsibility in the business. By this I mean that those who ranked higher, or had been in the business for longer, articulated responses in a very different way to those who were lower in the corporate structure. Assistant managers and those with less experience in the operation of venues struggled to communicate some issues in the interviews, possibly exacerbated by the complexity of the subject. It is perhaps because of a wider awareness of PR issues that those in higher management refrained from using potentially derogatory terms like 'charver' or 'chav'. In one interview with an experienced operator who works for a large corporation, having raised the term late into the interview, he declared his surprise of its propagation in such a way by other operators. In interviews with rather more inexperienced operators, regulation was articulated in very simplistic ways, and with no management speak it was in some of these interviews where exclusions were immediately articulated through the popular understanding of the term charver. However, I can recall one specific interview with an executive / owner of a large local firm where he demarcated this new underclass in rather derogatory ways at his own behest. Issues such as this need addressing in methodologies. Whilst there were commonalities between different managers of a similar ilk, there was no concrete relationship

between the level of management and the ways in which the regulation of admittance was articulated, perhaps demonstrating that there is a need for a greater cross section of managers as participants in studies dealing with such elite groups.

The interviews were then transcribed and categorised in accordance with dominant themes. Although I had loose categories in mind from the outset, themselves determined to some degree by the interview questions, the categorisation of the data was finally achieved after preliminary readings of the transcripts. Sifting through the data, I demarcated four main areas of analysis corresponding to the research questions. The first and second relate to the identification of the ‘wrong’ consumer, how this was articulated by the participants, and how groups of young people are being reconstituted as the new delinquent in Newcastle’s night-time economy. This involved categorising articulations of material deviant symbols (clothes, brands etc.) but also embodied symbols of deviance – comportment, demeanour, behaviour etc. The third main area of inquiry concerns the rationale for exclusion and redistribution, looking at how the participants articulated the commercial imperatives for channelling different groups of consumers, and how this influences the spatial composition of the night-time economy. The fourth analytical category addresses the concept of exclusion itself and examines more closely the filtering processes that characterise the inequitable nature of nightlife in Newcastle, how it is fragmented and segregated. It is these categories that principally determine the structures of chapters 6 and 7 in this dissertation.

5.4 Participation and Observation

The interviews were bolstered by a series of expeditions where I went out and participated in the night-time economy as a consumer, and an observer of regulation procedure. I chose this particular method mainly because of the problematic issue of embodiment (comportment, demeanour, style, behaviour etc. but also specific embodiments of class and gender) during the interviews, which could only be resolved with a more visual research approach. Most of the participants had great difficulty in articulating the more performative, kinaesthetic moments imbued in the identification and exclusion process. Having been put on the question agenda after the initial interviews, performativity became a central theme in the remaining sessions. When I enquired into issues of embodiment, some operators became increasingly frustrated, having difficulty in explaining exactly what kind of bodies they are looking to reject. Responses often took the form of “you just know who isn’t right for the venue” and “a lot of the time it comes down to feeling” (see chapter 6 for the full discussion). With responses such as these, I decided that very little of the performative could be neatly captured by the interview methodology. Thus, whilst entrepreneurial practices (including business

acumen, admittance trends, customer selectivity, service prices etc.) are constructed and rationalized by the venue operators, through observation methods I could examine how some of these aspects (i.e. door policies and the visual identification of the 'wrong consumer') are implemented by the door staff. Therefore, the interviews gave me the chance to investigate how venue operators practice and understand exclusion, and the observation work allowed me to see how some of these policies are actually enacted by door staff and venue security. It gave me the chance to witness inclusions and exclusions being performed by both bouncers and punters.

Whilst in the earlier stages of the research some degree of participant observation was employed to re-acquaint myself with Newcastle's nightlife, to see perhaps how it had changed, and to gain a better sense of what was going on at the time, initially, it was not my intention to employ this particular technique outright. However, during the very first interview at a club on the Bigg Market I was offered the chance to stand on the door one Friday night and observe how the door staff put these policies into practice. After some deliberation I agreed under the impression that this could only bolster the research and provide me with the more performative data on admittance practices. Thus, in subsequent interviews with other operators I asked if I could carry out this observation work on the respective venue's door. Due to the contested and somewhat stigmatised nature of the night-time economy, as well as strict regulations, danger and disorder, many were not keen on the idea of having an external researcher occupying much needed space at the door of the venue. However, after being granted permission I was able to briefly and informally interview door staff and observe their practices at a small number of venues in various locations in the city centre²⁰. Figure 5.1 stipulates exactly how and when the participation and observation was undertaken.

In languages of methodology in human geography, this technique is often known as 'participant observation', and is regarded to be the main principle of ethnographic research. However, the role of 'participant' here does not really apply, as I did not actively participate in the regulation of admittance at the door (and hence why this methodology cannot be conceived as a piece of traditional ethnography). Bar / club door staff are also highly trained to deal with violence and confrontation. It would have been far too dangerous for me and for others if I were to participate and work as a bouncer. Indeed, I would have been prevented from doing so by the risk assessment procedure. Rather, the combination of techniques that I used is more akin to Peter Jackson's approach. Jackson argues that the participant

²⁰ Again, with anonymity promised, I cannot stipulate exactly which venues participated in the observation work.

observation approach actually involves more than one research method, including observation (to describe events), interviewing (to learn of someone's norms and perspectives) and sometimes sampling (to document frequency for example) (Jackson, 1983). As he suggests, participant observation "should not ... be regarded as a 'technique' which can be effectively employed in isolation from other research procedures, but as an approach with a common core of appropriate methods inherent in all forms of participant observation" (Jackson, 1983: 40). This was also the case in this study, and by speaking with the door staff in semi-interview form, I could enquire as to the reasons for and articulations of the exclusions being performed. Methodologically speaking then, participation was not necessary to observe the regulatory processes in operation. I could see who was refused entry, the frequency of these rejections, and then ask the door staff to explain their decisions. I could thus see in practice some of what I had been told in the interviews.

Invariably, the observation work involved standing with the bouncers and watching them at work. However, I did have the chance to informally interview them earlier in the nights before it got too busy so as to distract them from their work. Most of the time I asked similar questions to those in the interviews, going over the types of groups they look for as suitable customers, those they choose to reject, how they identify these groups, and the reasons for rejection. As the nights progressed and the queues lengthened, I stepped back to observe, but occasionally had a quick chat during lulls. Again, the observation work, in addition to helping me understand the more performative approach to exclusion through embodied deviance, also enabled me to investigate the ways in which exclusions are articulated through contemporary representations of troublesome youth. As I show in chapters 6 and 7, appearance, dress, comportment and behaviour – as determinants in the exclusion process – were again enunciated by the bouncers through terms such as *chav* and *charver*.

Despite there being limited permissions for doing this kind of work, I could also, as a consumer of the night-time economy, do some observing more informally. Participating as a prospective consumer, I spent many nights in Newcastle walking around, standing in queues waiting for admittance, watching what was going on ahead of me, looking through an analytical lens at the flow of people, the way in which they were filtered through exclusion, immersing myself into the choreography of the night and the movement of nightlife. Entry into countless bars and clubs also gave me the chance to observe the aesthetics of consumers within venues. With an increasing number of visits to various establishments coupled with the data from the interviews, it soon became clear which venues catered for which consumers. Spending time in bars on the Diamond Strip for example, it became obvious that effort in appearance is very important to admittance (myself included); in order to participate in these

glitzy and glamorous watering holes, you have to look the part. In the middle-of-the-road venues, there seemed to be no high expectations of appearance – admittance was predicated on a trendy yet casual appearance. However, in some bars and clubs, I soon observed the slacker admittance policies that overlooked the most ubiquitous of class signifiers vis-à-vis the charver and chav – Burberry caps, tracksuits, bling and most of the other stigmatised clothing labels (again, for further detail, see Figure 5.1).

Venue / Area	Type of Observation	When	Total hours spent observing	Location(s)	Additional Notes
Mass-market, themed and branded superclub, owned by a national corporation, Bigg Market	Organised and Formal; as a researcher; observation, formal interviewing (i.e. with Dictaphone) and conversational interviewing	Friday, evening and late-night	4	At the door with security staff; inside the nightclub	Mixed work of interviewing door staff, observing admittance of consumers and cross referencing, observation of consumers inside
Upmarket and gentrified bar, boutique restaurant by day, Grey Street	Organised and Formal; as a researcher; observation and conversational interviewing	Saturday, evening	2	At the door with security staff; inside speaking with bar staff and duty managers	Mixed work of interviewing door staff, observing admittance of consumers and cross referencing, observation of consumers inside
Mid-high market style bar, Collingwood Street (Diamond	Organised and Formal; as a researcher; observation and conversational interviewing	Saturday, evening	2	At the door with security staff; inside speaking with additional managers and DJ	Mixed work of interviewing door staff, observing admittance of consumers and

Strip)					cross referencing, observation of consumers inside
Mid-market basement trebles bar, Grainger Street (adjacent to Bigg Market)	Organised and Formal; as a researcher; observation and conversational interviewing	Saturday, late-night	2	At the door with security staff; inside	Mixed work of interviewing door staff, observing admittance of consumers and cross referencing, observation of consumers inside
Low-mid market fun pub / bar, Quayside	Organised and Formal; as a researcher; observation and conversational interviewing	Saturday, late-night	2	At the door with security staff; inside	Mixed work of interviewing door staff, observing admittance of consumers and cross referencing, observation of consumers inside
Numerous bars and clubs, Bigg Market	Informal; as a consumer	Wednesday (popular night for students), Fridays and Saturdays; evenings and late at night	10	Outside on the streets; adjacent to venue doors; in queues; inside venues	Mixed work of observing consumers inside and outside of the venues; observation of admittance; informal conversational interviewing of myriad consumers

Numerous bars and clubs, Diamond Strip	Informal; as a consumer	Wednesday (popular night for students), Fridays and Saturdays; evenings and late at night	10	Outside on the streets; adjacent to venue doors; in queues; inside venues	Mixed work of observing consumers inside and outside of the venues; observation of admittance; informal conversational interviewing of myriad consumers
Numerous bars and clubs, The Gate	Informal; as a consumer	Wednesday (popular night for students), Fridays and Saturdays; evenings and late at night	10	Outside on the streets; adjacent to venue doors; in queues; inside venues	Mixed work of observing consumers inside and outside of the venues; observation of admittance; informal conversational interviewing of myriad consumers
Numerous bars and clubs, Quayside	Informal; as a consumer	Wednesday (popular night for students), Fridays and Saturdays; evenings and late at night	10	Outside on the streets; adjacent to venue doors; in queues; inside venues	Mixed work of observing consumers inside and outside of the venues; observation of admittance; informal conversational interviewing of myriad consumers

Figure 5.1 Table documenting the observation and participation methodology

It is not easy to describe this aspect of the fieldwork in terms of method. In some ways I am a participant (in that I am acting as a consumer), and in others I am somewhat more an observer. Hoggart *et al* (2002) offer the best kind of clarification in what *kind* of participant observation I employed here:

“The observer as participant. Here the balance favours observation over participation ... However, it is not unusual to find references in the literature to this kind of work as ‘participant observation’, when it is really observation with some participation ... With information collection commonly taking substantial allocations of time if the researcher adopts a participant-as-observer stance, many researchers are driven by preference or lack of time to sample events they observe ... or to focus on interpreting activities going on around them rather than in which they are active agents” (Hoggart *et al*, 2002: 257 original emphasis).

This observation work coupled with the interviews provided me with enough knowledge to better understand the composition of Newcastle’s night-time economy; where people go, where they simultaneously don’t go; how some are excluded; the way in which these exclusions are articulated and performed as meaningful phenomena; and the justifications for such actions.

5.5 Conclusion

This methodology, then, is not a traditional ethnography *per se*, but employs a situated, ethnographic perspective in order to examine an interrelated set of meanings and processes in Newcastle’s night-time economy. Despite the knowledge formed through this methodology being limited, situated, and partial, it is suggestive of wider economic practices and cultural politics. Through the case study approach, investigating exactly how representations of contemporary youth are utilised and reworked in economically-driven performances necessitates such a qualitative methodology.

This methodology also requires specific participants to yield particular data. The managers, operators and bouncers who orchestrate the regulation of the night-time economy have an intimate understanding of the city, its nightlife, and its consumers, were therefore necessary participants. Most have profound experience in the running of venues, the ways in which image acts to attract and deter different groups of consumers, and the commercial imperatives entangled in the exclusion, filtering and redistribution of people in Newcastle’s nightlife. They are also in a more privileged position than regular night-time leisure consumers, and, as Mike Crang suggests, the “qualitative studies of elites can inform understandings in an

unequal world” (Crang, 2002: 648). With this study seeking to understand the processes through which particular youth groups become reconstituted as the new delinquent and subsequently excluded by those obligated to prevailing capital forces, the participants selected through this methodology were therefore crucial.

I employed the interview technique due to its sensitivity to complex processes and meanings. As I suggested previously, other methods would have limited the scope of the study or were avoided due to their inconvenience. After establishing the importance of the more performative aspects of identification and exclusion early in the research process, I also greatly welcomed the potential of observation work courtesy of a number of operators. I came to realize that the interviews could not yield relevant and easily understood data on the relationships between representations of troublesome youth, exclusion, and the embodied, performing consumer. Being able to witness exclusions as they were being executed, and being able to inquire deeper into the identification process, I could shed further light on a very complex filtering system which engenders unequal access. Hence, the regulators, managers and operators of a number of nightlife venues are positioned and situated with the knowledge of how an entrepreneurial agenda drives the exclusion of those associated with contemporary representations of troublesome youth; how operators are propagating a term through which the already socially excluded can be identified and excluded yet again.

Chapter 6

Exclusion in Newcastle's Night-Time Economy 1: Deviance, Embodiment, and the Identification of Troublesome Youth

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I begin to present the findings of the research. I begin in section 6.2 with a brief discussion of the main characteristics of Newcastle's night-time economy, describing the different kinds of nightlife I have observed and learnt about in the recent past. I do this to provide a preamble to the subsequent sections, so that when I discuss specific areas and markets, they are understood in relation to each other. In setting the scene, I examine the four main segments comprising Newcastle's contemporary nightscapes, where specific areas consist of similar venues offering similar products and services, and visited by similar groups of people (in terms of class and income, taste and nightlife preferences etc.).

In section 6.3, I discuss a number of issues of deviance and exclusion. I begin by illustrating the importance of the visualisation of the 'wrong consumer', who is defined as incapable of fulfilling the social and cultural requirements for entry into a number of venues (including the highly stylised gentrified premises and some of the more mainstream, mid-market establishments). Here I outline how operators and bouncers articulated notions of the wrong consumer using the terms 'chav' and 'charver', and emphasised the ubiquitous symbols of consumer deviance that characterise this new underclass as constituents in the exclusion process. Subsequently, however, I discuss how operators and bouncers also seek out and exclude those who seemingly display a number of problematic embodied performances, which include demeanour, comportment, behaviour and speech. I then go on to illustrate how most, if not all of these exclusions are communicated through a masculine bias, pointing to a reinforcement of contemporary representations of young lower-class masculinity as delinquent, and posing a greater problem than its feminine counterpart. I close the section with further observations of exclusion, documenting the ways in which the night-time economy 'self-regulates', and how regulation at the street level has been tightened in recent years through the increased interaction between bouncers at different venues and the police.

In section 6.4, I conclude this chapter by presenting four main arguments, showing how consumption and certain commodities, in addition to the embodiment of a number of stigmatised performances related to the 'lower' social classes remain intrinsic to the reconstitution of delinquent youth. I also illustrate the importance of masculinity in this

process, and how the normalization of a series of cultural practices reinforces spatial inequality in contemporary nightscapes.

6.2 Nightlife in Newcastle: Overview

As I suggested earlier in this dissertation, the recapitalisation of urban space since the economic austerities and social upheavals of 1970s and 1980s Britain has involved the re-aestheticization of city downtowns through processes of gentrification and the development of a number of leisure and retail infrastructures through entrepreneurial governance under a neoliberalized political-economic regime. Night-time economies, comprised of bars, clubs, pubs, restaurants, cinemas and numerous others, are part of these leisure infrastructures, and in many cities across the UK their rapid expansion has been permitted – even encouraged – on the basis of economic development through local and tourist spending. This continues to be the case in Newcastle, with the night-time economy being supported administratively and financially by the local authority (see Newcastle City Council, 2006). The burgeoning of night-time economies in recent years is also attributed to reconfigurations of class and gender-based identities. As I illustrated in chapter 4, having lost the ability to construct identity through industrial spheres of production, young working-class men in Newcastle increasingly attempt to forge a socio-cultural identity through regular consumption in the night-time economy (Hollands, 1995; Nayak, 2003a).

However, earlier in this thesis I also suggested that urban renaissance, which incorporates the production of nightlife, has also entailed the reconstitution of specific social identities. Entrepreneurial urbanism has brought with it multiple landscapes of exclusion which are principally determined by the need to ensure a spatial capital fix. With certain groups represented as threatening to commercially defined imperatives – from those of prostitutes, squeegee cleaners, the working classes and the urban poor (Smith, 1992; 1996a; 1996b), to homeless people (Mitchell, 1997; also see Coleman, 2005), to children and young people (Valentine, 2004; and Sibley, 1995) – the entrepreneurial city has become a place permeated with exclusions. A multitude of socio-spatial regulation mechanisms have been developed by the state, the private sector, and by other cultural frameworks, that seek to control the spatialities of those defined as the new delinquents. Under the current political-economic condition, representations of the yob have replaced older anxieties about hooligans (young, working-class men) (Pearson, 1983), and contemporary forms of class condescension manifest in the chav phenomenon have supplanted preceding concerns of a growing underclass, reinforcing perpetual sensibilities to control and exclude (Hayward and Yar, 2006; Tyler, 2006; McDowell, 2006; 2007; Johnson, 2008).

Urban economic growth and its corresponding spatial operations are no less the case within the local scales of contemporary urban nightlife. The expansion of the night-time economy commensurate with urban economic restructuring has often relied on national and multi-national corporations, along with big brands that sanitise and homogenise night-time markets, quash nightlife diversity, and exclude many groups from actively participating in the newly refurbished, gentrified and glamorized watering-holes that characterise contemporary urban nightlife. Chatterton and Hollands (2002, 2003) have observed that many cannot afford to drink in the establishments which constitute the new dominant scenes, but also, that some are excluded due to their social and cultural class-based identities (see also Nayak, 2006). This chapter illustrates similar findings, but also argues that geographers need to think through exclusion in such micro-scale cases of exclusion. As I show in this and the next chapter, embodied deviance, along with material commodities, plays a significant role in the identification of delinquency. But, exclusion in this thesis is not posited as a systemic spatial sanction, but rather a process where certain groups of people are redistributed and channelled into different spaces according to predetermined obligations to protect image and maximise capital. In Newcastle this has helped create a segregated night-time leisure landscape where specific areas cater for different groups which are loosely demarcated around class, and exclusion articulated through contemporary representations of delinquent youth.

Nightlife Locales: Separating Consumers

Already recognized for its traditional Geordie drinking culture (Nayak, 2003a; Chatterton and Hollands, 2003), Newcastle now hosts a variety of drinking venues, ranging from traditional pubs and social clubs, live music venues, dance music nightclubs, to cocktail bars, theme bars and clubs, and it also has a thriving gay and lesbian scene located around Times Square. What I discuss here, however, are those which come under the ‘mainstream’ banner – trendy bars and clubs that cater for the general population and which do not maintain specialisms in music or other niche markets such as the gay scene.

Newcastle’s nightlife, like every other city in the UK, is also comprised of a multitude of different consumers with different tastes, preferences, and incomes. With two major universities in the city, Newcastle is also a part-time home for many students, in addition to the plethora of visitors who stay in the city every week, from people on business, tourists, to stag and hen parties. Much of Newcastle’s success in the night-time economy is attributed to its reputation as one of the leading party cities in the UK. Banded through a variety of media, this is also widely recognized by many of the bar and club operators I interviewed: “from the outside perspective it’s one of the country’s best party cities” (Operator of mass-market,

themed and branded superclub, Bigg Market); and “people, whenever you mention Newcastle, have a perception that it’s a real party town” (Operator of mass-market superclub, New Bridge Street West). What I observed during the research is that Newcastle city centre has four key mainstream nightlife locales which all maintain specific ‘scenes’ and which contribute to this party image: The Bigg Market, the Quayside, the Gate complex, and the area around Collingwood Street that has become known as the Diamond Strip²¹.

The Bigg Market

The Bigg Market is now known locally and nationally as an unkempt drinking area in the very centre of Newcastle. From outside the city, its reputation is one of boisterous hedonism and late-night partying. It is comprised of a number of bars, nightclubs and pubs, and located at the top is a large, themed superclub owned by a national leisure corporation, with a capacity of around 2000 people. The club’s consumer base is mostly mid-market and students. As its operator commented in the interview:

“It’s basically, what we want you to do is come down, get pissed, get laid, and in a safe environment, and that’s what it’s all about [...] 18 to 24 year olds, student based – majority of it is student based. I’d say that Monday to Thursday, you’re looking at 90-95 percent student based, Friday and Saturday you’re looking at, I’d say 30-40 percent student based, another 30-40 percent out-of-towners and the rest are all locals, so it’s very much a student orientated venue” (Operator of mass-market, themed and branded superclub, Bigg Market).

Other venues – the majority bars – cater for the lower end of the market. They are largely inexpensive, selling cheap, discounted drinks, and play mostly cheesy pop music from the 1970s to the present. Whilst a mixture of people consume in the Bigg Market area – including locals, tourists and students – the Bigg Market has otherwise gained quite a negative reputation, especially locally. It is often described by some locals as “full of charvers”, and disregarded as a reputable drinking area, thought of as unruly, troublesome, and sometimes violent²². As one bar operator commented:

²¹ There are to a lesser degree other nightlife locales: The Jesmond and Haymarket areas were also mentioned by operators on occasions; and there are numerous other bars, pubs and clubs located around the city centre. However, as a general consensus, operators, bouncers and consumers seemed to agree that the four areas discussed in this section comprise the dominant nightlife hotspots in Newcastle’s city centre. For a map detailing the locations of these areas, see Appendix.

²² Although as I illustrate throughout this chapter, the branded superclub at the top end of the Bigg Market is not thought of as a charver venue, and actively excludes those under this particular banner.

“The Bigg Market is very sort of blue-collar; you won’t find the footballers and that sort of crowd in that area. The bars are a bit rougher really, very blue-collar the clientele that drink there. The standards of the bars and stuff aren’t that high, standards of drinks aren’t that high and more often than not it’s a lot cheaper. A lot of stag and hen parties go there because a lot of the nicer bars including ourselves don’t really let people in when they’re dressed up, so stags and hens – when they go out with condoms attached to their heads and carrying big cocks around – obviously they go to places like that” (Operator of mid-high market style bar, Diamond Strip).

Others heavily criticise its role in Newcastle’s night-time leisure landscape due to its associations with disorder. As one marketing manager elaborated on the subject of charvers:

“Should you walk the city centre for an hour and a half on a Friday night and you will notice, very clearly where they [charvers] go – one very clear area. A member of Northumbria Police commented to me the other week that he disliked dealing with the area in the middle of the Bigg Market, towards the bottom. He commented that he disliked that bit, as a personal opinion. I wouldn’t say that any one operator is particularly at fault, but a lot don’t like policing that area” (Marketing manager of mass-market bar, Newgate Street).

This reinforced a viewpoint I discovered previously when speaking to a Northumbria Police constable patrolling the Bigg Market area. When asked where the more problematic areas are situated, the police officer replied, “Well, you’re looking at it [Bigg Market], I mean, look – it’s a shithole. We always get trouble round here”. Many consumers I encountered elsewhere in the city also stated their caution and distrust of the Bigg Market at night, largely due to its reputation, but also because of the very real visual and aural aesthetics which characterise the area: the cheesy 80s and 90s pop / dance music spills out onto the streets, along with boisterous revellers who are met with a significant police presence. The atmosphere can also, at times, be quite intimidating. Speaking to consumers who usually frequented bars on the Diamond Strip, it became evident that certain social groups pertained to different locales, where Bigg Market consumers would less than likely drink, for instance, on the Diamond Strip, and vice versa. I discuss the reasons for this later in the chapter.

The Quayside

Another eminent nightlife location is the Quayside. As I outlined in chapter 4, the Quayside area recently underwent a comprehensive redevelopment programme, and has since become a major landmark in Newcastle’s contemporary regional promotion imagery. Alongside the Sage Entertainment Complex, the Millennium Bridge, the Baltic Centre for Contemporary

Art, gentrified office and apartment buildings, and other upmarket leisure infrastructure such as the Malmaison Hotel and Brasserie, redevelopment in this area has also involved the assembly of numerous bars and clubs, some of which have been refurbished and upgraded, which led to another burgeoning nightlife locale. Initially quite upmarket and exclusive, the Quayside has since become much more accessible and now caters predominantly for the mass-market. However, it is also thought that the Quayside's nightlife has suffered economically in recent years, experiencing a decline in local usage and becoming heavily reliant on visitors to the city. Due to mass mediated imagery, it was argued that tourists exclusively associate nightlife in Newcastle with the Quayside area. As described by one operator:

“You’ve got the Quayside, which, to be honest, the locals of Newcastle, don’t really go there anymore; that place purely survives, I would say, on out-of-towners. The quayside, 5 years ago, when I worked at [Quayside bar] – [Quayside bar] got over 6000 people through the door in 5 hours – but it’s nothing like that now down there. The only place that gets the nice people is [Quayside nightclub], and they only really trade on a Saturday – same as most of the bars down there; nobody really ventures down there from Newcastle, so it is just the out of towners that drink there, stags, hens, people coming up for weekends, because that’s the only place they know, that they’ve heard about” (Operator of mid-high market style bar, Diamond Strip).

This stagnation, however, could also be explained by way of venue decline in the area, since many large-scale venues, such as Baja Beach Club and the Tuxedo Princess (known locally as ‘the Boat’²³) in Gateshead have recently ceased trading. Anticipating transformations and closing venues, consumers have moved elsewhere²⁴. One particular nightclub, however, remains popular, attracting students in the week and the more affluent of consumers and local celebrities at weekends. As its manager described:

“Well, [the venue gets] students midweek, you know, some nights we change our policy; you’ll see some venues that have the same music policy and same door policy every night of the week. Where we’re situated, we have to try and change that and be a bit more diverse. We try and get the students in the week, play student party themes and lower drink prices, and weekends, we try to get the people that are aspiring to be you know, top of the social ladder – it’s a nice clientele on a Friday night and Saturday – people that will spend a bit more money” (Manager of upmarket nightclub, Quayside).

²³ The Tuxedo Princess was an old ferry liner transformed into a nightclub docked on the Gateshead Quayside directly under the Tyne Bridge. For many years it was widely recognised as a “charver haunt”.

²⁴ This stagnation could also be explained through the rise in popularity of the Diamond Strip. I discuss this in greater depth in chapter 7.

In short, though, most Quayside venues cater much more for the mass market, their appeal predicated on a broad spectrum of popular music, lack of specialisms and rather inexpensive products and services, similar to those in the Bigg Market area (although with less stigma attached in its representation by local consumers and operators).

The Gate Complex

The Gate is another key nightlife locale. The construction of the Gate complex – also comprised of restaurants, a casino and a multiplex cinema – finished earlier this decade, and is a recent addition to Newcastle’s contemporary leisure landscape. Although not exclusively bars, clubs and pubs, the Gate complex and the adjoining Newgate Street is an extremely popular locale due to the abundance of vertical drinking establishments. Some of these are of a substantial size, and attract a huge amount of custom on weekends. One such venue plays a significant role in this locale due to its large size, popularity, and perhaps its brand name (this particular brand is propagated in most large UK cities, and its venue in London is hugely popular with current celebrities, the more affluent of urbanites, and their followers²⁵). In the past, it tended to market for the slightly older social groups with higher incomes, and used to be highly exclusive. However, over the years its market has broadened, as the manager depicted:

“Yeah we do have different times, like we have a student night, which for [Gate venue brand], when they opened up, all they wanted was 25-40 year olds, and all they wanted was that sort of end of the market, the middle-age bracket with expendable income, no under-25s in, and I’ve heard of people getting knocked back [refused entry] because they’re 46 or whatever, too old and not getting in. So they were quite elitist, this is like 6 years ago, and then as the years went by, as with big venues, they realised that you can’t fill them with that bit of the market. And I think it had a negative effect on customer perception, so they opened up their doors a bit more, and then they were never into student nights, but I think they saw a lot of the other bigger companies – one that I used to work for – saw all the money churning through the doors from the student nights and then decided to jump on the student bandwagon, and they were quite successful, and still are. So you’ve got that crowd in during the week, but then there’s the daytime and the lunch trade, and then the core Saturday night crowd. I would say we are a multi-entertainment venue, 6 different rooms, different things going on, and we cater now – which is why we’re popular for stag and hens – for every age group. You can have a stag and hen party come in that might have an 18 year old in it, it might have a mother or grandma of the bride, and hopefully there’s something in the building for them, because we’ve

²⁵ Although as I stated in the methodology chapter, I refrain from naming particular brands and venues due to confidentiality obligations.

got 70s and 80s music, up to date house music in the club, and we've got a cheesy room, so there's a bit for everyone. I think we do cater for a big crowd, a big market" (Operator of mass-market branded super-venue, The Gate).

Alongside, another bar also caters for a broad market. Entertainment-led, it offers similar products but with a very different image, relying much more on party and hedonistic signifiers:

"It's a 1100 capacity, twin level bar, open 7 nights a week, oriented towards students during the week and locals at a weekend. In contrast to some bars in the city centre, this is completely entertainment orientated. We don't do happy hours or discounted drinks, we just don't. We have three dancer stages, a resident rodeo bull, 50 grand's worth of lighting rig, 100 grand's worth of sound system, 34 big screens, 12 dancers work here; this is a show, a theatre, this isn't a boozer" (Marketing manager of mass-market bar, Newgate Street).

A similar market is sought by another nearby venue, which pertains again, to the party crowds, playing mainstream popular music:

"We're sort of a hybrid of activities. During the day we open as a bar and restaurant, and then in the evening we attract the early drinker, and then after 10pm, we turn into a late night bar with a late license. We are a very large bar so therefore we are general public and mass market. We have 3 different rooms here and play 3 different styles of music, trying to appeal a bit to everybody, but we try to stick to the golden rule, which is at weekends we are very middle of the road – cheesy music – because we tend to find, even if people don't admit it, that they like the old cheesy songs while they're getting in the mood and having a drink, and we find that some come to us and then go to a different style of nightclub later on (Operator of mass-market branded superclub, The Gate).

The Diamond Strip

Another major scene in Newcastle is the Diamond Strip, which is located primarily on Collingwood Street, adjacent to the Central Station area. The term was coined in recent years due to the gentrified, glamorous, fashionable, and more exclusive of bars located in the area. One of the first successful style-bars in Newcastle – Apartment Luxebar and Dining Room – was situated here, and since then a number of other style bars have taken place alongside. Apartment was ostensibly one of the first of its kind in Newcastle – a London-esque cocktail and premium-spirits bar that catered exclusively for the highest end of the market, frequented

by many of the Newcastle United Football Club players, local and national celebrities, and musicians when they were in town.

In 2008, however, the bar was re-branded as a Miami-style cocktail bar, reduced drinks and entry prices, and began seeking a slightly wider consumer base due to changes in nightlife preferences. Diamond Strip venue operators describe their bars in similar ways to each other, highlighting the similar products and services on offer, but also the kind of consumers that the venues seek as customers. The Diamond Strip, I argue, is an archetypal gentrified nightlife enclave. Whilst some have rather inexpensive entry charges (or none at all), drinks prices on the Diamond Strip are significantly higher than anywhere else in Newcastle (even the re-branded Miami-style cocktail bar). The styling and décor of the venues themselves are considerable, and as I show subsequently in this chapter, regulatory practices here are much stricter, ensuring exclusivity to more affluent consumers and thus maintaining the most lucrative market. The following accounts are descriptions of Diamond Strip venues by their respective operators:

“We are sort of seen as an upmarket trendy bar, a place where typical students would come on weeknights and then when it gets to Friday and Saturday you’ll see a lot of the older crowds, like 35’s and older. They come in because we don’t do your cheap nasty bottles of VK and stuff like that; we do flare barmen and cocktails and stuff like that, drinks that take time, and we serve lots of bottles of wine and like I say, you see cocktails made in front of you and stuff that not a lot of other places in town can offer, which attracts a lot of other people” (Manager of mid-market style bar, Diamond Strip).

“We’ve dubbed it a super-micro-mini-club, because the capacity is not in the thousands which you get in the [national chain venues] or [Gate venue brand], so we’re a super-micro-mini-club, a “looks club”, if we can be so bold. Our clientele, if you go on ‘youtube’ and look it up, you’ll see people like Cheryl Tweedy and the Girls Aloud girls kind of endorsing this place when they were here on New Years Eve; Beverley Knight as well; Ricky Hatton comes here frequently; we get all the footballers come here frequently, even the older footballers like Rob Lee, Barton, Shearer; we get the Eagles [Newcastle basketball team], the Vipers [Newcastle ice hockey team], all the sporting faces coming in. So I would say we get the upper echelons of Newcastle, the crème de la crème of Newcastle I suppose” (Operator of mid-high market style bar, Diamond Strip).

“Well, it’s marketed as a Miami Bar in the centre of Newcastle. So we’ve got a terrace outside which you can go in and smoke, fairly tropical outlook; the drinks that we do are very different to anything you’ll get elsewhere in Newcastle. We serve drinks in hollowed out

melons, pineapples, coconuts, stuff like that which is a first for Newcastle. They are all very fruity based keeping the top end products in them so we don't use low quality rum or anything like that, we stick to Mount Gay rum to use in cocktails, but still with very reasonable prices. We had quite a big price reduction since it was Apartment, just to bring us in line with what consumers are willing to spend these days" (Operator of themed mid-high market bar, Diamond Strip).

I argue that these four main nightlife hotspots point to a segregated night-time economy, which, to some degree, revolves around class (in both the taxonomic sense and – I show in the coming pages – the cultural sense). These locales are comprised of similar venues with specific scenes, where similar products, services and environments are on offer but only for particular social groups. They are also hierarchical in their market scope; where the gentrified Diamond Strip venues seek those with the higher incomes, the Gate and the Quayside seek those in the middle, although with a degree of fluidity. The Bigg Market venues tend to seek the lower markets by way of cheap drinks promotions, and they struggles to attract the higher-spending consumers because of the area's related imagery. Whilst it is no great surprise that there are distinctions between different markets and consumers based on income and nightlife preferences, the importance here is how the cultural politics of youth and class continue to influence the spatial forms of the night-time economy, which involve images, reputations, notions of access, exclusion and segregation. What is evident is that consumers, markets, images and representations are all thought of and expressed in very specific ways, with representations of certain groups, including those of contemporary troublesome youth, playing key roles in how admittance policies, dress codes, rejections and exclusions are articulated and practiced. It is these issues to which I now turn.

6.3 Consumer Identities and the Embodied Performance of Class: The Cultural Politics of Exclusion

One of the fundamental elements in the processes of exclusion at work in contemporary night-time economies is the visual display of class through consumer identities vis-à-vis the chav. As I illustrated previously, academic commentators have already documented the many different examples of exclusion that aim to curtail the presence of the chav in the consumer oriented post-industrial city, where certain commodities have become labels signifying delinquency through the reworking of the underclass discourse which pervaded 1990s social rhetoric by the right-wing (Hayward and Yar, 2006; Johnson, 2008; Tyler, 2006). However, the embodiment of working-classness through comportment, speech, demeanour and behaviour has also transformed to symbolize economic redundancy, social exclusion and

disgusting non-respectability (McDowell, 2002, 2003, 2006, 2007; Skeggs, 1999, 2005). This relationship between consumption, embodiment and class has also become an intrinsic part of the regulation of the night-time economy, where, as I show in this section, symbols of deviance, in their tangible and non-tangible forms, are yet again sought out in the identification of the wrong consumer and used to justify rejection from the more fashionable and gentrified of nightlife spaces in Newcastle.

Visualising Class through Consumer Identity: Exclusion through Appearance

During the research, bouncers and venue operators described different groups of consumers in different ways. From this I could make out a three tier hierarchy determined by a combination of class, age, gender and culture-based categories. At the top are those with the higher incomes, celebrities, and sports-people, variously depicted by the participants as “champagne charlies”, the “VIP crowd”, the “crème-de-la-crème of Newcastle”, the “upper echelons of Newcastle”, the “nicer clientele”, “people who want to be seen”, “the beautiful people” and the “wannabe wags who think they’re going to bag themselves a footballer”. In the middle are the mass market consumers, students, and those with cash to spend. And at the bottom are the “blue-collar crowd” (as described in one interview) or, using the most popular term, ‘charvers’. Corresponding to the segregation of Newcastle’s night-time economy, the gentrified Diamond Strip venues, and to some degree venues situated in the Gate and on the Quayside, had this particular group in mind when it came to issues of access and exclusion. In most interviews, some of the responses to questions about the ‘wrong consumer’ became all too familiar. As the following quote illustrates, defamatory representations of contemporary troublesome youth are used by operators to help articulate those to be denied access:

“We [bar chain] don’t say you can’t come in because you’ve got trainers on or jeans on; I don’t approve of door policies, or elitism in any way. Anyone who walks to the door is taken on face value – do you look like a reasonable customer? We won’t let you in if you’re drunk because were breaking the law by serving you drink, we don’t want a problem customer, so outside that, you get ‘do you want a group of stags to come in’? Some people would say that we don’t let stag parties in but we don’t really follow those rules either. You can get a group of chaps come along and they’ve all got welsh rugby tops on and you just know that in the daytime they’re all wearing shirts and ties and they’re absolutely fine, and you can try and enforce a policy on the door saying no sportswear and you know you can’t let people in that really should have been let in. It’s just about thinking whether that person’s a good customer. Outside all of that lot there is unfortunately a subculture in this country now, almost a sort of sub-class person which is the chav, or charver as we call them in Newcastle, and its very

unlikely on face value that they would get into the bar; you can recognise them because they've got the worn out grey tracksuits on and the sort of drawn cheeks and rat features. You know the ones I mean, they're everywhere, not just in Newcastle but all over the country, and they are a problem. I don't know where they're going to go and what's going to happen to them, how they're going to grow up to be anything other than what they are, and I do think, if you don't mind me straying off and talking about youth cultures, that's part of the huge problem we've got in the country [...] A chav by very definition is somebody who's going to be work-shy, on a methadone programme, have loads of kids on benefit, wear the biggest hoop earrings they can find, and they look at each other and they admire each other and that's it, they're in that mould and stay there for the rest of their lives. I think that's a huge problem. So, if you want me to categorise a group of people who you think are problematic, they are" (Owner / Executive of leisure and design group).

And of course, the identification of this particular group relies on some of the contemptuous symbols which signify this new underclass. As I illustrated in chapter 3, extant processes of exclusion depend on the new markers of deviance which make the new underclass immediately visible. Recognising that these symbols of deviance remain high on the regulatory agenda in Newcastle, on one particular night when speaking to door staff at a Bigg Market club, I began enquiring by taking a similar route to that taken in the interviews with the operators:

Aidan: What kind of place is this?

Doorman: It's just your party club you know? Go in and get pissed, be a bit lairy if you want, but not too lairy mind.

Aidan: So what kind of people are you looking for, clientele wise?

Doorman: Students', mainly students', anyone really, as long as they look OK and they act OK.

I proceeded with the following, anticipating the all too familiar answer that charvers are denied entry, and identified through certain symbols:

Aidan: So who won't you let in?

Doorman: People that look under age, or if they haven't got any I.D., people who look like they've had too much [alcohol] already; no charvers.

Aidan: No charvers?

Doorman: Yeah, basically no charvers; Henry Lloyd, Rockport, Lacoste, all that kind of stuff doesn't get in because it looks ... it's got a bad image. It's just their general appearance really. We try to keep the place looking nice and not too threatening really.

There were other markers identified by the door staff as well – *Timberland*, *Burberry* and *Ben Sherman* were other fashion labels under scrutiny by the doormen. Sometimes people would be let in if wearing some of these brands, but if their clothing contributed to a general appearance of a charver, then more than often they would be refused entry. This was made evident by another doorman working at a bar on the Diamond Strip:

“Well, you’ve just got to take people as they come really. There’s a few things that we look out for, you know, if they’ve had too much to drink, underage or if they look like they might be trouble [...] I guess we look at appearance and how that might look in the bar you know, some types of clothes and certain brands we pay attention to, charver kind of wear, that sort of thing: as long as they don’t look too much like a charver... [they will be granted access]” (Diamond strip venue doorman, emphasis added).

The “cruel irony” (Hayward and Yar, 2006: 22) here is that these particular brands are not cheap, yet serve to elucidate social and cultural deviance. As Hayward and Yar (2006) argue, whilst contemporary non-working-class youth are striving to construct identity through conspicuous forms of hyper-consumption commensurate with late-capitalist sociality, and whilst valorising the very commodities they are ‘instructed’ to buy in these neoliberal times, the excessive and profligate ways in which these are projected have become “tools of classification and identification by which agencies of social control construct profiles of potential criminal protagonists” (p. 23). They not only play a part in Newcastle’s night-time economy, but also in Leicester for example, where local bars, along with the police, are composing lists of particular brands of clothing that are widely associated with problematic youth (Hayward and Yar, 2006).

In some respects, the prohibition of these items suggests a dress code at play – itself a wholly unremarkable method of consumer regulation practised for decades in the night-time economy. However, whilst dress codes are traditionally thought of as tightly-bound rules declaring banned or restricted items (such as the previously ubiquitous ‘no trainers’ policy), the research revealed that the construction and execution of dress codes is a very fluid process. In one of the earliest interviews, I asked the operator of the Bigg Market superclub if the venue employs a dress code:

Operator: Yeah, but it’s a fluid one. I famously got quoted in FHM [men’s magazine] saying ‘a student can come down in a scruffy pair of jeans and a t-shirt and trainers and get in, a charver can come down in a five hundred pound suit and get knocked back’. That’s the kind of thing we’re looking at, where it’s not just about brands or anything like that, but there are certain brands that do get labelled with the wrong kind of crowd, which you’ve got to be

aware of; other than that it is pretty flexible [...] I mean image is a certain part of it, and there's certain sectors of the community that would never ever get into Blu Bambu, there's no denying that, but it's kind of middle of the road, very much open to everybody really. If you make the effort to get in then you'll get in. I mean, if you come down with a Berghaus [jacket] on, trainers and tracksuit bottoms you're not going to get in full stop, no matter how nice a person you are [...] It shouldn't do but a lot of venues, a lot of premises go on brands as well, there are certain brands that will not get in anywhere, and it's not the brand's fault, it's just the people who have associated themselves with that brand. You think a kid walking round with tracksuit bottoms on, black shoes, with a Berghaus on, you're going to presume something aren't you?

Dress codes are thus not as rigid as they first might appear, although it is evident by way of the above interview extract that symbols of deviance relating to current representations of the chav are still called upon to verbalize the criteria for rejection and exclusion. Sometimes, where operators struggle to define a dress code, or even they simply do not employ one, deviant youth semantics are used outright to exemplify exclusions. In an interview with the manager of a branded mid-market style bar in the Gate, I began asking about door policies and dress codes and how these help filter access according to appearance. Rather than listing brands or commodities in describing restricted appearances, he simply used representations of the charver to outline those not wanted as consumers:

Manager: We're very strict on the door so we don't let in certain clientele, we don't let in certain, well, charvers basically, we don't let them in, but irrespective of that, if we do have anybody in here who's causing trouble we try and eject them as quickly as possible really.

Aidan: So do you have a particular dress code?

Manager: I wouldn't say it's a dress code, it's just more general appearance, and how intoxicated they are.

Aidan: Is certain clothing banned?

Manager: Stripy tops [laughs]. Charvers...charvers and kickeys, that's what's banned (emphasis added).

The fluid nature of identity seems to be one of the main reasons why operators do not stipulate a specific dress code, and operators who do set a loose dress code for their venue are less likely to ban specific items or brands outright. Contra Hayward and Yar (2006), certain places in Newcastle's night-time economy are not merely "policing by labels". This is because some people may wear 'chav brands' without appearing to actually *be a chav*. The hesitation to employ a strict dress code as a method for regulating access is thus due to its

incapability to filter consumers effectively. As one major club operator illustrated in an interview:

Operator: There is obviously some element as with any major city. You've always got your charvers as they're called, in any city, but in terms of this particular business, we don't deal with that side of the market. Most people know what makes a chav quite distinguishable, the way they dress, the way they speak, the way they put themselves across; people like that certainly wouldn't get into this venue. There are places that cater for that market.

Aidan: So you would say that some people are perceived to be a nuisance or troublesome?

Operator: Yeah absolutely, like I said in every city you're always going to have the people who are known trouble makers, and people who just may look drunk or whatever, to be honest.

Aidan: So the people that might be trouble or a nuisance, how do you identify them? Do you use these specific terms like chavs or charvers?

Operator: It's not really as simple as that. A lot of it comes down to gut instinct. At the end of the day, just because someone's wearing a certain item of clothing doesn't necessarily make them a chav, or a person that might go fighting or whatever. We have certain policies in place that minimise that – obviously chavs do wear certain brands of clothing – and if you eliminate them from the dress code, it narrows it down, so the chances of them getting in are slim. And that's kind of the way we operate.

Visualising Class through Embodiment: Exclusion through Performance

The aim of regulating access, as I show in the next chapter, is to permit those who appear cash-rich and who meet admittance criteria, but, as many operators suggested, appearances through consumer identities alone cannot signify the presence of the wrong consumer who purportedly discourage the cash-rich. The ways in which potential customers socially perform are also assessed, and for this, a more interactive approach to regulation is needed. As one nightclub manager stated, "Our door supervisors are constantly talking to people and they've got to make that judgement whether we let them into the club" (Manager of upmarket nightclub, Quayside). Following on from the previous interview excerpt, the nightclub operator elaborated on the methods through which potential consumers are assessed prior to entry:

Operator: The policy we operate is more about the person and the attitude rather than just what they're wearing. So if someone's coming in with a particular brand that we don't let into the club, it could just be a person from out of town and very nice or they're a student, or just didn't know that this was classed as chav-wear if you like, so you take it on each basis, and the way that I employ the door staff is to interact with all the customers, so they speak to all

the customers that come in so they can get a feel for what that person's like, the way they come across, they're attitude etcetera; when they're speaking to the door staff, you can tell a lot by a person by the way they interact with you.

[...]

Aidan: What kind of criteria do you use in assessing the person then?

Operator: You can only really take people as you find them, because when someone arrives at the front door, you don't necessarily know their background, you don't know what they do professionally or if they work at all or if they're students; people dress and act in certain ways from different genres in life, and you can have an idea of what the person's like, without having talked to them it's a stab in the dark. So that's why we engage with all the customers in conversation.

This particular interview was vital in shedding light on the ways in which the regulation of access operates. As the manager stated, there is more to being a chav than simply the wearing of symbols of deviance, although these do remain on the exclusion agenda. The point here is that attitude, behaviour, bodily comportment and social performance are also assessed prior to admittance in a convergence of methods of identification. Access to various spaces within Newcastle's night-time economy, then, is not simply regulated through a set of deviant commodities associated with the chav as may first appear, but is also predicated on the visualisation of class through embodied performances. On various observation nights, I paid attention to the ways in which people approached venue's front doors. I noted their behaviour and their appearance, including the style of clothes they were wearing. Some approached in large groups, and some were rather boisterous, talking and laughing loudly with friends. Some were turned away and some were granted entry. As I continued to ask door staff why some were turned away, it became obvious that appearance through dress was actually less of a concern than the performance of a problematic – and predominantly masculine – class status. Those who appeared to have a rather machismo attitude, evident through their demeanour and comportment, were most of the time rejected. It seemed as if specific displays of masculinity associated with the young working-class are not welcome. “Aggressive attitudes”, “yobby kind-of attitudes” and “people who think they're hard” were all expressions used by bouncers to illustrate the performative ways in which people are perceived as troublesome and unfitting with certain venue's images. In this way, performance itself also becomes a signifier of deviance. As a Bigg Market club operator stated:

“We're looking at the person *and* what clothes they're wearing, and if they're behaving themselves and approaching the staff in the correct manner they'll get let in, but if not, it doesn't matter if you're wearing a five hundred pound suit you can still get knocked back.

[...]

I mean we can we look at people and how they walk and stuff like that, it's bizarre but, a kid who's a bit of a jack the lad and thinks he's the man, will strut himself differently from what me and you would.

[...]

This is how much we analyse customers coming in, if you're in the queue with your friends and you're dicking about in the queue, you're going to get knocked back, you know? And it's this kind of like, that's how sensitive we get because we don't want people dicking about inside the club and, knocking people's drinks over the nice £50 dress that she's just bought, you know?" (Operator of mass-market, themed and branded superclub, Bigg Market).

Anoop Nayak (2006) found something similar in his study of charver youth in Newcastle. Although not exclusively located in a night-time leisure context, Nayak discovered that charver lads were "engaged in the body-reflexive technique of 'hard' masculinity" where their walk and talk, and strong associations with crime and disorder came to "symbolize the stunted evolution of the 'knuckle-grazing' *Charver* youth" (p. 823). Other venues employed similar frameworks to identify these bodily performances, and bars on the Diamond Strip seemed even stricter in their regulation practices. For a gentrified high-style bar adjacent to Collingwood Street, attitude, comportment, as well as consumer appearance are assessed prior to entry, as this interview excerpt illustrates:

Aidan: So it's *charvers* that don't get in?

Operator of style bar, Diamond Strip: When I say charvers I mean, the likes of anybody wearing like, Henry Lloyd, Rockport's, no hair on the sides, the hair on the top gelled down, maybe a horrible tattoo on their hand, you know? It's really hard to define. Some charvers will try and dress nice, but they'll still be charvers at the end of the day; it's just the *way they look, the attitude they have when they walk towards the door*, the way when you ask them, "you alright guys, you had a good night, where have you been", and their response is ... you know, you kind of decide from things like that as well (emphasis added).

But the assessment of performance is extremely difficult to define with there being no real clear-cut conditions for admittance or rejection. As one manager suggested, 'feel' and 'experience' play intrinsic roles in the evaluation of potential consumers:

"The bottom line, legally, we challenge everybody for ID if they appear to be under 21, but over that, I think it's a question of, do they look right, do they feel right, are they right for the particular session we're trying to do? There's a saying that we have here – you can't mix foxes and chickens – so you've got to look for the chickens, but if only it was as simple as that. Seeing a fella with a bushy tail can sometimes be tricky, you're not always going to get it right, but again, with everything, it's all about experience and they [the door staff] can tell

who's who and what's what you know?" (Marketing manager of mass-market bar, Newgate Street).

And this was reiterated by another club operator:

"When people come to us, we react to them in different ways. Yes, we look at what they're wearing, we look at their behaviour or their attitude when they come to the door, and yes, if they are known – because we have a good pubwatch scheme in Newcastle – if they are known, they'll be knocked back immediately. If we feel that they're trouble then we have very experienced door staff on and quite a settled team here and they won't get in" (Operator of mass-market branded superclub, The Gate).

Visualising the 'wrong consumer' through admittance policies, then, is difficult to define, not only by myself here, but also by venue operators themselves. Admittance policies that are easy to define are legal obligations: admittances to under-18s and people perceived to be drunk or intoxicated are strictly prohibited, an infraction of which sometimes resulting in the loss of an alcohol premise license. But otherwise, regulatory mechanisms that help filter and exclude are unstable and sometimes contradictory systems. Dress codes are no longer specific rules and regulations for entry but rather guidelines that are used to help identify unwanted customers who are most of the time articulated through semantics of job and chav culture. Representations are thus used to illustrate undesirable customers, and despite a hesitance to stipulate which markers are banned outright, the symbols of deviance associated with the chav, such as specific clothing brands, remain on the operator's exclusionary agenda. But as some maintain, the practice of banning specific brands, or perhaps more accurately, those *wearing* specific brands, is not absolute. It seems that if these brands contribute to an overall look of 'chavness', say, only then will individuals or groups be denied access.

The embodiment of class is also intrinsic to the regulation of admittance. Those who display a masculinity deemed problematic through demeanour, comportment, speech, attitude and social disposition are immediately repudiated as part of an expanding representational collective of troublesome youth – be it the job or the chav. And what seems to be the case, is that issues of embodiment seem to be entirely exclusive to young men. All of the interview and observation fieldwork excerpts I have presented so far emphasise masculinity in the identification and exclusion process. In both the interviews and the observation work, there was no explicit reference to young women in the regulation of access unless I brought it up. This points, perhaps, to a representational process which only addresses masculinity *and* class

in the repudiation of the chav phenomenon, rather than just class, as has been widely argued by a range of media, social and academic commentators.

Problematic Masculinities

In later interviews, I persisted with questions relating to problematic masculinities because even though the chav phenomenon – as an emblem of recent class-based cultural politics – is not purportedly exclusive to masculine youth identities, most of the research participants seemed to be talking about young working-class men in discussions surrounding the chav and charver. In some of the interviews, a number of different responses transpired when I questioned the gender politics at play in the night-time economy. For example, when speaking to the manager of a number of stigmatised Bigg Market premises, the behavioural characteristics of young men and women when located in the night-time economy were perceived to be the same and so not influence the difference in regulation:

Aidan: Would you say there's a difference between regulating men and women? Would you refuse entry to more blokes than women?

Manager: Not really ... women can be just as bad as the men. Once they've had a drink they can be just as bad. Men might be a bit more violent when they're drunk and kick off, but the women I've seen, no matter where you go, women are just as bad.

But of course, managers have diverse views, and where some think that women's behaviour is as unruly as men's when out on the town, others think differently:

Aidan: Is there a difference between the admittance of young men and young women? Is the regulation of young men stricter?

Marketing manager of entertainment-led bar, Newgate Street: I'm going to say no because the basic criteria for entry would remain the same. If you're drunk, intoxicated, if you appear to have done anything dodgy, if you're unsuitably dressed, and you appear to be an undesirable element then no. I think it pretty much applies across the board. Generally, the fairer sex tend to have a little more self-respect, they tend to be better, and don't get smashed as often, and maybe that's a sexist view but you see less of them fighting and causing trouble than you do chavs, but generally I think it's about the same.

After struggling with the issue slightly, I took a slightly different line of questioning in further interviews. In a subsequent meeting, the manager of an upmarket cocktail bar gave a more elaborate response which brought back in to play the ubiquitous signifiers of the new

underclass. According to him, young men are easier to distinguish as charvers compared to young women when located in the night-time economy:

Aidan: Is the charver thing a male issue?

Manager: No not strictly, with regard to the door they're probably more noticeable; you know men are probably more distinguishable than their legged counterparts if you like, because the uniform is much more identifiable, where for the girls it's a lot less strict ... It's easier to tell with men, with the male charvers it's easier to tell, because the image is there. With the girls they could be a posh rah student wearing a short skirt or they can be a penniless girl from the west end wearing a very short skirt – it's so much more difficult to tell. It's a harder job for the door staff. Attitude, the way they walk, the way they talk, that's a different thing that just comes from experience. There's no uniform as such.

Aidan: Would you say that you turn more men away in a night than you would women?

Manager: Probably yeah, unintentionally yeah, for whatever reason, for already having had too much alcohol or not looking the part or being in a big group, yeah.

A similar response was given by a Diamond Strip bar operator. Again, the dialogue seemed to impart the idea that the consumer symbols which demarcate the *chav* pertain more to male youth, making them increasingly stand out in a terrain which values 'higher' and more 'distinguished' forms of consumption:

Aidan: Is the charver issue more a male issue?

Diamond Strip bar operator: No there's girl charvers that we knock back, but girl charvers always kick up more of a stink than guys will; guys will generally accept it and walk away, you always get the ones that look at themselves and go, "my shoes cost 190 quid" – Rockport's do, they're very expensive, but they're still hideous.

Aidan: So it's a case of bad labels?

Operator: Well that's it, the make's are really expensive, some of my shoes don't cost anywhere near that, and Henry Lloyds and that, they're not cheap items of clothing by any means, but, nobody will let them in because they're associated with a certain type of person.

It thus seems that the signifiers of deviance vis-à-vis the *chav* – the clothing and embodied performances etc. – are much more closely tied to young men than young women in the regulation of the night-time economy. According to the operators, it is easier to identify a charver if they are male due to both consumer identities and the performance of a problematic, lower-class masculinity through attitude, demeanour and comportment. Expressions of a 'uniform' also reinforces the demarcation of a problematic social group in which young men increasingly catch the eye, whilst young charver women, it seems, despite being continually represented by their lower social class in a range of contexts, are able to

escape the strictures of an otherwise prohibitive consumer identity associated with the chav phenomenon.

‘Self-Regulation’ and Extended Networks of Exclusion

Whilst there is an unaccountable occurrence of direct rejection at the door through the identification of deviant consumer sensibilities, problematic social performances and delinquent behaviour, exclusion is also achieved through a kind of ‘self-regulation’. Despite some getting ‘knocked back’ (rejected by bouncers when trying to gain entry into a premise), certain consumers have become aware of their socio-cultural night-time position and overlook the more exclusive bars, even locales, knowing of potential rejection. Put simply, they don’t bother trying to gain entry to the more exclusive, sometimes even mid-market bars and ‘stick to their own patch’. As one operator put it:

We don’t actively advertise it, but *charvers don’t try and get in now*. The first 12 months in [venue’s] history – because of our position, where we are, we’re not exactly in the most deluxe part of the city, the bottom part of the Bigg Market now is well known to be run-down, and that’s probably where most of the charvers go out drinking – but in its first two years I think, on a Saturday night we’d be knocking back up to 2000 people who just weren’t suitable for the venue. Over the years that’s tapered off and tapered off because in certain levels, certain people find out that they’re not suitable, but we’ve still got people coming and saying they’ve been trying to get in for three or four years. We don’t actively advertise it; word of mouth is the best way of advertising anyway. You know, *the people you don’t want in know they can’t get in, so there’s no point in them trying to go for it you know?* (Operator of mass-market, themed and branded superclub, Bigg Market emphases added).

This was also made evident by a Diamond Strip bar operator:

Operator: Sometimes maybe, the majority of people know if they’ll get into us, or “Apartment” [old Diamond Strip venue] or places like that, and they’ll know if they won’t get in so they won’t bother trying.

Aidan: So some places are kind of ‘self-regulating’?

Operator: Yeah, you just know yourself. If you like drinking in certain circles and like certain products and paying a certain amount of money then you know that you’re not going to get that in other places.

For other venues, this mode of self-regulation means that venue security can be reduced, especially at the door. At one particular bar on Grey Street, I was initially surprised at there

being only one member of venue security. Being a very upmarket and expensive bar, I approached under the impression that security would be paramount in the protection from undesirable consumers. As I enquired as to why there is so little security, the reasons were stipulated thus:

“There’s only certain people that want to come here anyway you know? Mainly because it’s expensive and only people who earn a bit more money can afford it and those people tend to be a bit older, so we don’t really get many young people coming in, like students and stuff” (Grey Street upmarket bar doorman).

However, on the contrary, some perhaps disregard their night-time social status and attempt entry anywhere. Nights out for most people are significant events in their social calendar and I was made aware by one operator that a single rejection would not be enough to deter people from attempting entry elsewhere, no matter what their social status in contemporary nightscapes. In an interview with the operations manager of a Bigg Market nightclub and bar:

Manager: Yeah, well the people that get refused entry, they’ll try anywhere, whether it be the Diamond Strip, Jesmond, where ever they can get into next ... if it’s me or you and we get knocked back from one place, we’re going to try another place aren’t we? So, people go anywhere really.

Aidan: So it’s a case of going to different places until you get in?

Manager: Yeah.

However, sometimes these constant efforts are thwarted due to the potency of regulation and security in the night-time economy. Where the spatial organisation of the night-time economy was heavily regulated in the past, the regulation of security was very slack. In contrast, contemporary nightlife safety measures are heavily controlled. Where bouncers used to act independently, they are now subject to increasing conformity through security licenses. At the current juncture, everyone involved in working as venue security must have specific training and fulfil the obligations of a license granted by the SIA (Security Industry Authority). This has also led to an increase in cooperation between venue security and the police. The following interview excerpt outlines this relationship:

“It’s simply not the case that doorman and police are at each other’s throats anymore, which they might have been for a very long time. A little known fact about Newcastle city centre: the head doorman of every major club in Newcastle city centre has a police radio. They have 2 radio’s on their belt – one is internal and one is external – and if somebody’s seriously ejected from a bar or there’s an issue that they think the police should know about, they have

an external radio; for example, “we’ve knocked back 5 guys in yellow t-shirts who we don’t think are suitable for the venue, you might want to pass that round to the rest of the premises”. There is a massive flow of information between the police and the operators now which has never been before” (Marketing manager of mass-market bar, Newgate Street).

This has also enabled the practice of multiple exclusions, where bouncers at one venue will advise and update those at another if a group deemed unsuitable are rejected and moved on. Around the Gate complex area, a number of venues are in contact with each other throughout the night, as the marketing manager of an entertainment-led bar informed me:

“For example, [Gate bar] is next door to [another Gate Bar]; if they get knocked back from [Gate bar] they’re not going to get in here – they won’t automatically deny anybody entry but, if our colleagues down the street are clearly unhappy with them, it’s unlikely we would take their business. Again, if at [Gate bar] they refuse someone entry or eject somebody it’s extremely unlikely that we will let them in, and again, the head doorman at [Gate bar] used to be the head doorman here. Many of our lads are close with the guys at [Gate bar], and down the street, you can physically see down the street who’s been knocked back” (Marketing manager of mass-market bar, Newgate Street).

So, if the majority of exclusions are articulated by a repudiation of the charver element, we can think of Newcastle’s night-time economy as a landscape of multiple exclusions where those who are deemed charvers are rejected from numerous venues until they are granted entry somewhere, more often than not, in locales and venues perceived as charver bars, as these are the only spaces in which ‘lower’ citizens are permitted. As I show in the next chapter, despite a pervasive occurrence of expulsion within Newcastle’s nightlife, exclusion should not be understood as a systemic embargo preventing participation in city centre nightlife completely, but rather a filtering process which helps redistribute different groups to different segments.

6.4 Conclusion: Reconstituting Delinquent Youth

In this section, I want to present four main conclusions. First, a number of commodities and consumer identities continue to assist in the demarcation of delinquent youth. Where groups such as the mods and rockers (Cohen, 1972), the teds and the skinheads (see Hall and Jefferson, 1976; Hebdige, 1979) are traditional precedents of this process, the ‘chav’ has become the latest pervasive representation of delinquent youth in Britain to be constructed through consumerist aesthetics. As I illustrated in chapter 3, in the media the term has been used to distinguish those who would have previously been enveloped by the underclass

discourse which dominated 1990s rhetoric on the urban poor – those who are dependant on state benefits, the promiscuous teenage single mothers, the delinquent and criminal young men, the feckless, anti-social, and the socially excluded. The underclass phenomenon, however, has taken on new forms of consumption as its defining characteristics. This is no less the case within contemporary nightscapes. As the example of Newcastle shows, the multitude of brands, labels, clothing, and other commodities are used to help identify those deemed the wrong consumer in the mass market and gentrified venues.

I am sure that by now it is common knowledge that entry into night-time drinking establishments is nigh on impossible if wearing a Burberry baseball cap, such that the media (and academic commentators) have overwhelmingly documented and supported examples of such exclusions (Hayward and Yar, 2006; Coleman, 2005; McDowell, 2006). But as I illustrated above, regulatory processes revolving around consumer aesthetics in post-industrial Newcastle are not as clear cut as they first appear. Branded clothing associated with the chav is not actually prohibited outright, but is used, where necessary, in the evaluation of a ‘chavvy’ appearance. Put simply, it seems that if there are too many of these signifiers, rejection is a likely outcome. Furthermore, interview responses where the term charver was used to describe the rejection agenda outright points to the ubiquity of the term and its associated signifiers in the contemporary social consciousness.

Second, I argue that embodiment also remains a fundamental aspect in the creation of ‘the other’, and contributes to the perpetual construction of delinquent youth identities. In addition to the tangible symbols of social deviance, the identification process in Newcastle’s nightlife is also reliant on the more performative, kinaesthetic, and embodied signifiers of deviance, but this is less to do with a policy constructed by operators and more to do with the discretion of venue door staff and how they perceive the potential of consumers in terms of their economic viability and cultural applicability to the venue. Of course, in line with the transactional approach to deviance (Becker, 1963; Cohen, 1972) those who embody particular class-based signifiers are not deviant *per se*. Instead, their bodies and the symbols of class they personify are constructed as deviant by wider society and the operators and bouncers who regulate their night-time presence. To gain entry into the gentrified nightlife environments, consumers have to look a certain way (highly styled, brands not associated with the tasteless, non-respectable working class for instance), act a certain way, have a non-threatening demeanour, and embody features of the middle class. For the highly stylised environments, those perceived as charvers are therefore excluded because they are not the “beautiful people” (to use one of the participant’s phrases); they fail to dress accordingly, and more importantly, they embody a number of signifiers which do not conform to prescribed

images of the styled, cash-rich, predominantly middle-class consumers. As Anoop Nayak found in his research, “Charvers were said to affect a loping stride and exaggerated, rough ‘Geordie’ accents. The Charver walk ‘head down ... with an arched back’ was a sign of acting ‘hard’ and provided evidence of their subhuman, animalistic tendencies” (Nayak, 2003: 315). Embodied deviance is thus represented, in that the “movement of human bodies ... is never separate from consciousness and representation” (Cresswell, 2006: 73).

Third, working-class masculinity continues to be emphasised in contemporary constructions of delinquency. As this research shows, despite a slight denial that young men are perceived to be increasingly problematic compared to young women, the participants illustrated a general bias toward masculinity when describing the chav as the wrong consumer. Although the chav representation in wider society encompasses both masculine and feminine delinquency, its operation in contemporary nightscapes seems to only refer to the exclusion of young men. This raises some fundamental issues, particularly concerning notions of access to cultural capital. As Nayak has illustrated, a number of young men in Newcastle ritually participate in nightlife to express their locally-specific working-class masculinities that were hitherto forged through industrial production (Nayak, 2003a, 2003b). However, young men of the ‘non-respectable’ working class (or the ‘non-working class’), i.e. charvers, whilst long restricted from extant systems of production, are also restricted in their capacity to negotiate their masculinity and sociality through contemporary leisure structures, exacerbating their social exclusion and cultural disparagement. In this respect, whilst Nayak argues that class demarcation “is an unflinching whiplash that does not swerve between the deserving and undeserving, the clean and the filthy, the tasteful and the distasteful, the modest and excessive, the ‘ruff’ and respectable” (Nayak, 2006: 827-8), the above accounts, I argue, illustrate that it does. Throughout the research, there were subtle (and most of the time implicit) demarcations between the respectable working class, and the non-respectable non-working class, exemplified foremost by the exclusion of those encapsulated by the masculinised chav representation.

Fourth, and finally, I argue that the spatial processes discussed in this chapter are symptomatic of a Cresswellian “normative landscape” at work (Cresswell, 1996). Chatterton and Hollands, through their various pieces of research, came to a similar conclusion:

“Cresswell (1996) discusses the relationship between place and ideology, and specifically that certain places contain particular meanings and expectations of behaviour. Mainstream society has its own set of rather overt taken-for-granted norms and sense of limits, reinforced and circulated by an ever growing media and

advertising industry. In day-to-day urban life there are few presentations of alternative possibilities and little questioning of the legitimacy of the dominant social order. In this way, mainstream nightlife is a 'normative landscape' in which particular actions and behaviours have become pre-inscribed, tolerated and accepted, while others are not. This is a geography of common sense which renders unacceptable the other, the different, the dirty. One has to look a certain way ... be expected to pay certain prices ... and accept certain codes and regulations' (Chatterton and Hollands, 2003: 107-108).

In defining deviance and delinquency, be it through the vast array of consumer symbols relating to the chav, or the performance of non-respectable social class through bodily movement / demeanour / comportment, the operators and bouncers of Newcastle's night-time economy are constructing boundaries of appropriate and inappropriate socio-spatial practice. These are then reinforced through a continuous system of exclusion that helps keep different consumers (themselves categorised around ideas of class) in different places. These processes have become so pervasive that in some respects, nightlife in Newcastle regulates itself. Some consumers, through repeated rejection, have become conscious of their position in present nightlife relations, and so discontinue attempts to gain entry to the more fashionable spaces. In this way, the operation of representations of social class has far-reaching consequences, not only legitimating individual instances of exclusion, but normalizing a series of cultural practices across the night-time landscape. Through this it is clear that there are only certain spaces accessible for certain class-based youth groups, and as Bev Skeggs suggests, "representations are crucial in understanding how one learns what is accessible to one and what is not" (Skeggs, 1999: 214).

Chapter 7

Exclusion in Newcastle's Night-Time Economy 2: Protecting Image and the Maximisation of Capital

7.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I expand on the research findings, beginning in section 7.2 by explicating the rationale for the multitude of exclusions in Newcastle's night-time economy. I first detail how exclusions are, to a limited extent, predicated on concerns for crime and disorder; however, operators and bouncers are not influenced by media representations of deviant youth and their ostensible criminalities. As I illustrate subsequently, the overarching rationale for the exclusion of those perceived as delinquent youth is to ensure a homology between upgraded venue image, upmarket consumers, and commercially defined imperatives. The exclusion of chavs thus reflects spatial processes common to the post-industrial city, which revolve around the protection of specific images and reputations that are themselves preconditions for maximising capital through the most lucrative markets.

However, despite widespread occurrences of exclusion in Newcastle's night-time economy, in section 7.3 I argue that 'exclusion', as a spatial process, needs to be considered in more detail. Whilst theories of revanchism, the annihilation of space, increased surveillance, and methods of policing by labels are suggestive of scathing spatial curtailments aimed at the urban poor, these particular understandings do not accurately support the findings of this research. By presenting cases of changing consumer trends in nightlife consumption, as well as the increased gentrification of particular locales, I suggest that exclusion here be posited as a redistributive process open to contestation rather than a blanket spatial injunction that completely denies participation in city centre night-time leisure.

I conclude the chapter in section 7.4 with a brief summary of the research, and by arguing that whilst exclusion here is far more nuanced and subtle than previously anticipated, it nevertheless exemplifies landscapes of unequal access, which are reflective of the wider nature of contemporary urban space.

7.2 Maximising Capital: Rationalizing Exclusion

Whilst exclusion is predominantly rationalized through commercially defined imperatives, participants also expressed other reasons for rejecting particular individuals. As I stated in the previous chapter, there are heavy penalties for admitting those who are already intoxicated

and under-18s; excluding these groups is thus justified by operators to protect licences. But there are also selected concerns for crime and disorder. As some of the interviewees and bouncers suggested, venues will regularly ‘knock back’ those they feel will disturb the order of the venue, and if some individuals are known for their criminality they will also be refused entry (for example, one interviewee stated that those involved with organised crime, those who are known to be a nuisance, and those already barred for such actions will be denied access).

As I declared in the methodology, I initially thought that media representations of youth crime – including representations of particular youth groups such as the yob and the chav – may also help shape the legitimisation for specific modes of regulation and exclusion. However, the sensationalised concerns that abound in the media (such as those I illustrated in chapter 3) were often dispelled by operators and door staff. When questioning the causative potential of representations of delinquent youth, interviewees snubbed the idea that they were at all influenced by these images. Speaking to a doorman one night, I decided to enquire into the role of these representations of both troublesome youth and nightlife driven by the mass media:

Aidan: With regard to the media, all these articles about charvers and chavs and yobs, do you think that that’s influenced you and the management here?

Bigg Market superclub doorman: Not really. We see it differently because we’ve been doing it for the last however many years. We know what’s charver and what’s not. We know what’s a nice person in charver clothes and know what isn’t. What’s in the paper’s is hyped up a lot, to sort of scare people really, more than anything else.

Aidan: So you think that the media influence other people’s perceptions and you’ve got to regulate it from that?

Doorman: They influence people who don’t come in to city centre’s, or who don’t leave their communities, and they read it and think, ‘that goes on in the town all the time’, but it’s not like that at all. Some bars do have that element all the time, and what’s written about in the media does happen in them places. But in general, we’re not [influenced by media].

From this, and to a certain degree from the interviews, it became evident that venue management and door staff are wise to some of the negative publicity about nightlife revellers by the media, and, as I illustrated in the last chapter, argue that appearance does not necessarily denote behaviour as current representations suggest. Yet, according to many venue security staff, some consumers do relate appearance with deviance, and the welcome customers who fit with prescribed venue images apparently feel intimidated by those perceived as problematic folk devils such as the chav. As another doorman put it:

“I mean, my old man works for the BBC so I kind of know what the media are like you know? But yeah, people know what charvers are and don’t like them etcetera and we’ve got to be aware of that. So yeah, there are probably quite a few bars and clubs around that don’t let in charvers for those kinds of reasons” (Bigg Market basement bar doorman).

Protecting Image: Exclusion as a Means to Economic Growth

Instead, then, the exclusion of charvers from mid-market and gentrified nightlife spaces is predicated much more around the protection of image, which is, as I come to illustrate below, crucial in maintaining the most lucrative markets. Again, the symbols associated with the chav are fundamental to this approach. In gentrified environments where everything, including both the space and the desired consumers are heavily styled, chavs seem to become more visible, as the following interview extracts suggest:

Operator of mid-high market bar on the Diamond Strip: We have standards, so if somebody turns up and they’re dressed in tracksuit bottoms then they’re not going to get in because they’re not dressed appropriately, but that’s pretty much where we draw the line.

Aidan: So, is a dress code a major part of regulating your clientele?

Operator: It is when it comes to people dressed in sportswear, because 9 times out of 10 they’re not the clientele we’re looking for. *They stand out when they’re actually in the venue.* [...] unless it’s fashionable sportswear – we don’t have a problem with that as long as their overall appearance fits in with the style of [the venue] and they’re not causing trouble (emphases added).

Operator of mid-high market nightclub: There are like you say, a real chav comes to the door and *sticks out like a sore thumb* so it makes it very easy – they’re not for this venue – but other venues accommodate them, because that’s the business they deal in, so every venue’s different in the way they approach their door policies. I like to think of ours as being fairly rigid in terms of being anti-chav, if you like, because that’s not the business we want to be in. I don’t know anyone that wants to go to a venue that’s full of these so-called chavs. If you do have these people in *they tend to stand out in a crowd that’s very nicely dressed* and there for the good time (emphases added).

Image, therefore, is of paramount importance. As I illustrated in chapter 2, in the face of economic transformation by way of neoliberalization and globalization processes, cities have to do what they can to make themselves attractive in order to attain capital investment. This has involved a number of government-led incentives, increased corroboration between public and private sectors, and increasingly, gentrification and the aesthetic improvement of the built environment (Harvey, 1989a; Hubbard and Hall, 1998; Smith, 2002 for example). Whilst the

night-time economy as a whole has experienced a surge of encouragement from the public sector to increase the profitability of urban space, what is of particular interest here is the increasing role of gentrification and image enhancement within certain nightlife environments. Recent processes of nightlife restructuring, which include gentrification and branding, are purposeful attempts to help “shape new consumer identities” (Hollands and Chatterton, 2003: 375). But also, intertwined with this process is the fuelling of demand for gentrified, branded and themed spaces by the new cash-rich urban and suburban middle classes. The result of this interdependency is a plethora of design-led, highly-styled, predominantly vertical drinking establishments which project particular images that appeal to higher consumer groups, replacing traditional pubs and clubs and their seated layout.

The image of the venue is thus entangled with the projected clientele, where the cash-rich seek style bars and upmarket nightclubs as they dissociate themselves from traditional forms of nightlife consumption, and increasingly demand complete exclusivity (Hollands and Chatterton, 2003). As Chatterton and Hollands (2002) have observed, many young people desire these upgraded cosmopolitan spaces with “polished floors, minimalist and heavily stylised décor and a greater selection of designer drinks” to mark out new and more distinguished forms of consumer identity (p. 110). I uncovered similar consumer wants in this research; the glitzy and glamorous venues on the Diamond Strip were consistently packed out, with prospective consumers queuing in great lengths outside, some of whom, in informal conversation, stating that they wanted to be in the “cool places” with other like-minded, fashionable people, able to be offered the latest cocktails or fashionable premium drinks, away from the relative ‘dirty’, rough and rowdy environments of locales such as the Bigg Market.

This fit between venue image and consumer image was emphasised by some operators during the research, making it clear that operators – especially those responsible for upmarket venues – must maintain a certain venue image to perpetuate their desired customer base. Many operators argued that chavvers are rejected because their appearance is incompatible with both their venue and the general clientele within the venue. This echoes the idea that, to use one of Hayward and Yar’s (2006) terms, chav style is perceived as ‘aesthetically impoverished’ in a context which demands ‘higher’ forms of consumption. The image of the clientele *within* the venue is vital here, as the presence of undesirables is argued to tarnish the venue’s visual image, and thus rejection through admittance policies such as loose dress codes are methods through which to protect that image. As one Diamond Strip bar manager stated:

Manager of style bar Diamond Strip: Yeah, as I say, *dress code and that's there to protect us and our image, so when you let one guy in with tracksuit bottoms on and stuff like that, then how many people are going to see him wearing tracksuit bottoms?*

Aidan: So if you did start letting in people who weren't dressed accordingly then that damages the image and the revenue?

Manager: Yeah yeah – get rid of the nasty crowd and you end up with the clientele you're after, so the other way we'd have to go back to alcopops and stuff like that – drink as much as you can in half an hour and end up getting your license restricted and stuff like that. I'd prefer to serve people nicer drinks, and look nicer, rather than people who come out in tracksuit bottoms and socks pulled up to their knees and stuff like that – *they just don't have the right image about the place* (emphasis added).

The image of the venue, however, is not just protected from 'pollutants' such as the chav through its corporeal visual aesthetics; in other words, the exclusion of chavs is not only practiced to keep the place looking 'chav-free'. As one manager suggested, exclusion is a means to protect the image of the venue in terms of its reputation. He explained this with an account of his previous role at another nightclub:

Manager of style bar, Diamond Strip: Well, the first club that me and [other manager] worked in was [club located on New Bridge Street West] and before that it was [called] 'Ikon', and that was basically the place to go if you were a charver and, well, it got shut down because of several incidents and stuff like that, and me and [other manager] helped open it back up and stayed there for about a year. Before, it would be so bad that taxi drivers wouldn't pick up from there, there was a taxi rank right outside but there'd never be any taxis there because of the type of clientele that used to go in.

Aidan: What kind of incidences were they?

Manager: It was stuff like stabbings and things like that, that's how bad it got and then they shut it down and it was shut for like 4 months or something, and then they spent a couple of million pound on it and it was total contrast to what it was. People like me and yourself would go in now and it's rammed nearly every night of the week. But like, me and [other manager] would go and give flyers to the shops and they'd say 'where's this?' and you'd say it was the 'old Ikon' and they'd give you them back because they didn't think that anyone could do anything with it. And now you see taxis parked outside the front and people walking round saying 'I can't believe what you did with this place' because people didn't think it could get better and get rid of that image (emphases added).

This particular nightclub thus had a reputation as a charver venue, which helped deter the higher spending consumers. After several incidences of violence it was shut down, but then reopened and re-branded. The interior design was completely changed, and it was

subsequently marketed to the higher spending consumers. However, according to the manager, it was so stigmatised that this remarketing process initially proved to be difficult. Only with the repeated exclusion of its previous clientele – i.e. the charvers – could the venue actually attract the more lucrative market. The image of a venue, then, in terms of its representation within the wider networks of the night-time economy, plays a significant role in the attraction of different night-time groups. Representations of places as charver venues therefore have the capacity to repel other groups (i.e. the more affluent classes) due to associations with crime and disorder, but also due to the kinds of class distancing sensibilities discussed by scholars such as Bev Skeggs (2005) and Linda McDowell (2006, 2007).

But of course, these kinds of place representations have been operative for a long time, at least in contexts outside of the night-time economy. As McDowell argues, there is a “long-standing set of associations between inner city areas and, more recently outer local authority estates, with the disreputable working class that is a key feature of current relations between the social classes” (2007: 277). Indeed, as Stuart Cameron (2003) suggests, the stigmatisation of neighbourhoods in the West end of Newcastle – long connected with the ‘rough’ working classes – has significantly influenced collapsing private-sector house prices in these areas, outward movement, and extreme polarisation of house prices in Newcastle as a whole. And in East Manchester, Kevin Ward (2003) notes a similar scenario, illustrating how the area, characterised by low housing demand and multiple indexes of deprivation associated with the lower working class, was argued to have to be ‘civilized’ through intensive policing before it could attract capital for redevelopment (particularly before and during the bid for the Olympic Games in 2000, and the Commonwealth Games in 2002). Similarly then, those deemed charver nightlife establishments are “spaces to be feared and avoided” (McDowell, 2007: 277), and only after a thorough re-imaging – both materially and immaterially – as well as a thorough ‘clean up’ (or in Ward’s words, ‘civilizing’) through repeated exclusion can they become profitable through middle-class consumption and other lucrative markets.

So, the post-industrial city relies on certain images to attract and maintain a space for consumption and capital and to do this, a number of spatial processes must be employed. As I illustrated in chapter 2, a number of geographers and cultural analysts have commented on this. Neil Smith discusses gentrification (1992) and zero-tolerance policing in the ‘revenge’ on public space in New York City (1996a; 1996b), as does Gordon MacLeod in Glasgow (2002); Don Mitchell exemplifies the use of legislation to rid urban space of the homeless in numerous US cities (1997); Kevin Ward also considers intensive policing in the reclamation of urban locales in Manchester (2003); Nick Fyfe and Jon Bannister discuss increasingly intense surveillance through CCTV in Britain (1996; 1998); and Sharon Zukin (1995)

examines the revitalisation of urban space in New York City through expanding consumption practices in what she terms 'domestication by cappuccino'. But what all of these accounts observe in common, despite the differing national contexts in which they are located, is a spatial method of marginalisation or exclusion (either overtly / directly or covertly / indirectly) concomitant with entrepreneurialism, to recapitalise urban space in increasingly competitive local, regional, national and international economies.

The night-time economy, in Newcastle as everywhere else in the UK, is also hugely competitive. As the marketing manager of a Gate venue informed me, there are over 400 licensed premises in Newcastle's city centre and, being businesses, each have to maximise profit. Thus, venues do what they can to ensure profit perpetuation. The major players owned by national and trans-national corporations are widely advertised, as are some of the smaller venues; the abundance of discarded flyers throughout the city centre before being swept away is testament to this. Drinks prices, discounts, and various forms of entertainment also point to the night-time economy's entrepreneurial character; each are utilised to attract the maximum amount of consumers possible, whatever the market. Moreover, spatial politics and the construction of 'meaningful places' are also used to attract consumers: highly stylised venues promoted through upmarket images and upgraded 'lifestyles' aim to draw the cash-rich, themselves involved in the ongoing construction of venue image.

But, again, the cultural politics of youth are fundamental in articulating these processes. The exclusion of those identified as charvers from the highly stylised venues is predicated less around concerns for crime and disorder, nor do these media-driven representations have any causative power to influence operators and bouncers to exclude. Yet regulators have been provided with a language through which to describe these exclusions. What became increasingly evident as the research progressed is that these representations are negotiated in order to maintain specific images, which are, in turn, a prerequisite for attaining the higher-spending consumers seeking highly stylised nightlife environments. Reflective of extant urban processes aimed at attracting capital, night-time entertainment operators thus practice various regulatory mechanisms, especially exclusion, to filter access according to contemporary cultural politics, and to ultimately maximise profit. As one operator suggested, certain sectors of the market do not want to cohabit leisure space with others, particularly chavs, so groups such as students and the cash-rich strive to distance themselves from these lower markets, seeking exclusive spaces:

"There's certain things that you can identify, certain people, they're a charver, and it's a sad state of affairs because really, you know, everybody's got the right to dress however but at the

same time licensees have got the right of admission, that's ultimately the law [...] A lot of people don't understand the rights that people have got and the rights the licensees have got ... you know if you come with a pair of running shoes on, we've got the right to turn you away, it's private property, you're the guest of the licensee, it's not your right to walk in you know? It also kind of ... you need the right crowd in the venue. *If you have a student night then students are going to be more sensitive to the likes of the charvers or the chavs whatever you want to call them, because, students like exclusivity on their nights, so, if the wrong crowd gets in you alienate the students and once the students go, you've got no chance at all of pulling them back because you'll be deemed as a charver venue and that's it.* There are some venues in Newcastle that directly market the charvers, there's some directly market the high-end customers, where we sit right in the middle, to clients spread over all, and as long as you dress appropriately, you'll get in" (Operator of mass-market, themed and branded superclub, Bigg Market; emphasis added).

This was emphasised by other operators:

Aidan: So there's a direct economic reason for [interrupted]

Manager of branded mid-market style bar, The Gate: Yeah without a doubt. If I let in too many of those people [on the subject of charvers], then my other clientele who are willing to come in and spend money at full price won't come back again, and therefore, I'd lose that trade, and then I'd have to lower the prices because the only other option is to get those chavs in, which I'm not prepared to do.

Aidan: So if you started letting charvers in, that would turn people away?

Operator of mid-high market style bar, Diamond Strip: It would deter the nicer people from coming I think; it's just something you don't want to test in case it does happen, especially because this bar used to be a "Bigg Market bar", prior to it being transformed into [what the bar is now].

Aidan: Do you think that if you started admitting people that looked like charvers it would turn your existing clientele away?

Marketing manager of mass-market bar, Newgate Street: Yes.

Aidan: Is that one of the reasons the charver element is kept out?

Manager: Yes [...] there is an undesirable element which is definitely kept out, and it would deteriorate very quickly if you let that element in.

As these excerpts illustrate, the admittance of those resembling what people have come to understand as 'charvers' or 'chavs' will directly deter the student, mid, and high markets, and as the operators argue, they will not just deter them temporarily, but permanently. It seems,

therefore, that those perceived as charvers are constantly excluded from certain venues to make space ‘safe’ for consumption by more affluent groups. For the superclub in the Bigg Market area, even students, who do not tend to have that high an income, are sought above charvers (probably due to the lucrative nature of the student market). As its operator suggested, “the student pound is a big pound”, and thus deterring students by admitting charvers would infer a significant loss in profit. A similar situation exists for those operators that run higher-end venues. The more affluent middle-class consumers that frequent such venues are an absolute necessity, and again, the admittance of charvers would deter consumption by the ‘right’ crowd. For the more exclusive, then, this means having to exclude, but for those who struggle to obtain the cash-rich, or do not even attempt to market to ‘higher’ groups, nearly anybody is permitted. However, as I illustrate shortly, despite this, night-time economies are very fluid and consumer trends change frequently, and thus venues have to be entrepreneurial again when faced with such change.

7.3 Thinking through Exclusion: Redistribution and the Channelling of Troublesome Youth

Where urban commentators such as those I have discussed previously present particularly cruel and excessive forms of exclusion, the findings of this study suggest a far more subtle and nuanced process of channelling and redistribution. As I illustrated in chapter 2, Neil Smith (1996a; 1996b for example) and others point to the systemic removal of specific groups from urban space and particular locales within. However, whilst imparting some parallel spatial processes, forms of revanchism, the “annihilation of space by law” (Mitchell, 1997), the “militarization of space” (Davis, 1990; 1992) and other extreme methods of marginalisation do not adequately vindicate the spatial practices observed in this thesis. The framework which establishes these theories – that spatial processes, including exclusion, operate at the behest of market forces – is connected here, as I argued in the previous section, but its outcomes are rather different. Those youth groups under the chav banner are not *completely* denied access to Newcastle’s nightlife. Indeed, there are places where chavs are welcome. As I suggested in the previous chapter, the Bigg Market caters predominantly for those comprising the lower-markets. As a result, Bigg Market venues are less exclusionary in terms of dress codes and rejection occurrences, as one Bigg Market club operator commented:

Aidan: Is there any particular clothing that’s banned, or any labels?

Manager of low-market bar and nightclub, Bigg Market: Kind of, tracksuits, trainers. We can’t stop the stripy jumpers – we’re trying to – but the reason being in the Bigg Market, that’s what they all wear, stripy jumpers – they’re alright and that, but you know, they’re

charvers, but the Bigg Market is full of people like that though. They're not that bad a people though, when you come to deal with them, they might have a label on them – "charvers" – but apart from that, most of them are alright.

Instead, they are filtered and coerced into certain spaces in which they are then contained. I use the word 'contained' loosely here because, as I have alluded to already, there is always some element of resistance to this redistribution process. For instance, those aware of their otherwise stigmatised social identity can always dress differently to avoid being demarcated by ubiquitous signifiers of deviance; some repeatedly attempt entry to the more fashionable venues; and some "kick off" when rejected. I now want to demonstrate this nuance with two accounts of the variegated nature of nightlife in Newcastle, which again, exemplifies the relationships between image and consumption practices, the economic imperative to exclude, but also the ways in which these are transformed through shifting cultural tastes and preferences, and the spatial shifting of different groups of consumers. I begin by illustrating the changing nature of nightlife consumption in Newcastle, before moving on to present an account of the gentrification and growth of the Diamond Strip.

"Opening Doors": Changes in Nightlife Consumption, Gentrification, and the Diamond Strip

As consumer tastes change, so does venue favouritism, and those which are frequented by the more affluent struggle to maintain their position for any prolonged period. Venues sometimes change their management and ownership, become re-branded, or sometimes collapse completely. So far I have illustrated the current trends in Newcastle, showing the hierarchical structure of markets and how these relate to different locales. But it has not always been like this. As one operator suggested, current drinking circuits have emerged out of more traditional practices, before Newcastle gained such a reputation as a 'party town':

"I think Newcastle's first drinking circuit, the original one, was the Bigg Market, and that was about 16 years ago, which was kind of set up by a bloke called Joe Robinson, who opened up a bar called Bentleys, it's going back some years now ... 16 .. 17 years ago, and this bottom half down here, this part of the street [referring to the lower end of the Bigg Market], it used to be the Mecca before it started to bleed its way out. And I think, really, Newcastle is one of the very first cities where the council authorities really let have a concentrated area of bars, and also, the innovation of having fun bars and party bars was pretty much born in this city as well, and I think that's why it's kind of right up there. And everything else has been developed from here [the Bigg Market], and then its exploded all over the city, and where it's exploded, it's left this huge void where the Bigg Market was and now its just full of the lesser

likelier people who'll get in anywhere else now, and it's a bit rough and run down, but that's initially where it started and you're talking about 15 / 20 years ago" (Operator of mass-market, themed and branded superclub, Bigg Market).

As I outlined in the previous section, one particular nightclub had quite a negative image, reputed to be full of charvers. It was also a 'problem' venue with high incidences of violence. It was subsequently shut down by the council, but then refurbished, re-branded, and re-opened, catering for a completely different market. All previous clientele – those encapsulated by the chav representation – were excluded, and only those perceived as the more affluent were granted entry, alluding to the processes of nightlife gentrification outlined in Chapter 4 using Chatterton and Holland's (2003) work. However, as the research progressed, a number of operators claimed that this particular venue could not sustain the initial profit because they could not retain the upmarket crowd, and thus reverted back to its 'traditional' clientele by letting "all the charvers back in" (Diamond Strip bar owner). Because of these consumer shifts, some operators are mindful that venues have to be adaptable as consumers continue to seek the latest and most upgraded nightlife destinations. As one operator illustrated, he and his business partner designed and marketed a Quayside bar knowing that its demographics would eventually change from the high-spending middle-class wanting exclusivity to the more general mass market seeking the more hedonistic 'fun pub' atmosphere:

"The [Quayside bar] is a fun pub, but it's a luxurious beautiful fun pub. Its like, the idea of 'fun pub' brings up all sorts of horrendous thoughts where you spend tuppence ha'penny on a drink and then try and compensate that by playing cheesy music very loudly with flashing lights. The [bar], the fit-out cost of that when we did it was in excess of a million pounds and it was very sophisticated. I worked on that with [business partner], and it was a total champagne Charlie's bar when it opened, very expensive, and it sold a lot of champagne and was very upmarket, but we always realized that one day those people would move somewhere else, because the champagne Charlie's, these aren't the [Grey Street bar] people, the champagne Charlie people are a bit more flash with their money, and they stay there until the next thing comes along. You've got them for 2 years and then something else happens and that's it. Best way to describe them is the *Apartment* [bar on Collingwood street – Diamond strip], which is Newcastle's current champagne Charlie's bar [²⁶]. But they're leaving there, they're at the [other Diamond Strip bars]; they're moving around and they leave a void, so you've got to be ready to fill that gap. So [Quayside bar] was designed specifically with that in mind" (Owner / Executive of leisure and design group).

²⁶ At the time of the interview (before being re-branded).

As these processes were brought to light, in later interviews I enquired about changing regulation practices further. As the following excerpt suggests, bars on the Diamond Strip used to be far more exclusive than they were at the time of the research in 2007 / 2008:

Aidan: So *Apartment* would only let in a certain crowd that would spend lots of money?

Operator of themed mid-high market bar, Diamond Strip: Yes.

Aidan: Are there any bars like that now?

Operator: [Diamond Strip bar] tried to be like that and then went into administration, and they've now been bought by the guys who own [another Diamond Strip bar], so they're the new ownership now but I'm not entirely sure what their policies are now. I think they still have the high-end range and stuff and the VIP room and the membership scheme, but I don't think there's such a demand for it in Newcastle anymore.

Aidan: Why do you think that is?

Operator: Times change, things which are fashionable one year aren't going to be fashionable 3 or 4 years later. Everything has a shelf life unfortunately, and in a city as small as Newcastle, maybe you could have a little bar which is entirely exclusive, but something this size [referring to the venue that she operates], you need to pack it out and have the atmosphere going.

This process also influenced the transformation of a Gate venue's demographics:

"You always get cycles in bars. When you first open you first get all the beautiful people, and then if you're a large bar, everybody wants to come and see you. But especially for females, and young single females, if they're [charvers] dressed as you say and acting aggressive or whatever, it's off putting for the girls, and they will go elsewhere, where they think the other beautiful people drink. So yeah it can affect your market and you've got to judge it, but at the same time, we get a lot of people in and you think, they're a bit rough or whatever and they're really canny lads, and probably just come out for a quick drink and then do the circuit" (Operator of mass-market branded superclub, The Gate).

Therefore, as venues "open up their doors", dress codes and admittance policies are relaxed, and inclusion rather than exclusion is the result of the same economic imperative to maximise profit. The entrepreneurial agenda, driven by competition, thus propels various spatial processes. Initially, the upmarket venues revel in their profit-making abilities; they have sought the cash-rich consumers which in turn fuel images and trends, which repeat the cycle. They are the 'places to be', and the places that *can afford* to exclude the most. But as new bars open or re-brand and cater for the same market, those consumers, wanting the latest fashionable venues, relocate, influencing other venues to reduce exclusions to gain more consumers to ensure profit. This speaks of regulation as a process diverting different groups

in relation to changing markets rather than a process which seeks to maintain a *status quo*. I now want to expand upon this understanding with the idea of gentrified nightlife, and the rise of heavily stylised venues located around Collingwood Street, now known as the Diamond Strip. I argue that the following case study demonstrates the effects of the gentrification process, where the highest-spending consumers colonize the most stylish of new venues, displacing and transforming existing patterns of consumption.

I remain unsure of the exact inception of the term ‘Diamond Strip’. It was coined fairly recently to encapsulate the area located around Central Station and Collingwood Street in Newcastle city centre²⁷. By day it is as unremarkable as any of the other nearby streets home to tertiary sector employment, but at night, as the multitude of bars open, it transforms into a haven for those dressed to the nines seeking style, décor, and premium drinks and services. A quick search via Google for Newcastle’s Diamond Strip reveals www.newcastlevip.co.uk as the first entry – a web log (‘blog’) site written by a Newcastle local dedicated to reviewing Newcastle’s favourite nightlife scenes²⁸. On the site, the Diamond Strip is described by the following promotional rhetoric:

“One of the buzz words in Newcastle when talking about nightlife and bars is “The Diamond Strip“. This is mainly used by bars and promoters to make the area sound cool, chic and expensive, and it does have all three. The Diamond Strip is the place to go out in Newcastle, as W1 is the place in London ... The kind of people who go here are 20-35yr olds, young, cool, mature people. The area attracts these kinds of people by selling a range of drinks including cocktails, bottles, and long drinks. You will not find any girls here drinking pints with a straw. The layout of all the bars is modern and contemporary, with comfortable places to sit and talk, private booths are available at most places with or without advance booking. Prices are expensive in comparison to other areas of Newcastle, for example the Bigg Market. Some bars in Newcastle try to attract customers by selling cheaper drinks, such as the treble’s bars ... The bars on The Diamond Strip sell more sophisticated drinks at higher prices ... One of the biggest problems with this area is the label which goes with it, therefore the people it attracts. The majority are fine, nice people having a good night out. But since this is the ‘upper class’ area of Newcastle you do get a few pretentious idiots, late 20 – 30yr old men who think they are better than everyone else, as well as 21yr old girls who think they are Paris Hilton. Because of this the doormen want to let ‘the cool kids’ in, and if you don’t look like one you might not get in the place if there is a queue. Wear the wrong thing, look a bit off, and you will not be getting in if the place is busy” (<http://www.newcastlevip.co.uk/the-diamond-strip/>).

²⁷ I still had not heard the term when I moved out of Newcastle in 2005, and I worked at what would now be called a Diamond Strip bar.

²⁸ The Diamond strip has also found its way onto travel sites such as the Wikipedia sister website Wikitravel – see http://wikitravel.org/en/Newcastle_upon_Tyne

As I suggested in section 6.2, the locally infamous *Apartment* luxury bar on Collingwood Street was probably the first successful style bar in Newcastle, and since, many have followed suit in the provision of high-style nightlife. The Diamond Strip is now comprised of at least seven bars, four of which were represented in the interviews (more if bars on adjacent streets are taken into account) and all provide very similar environments. One of these used to be a Bigg Market style bar and had a reputation as a charver venue with cheap drinks promotions and playing cheesy 90s pop music. It became known, however, as a problem venue and subsequently closed (although I am unsure as to whether it was *forced* to close). Now it is a bar that hosts celebrities, the upper classes and the more affluent of the middle classes, and represents a telling sign of gentrification at work in the contemporary Newcastle night-time economy.

This rise of these style bars on the Diamond Strip in recent years has helped shift upper class consumption from other locales. The Gate area was previously very popular; in the interviews I learnt that at least three of the earliest bars to open in the complex were highly styled and initially very exclusive. But the growth of the Diamond Strip had shifted the most lucrative markets. The account that follows is based on an interview with the general manager of a large branded venue situated in the Gate area of Newcastle. As he took his post as manager a few years ago, many of the venue's sought consumers had either relocated or were in the process of relocating to venues on the Diamond Strip. As the following interview extracts illustrates, location within contemporary nightlife relations is fundamental in attracting the higher-spending consumers. As the Diamond Strip grew, attracting more and more of the upper classes, Gate venues designed for the big spenders (through their products and services, environments, admission charges etc.) found themselves spatially redundant in a declining locale which was increasingly gaining a reputation as a 'lower' drinking area:

Aidan: Well I guess my next question was going to be what end of the market do you seek and how does that fit in with the rest of Newcastle?

Operator of mass-market branded super-venue, The Gate: It's actually quite an interesting one. We are very much stuck in the middle. The Gate, which we are next door to, is now, it's sometimes perceived to be a lower end of the market; you're nicer crowd, like you said are now down in the Diamond Strip. [This venue] used to get the VIP crowd, as they're called, when it was the new place in town, and to be honest, a lot of that crowd has gone and they don't want to come up this end of town. So when I took over as GM, it was a bit of a task for me because I was trying to open up the doors to a wider market, which in the past would have probably been knocked back from the venue, and it's a bit weird because I've run clubs before, and when they've been open for 5 or 6 years and they're not the newest places in town, you do have to change who you market it to, and it is a natural progression for those

middle and lower end customers to come in a bit more. But in this city, [this venue] had a bit of a stigma, and people disliked the venue because they saw it as elitist, and you were kind of fighting an uphill battle, and we had to say, 'now hang on, we are laid back, we do want your custom'. But yeah we're in a strange location, people always say, you know [Quayside nightclub], the manager of [Quayside nightclub] comes up to me and says 'well how are you doing', and 'if you picked up the [Gate venue] brand and plonked it where I am at [Quayside], you'd be rammed every single night, because you'd be in the right location', so we're sort of a higher end venue in a lower end market.

The Gate area therefore lost much of the upper markets. Nevertheless, they still have to make as much money as possible. As the operator continued, he suggested that the venue "opened up its doors", admitting consumers that would have previously been rejected. He continues:

Operator: We take feedback from our customers, because we want to keep our regulars happy, and some of my regulars come and chat to me now and they say 'your crowd's totally different than it was two years ago', and they use these phrases like 'there's stripy jumpers and chains on people in the club' and 'lads with tattoos', and it's interesting because they're perceiving this shift in the venue and the potential to put them off and drive them to another venue so ... yeah, the people I've spoke to have, not exactly been put off, but have said 'the level of your clientele is dropping'. And like I said with this end of town, I've got to make money and I can't be elitist, and if I was, in a 2000 capacity club, I'd probably only let in 7 or 8 hundred every Saturday, but even though the clientele is changing, we're still not a problem venue and it's still safe, but yeah, people do want to be in the coolest place – you know, [Diamond Strip bar] has just opened and everyone wants to be seen [there], it's all that social networking crowd right? I suppose it can put customers off if you're perceived as that kind of venue.

Aidan: You were saying about how the VIP crowd have left, do think [the growth of the Diamond Strip] is the reason for it, or is it a mixture of reasons?

Operator: I wouldn't say which came first, the cart or the horse, because when I got here I had to start letting in the lower market because I realised the VIP crowd had left; we weren't going to make money out of an empty building so we had to start letting a different crowd in. My area manager was the manager of this venue when it opened and he had a walk round having not been here for years, and he said that all the figures were the same but the VIP crowd is lost, and the VIP room when he had it used to take about 8 grand in a night because they'd all buy champagne etcetera, and that's what you've lost. They'd already gone and maybe, like you say, maybe they left because this end of town was becoming a lower end market, or middle market. Maybe it was this end of town that put them off, either that or we're just an older venue and they went to a newer place.

In some respects, then, the consumer is a powerful actor in the night-time economy, at least, the higher-spending middle-class consumer is. The bulk of the change in Newcastle's nightlife is down to this group; they determine which venues are 'in' – which are fashionable, trendy, and the latest 'place to be' – and in doing so they determine which places are *passé* and which are yesterday's news. This is a process which is perhaps underplayed in the expositions by Chatterton and Hollands (2002, 2003 for example) and others (for example Hobbs *et al*, 2000) on the subject of the night-time economy and its processual, ephemeral character. Sometimes, transformations occur so rapidly, that after losing the upmarket consumers venues suddenly experience a degree of desperation in their commitment to capital, opening their doors so wide, perhaps, that they become 'trouble venues'. As the operator of the branded Gate venue continued:

Operator: The phrase people use is "he's opened up his doors" or whatever, you hear that thrown about quite a lot, and a bar's got a shelf-life of 18 months when it's the new bar in town – it might be a popular place up to about 2 and a half years, but after that you'll hear people say "they've opened up their doors", they've slackened their door policy, and then it is a slippery slope, and 5 or 6 years down the line, not [this venue] because we hold ourselves pretty strong, but I've seen other venues then be labelled your 'trouble venues', and it's quite interesting to watch the timeline. There's a bar not far from here, I won't name it, but it opened itself up as a style bar, a VIP bar, and gradually opened up the doors and is now what I would say the low end of the market doing pound drinks and cheap offers. And it's not in such a long space of time either. But they had to adjust to the market because you've got to make money, you're *forced* down that path and you just have to go with it.

Whilst at first this account seems contradictory to my argument that night-time economies are imbued with *exclusionary* cultural politics, it actually illustrates further the entrepreneurial rationale for exclusion, and how this helps segregate different nightlives commensurate with common understandings of social groups – including those of troublesome youth. The capital directive remains the same, and whilst some bars broaden their market scope, other bars maintain their exclusionary agenda; new bars are able to practice intensive rejection, and so it continues. The basic premise lingers: that entrepreneurial agendas fuel exclusionary systems, but that these exclusionary systems are fluid, contested and open to change.

7.4 Conclusion: Restricted Access to Nightlife in Newcastle

In this concluding section, I want to recapitulate the three main arguments of this chapter. First, along with many other geographers, I argue that we have to think about urban entrepreneurialism and its doppelganger neoliberalism as a set of spatial process as well as a

political-economic agenda. To re-phrase a term I used earlier, “neoliberalism is a spatial project that is spatially projected” (Herod and Aguiar, 2006: 435), in that its political programme – entrepreneurialism – employs space to attract and fix economic growth. And it does this in a number of ways. As Harvey (1989a) suggests, urban space has been reconfigured around place rather than territory, increasingly bringing image and aesthetics into modes of governance, shifting emphases away from the provision of welfare and services. With this comes large-scale gentrification and re-aestheticization (Smith, 2002; Macleod, 2002) that seeks to attract new forms of capital and flexible modes of accumulation. However, in doing so, a number of other spatial projects are also employed. The 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s have witnessed an increasing cascade of marginalising practices concomitant with the recent restructuring of urban space. Exclusion, escalating punishment, more intensive modes of policing, and segregation have become common features of the post-industrial city, where representations of deviant groups, constructed in opposition to late-capitalism, serve to justify their removal from the public sphere, as well as a range of surrogate private spaces.

This particular theoretical trajectory, I argue, is fundamental if we are to better understand the spatial characteristics of contemporary night-time economies. Representations of deviant youth do not *drive* exclusions; excluding chavs is not predicated around their construction as criminal; and exclusion cannot thus be explained by way of a causal framework. Despite some concerns over crime and disorder in the night-time economy, it seems that exclusions are articulated much more around capital needs, and rationalized through the protection of image intrinsic to the retention of middle-class, high-spending consumers (or in response to the loss of this market, and the need to throw the net wider). As image has become ever more significant in seeking an urban spatial fix for capital, it is therefore also hugely important in Newcastle’s contemporary night-time economy. Maintaining a particular image – especially for the gentrified, high-style venues – is essential for keeping hold of the most lucrative markets, and therefore the exclusion of those reconstituted as troublesome at the current juncture is justified by regulators as a means through which to protect these images. Admittance to those under the charver banner would deter the more affluent consumers, resulting in a loss in profit and a widening in consumer base by any means necessary – drinks promotions, cheaper entry, and even normalizing entry to charvers. Excluding troublesome youth is hence the result of capital obligations to maximise profit.

My second argument concerns the way in which these exclusionary processes should be understood in relation to existing theories of exclusion in urban and cultural geography. Whilst the theoretical context of this thesis derives from the geographies of David Harvey,

Neil Smith, Don Mitchell, and others studying the recent political-economic transformations and cultural politics of urban space, exclusion here is not presented as a complete removal of a particular social group. As the fieldwork illustrates, there is no 'annihilation' of those perceived to be charvers. Rather, groups encapsulated by contemporary representations of delinquency are filtered, channelled and redistributed; they *are* excluded from some venues, as the case of the Diamond Strip suggests, but not all. Indeed, what I discovered through the interviews and observation is that the Bigg Market typifies what people demarcate as a charver nightlife area. Moreover, the fact that consumption patterns change and nightlife is in a constant state of flux points further to the fact that there is no systemic removal of charvers from the night-time city centre. Instead, exclusion works to redistribute groups according to their 'place' in this normative landscape, which, again, is subject to temporal change. Processes occurring at a certain time and place are not set in stone forever. Venues change in ownership, become re-branded, refurbished, and sometimes close altogether, whether due to irresponsibility, contributing to disorder, or through lack of profit. Transformations are further impelled by shifts in consumption preferences, where once popular venues lose their allure, and consumers eventually relocate to other, newer / refurbished, more fashionable venues. And as these transformations occur, venues have to 'open up their doors', relaxing admittance policies in order to maximise the profit to which they are obliged.

My third and final argument revolves around issues of segregation and unequal access. Having been exemplified through the development of the Diamond Strip, entrepreneurial processes which engender exclusion and redistribution contribute to a segregated nightscape which aims to keep the higher and lower classes of consumers socially and spatially separate. We can, therefore, think of Newcastle's nightlife as a fragmented leisure landscape where specific groups find themselves excluded from a number of locations, but accepted in others. Newcastle's current nightscapes impart distinct, although not completely clear-cut segments. Of course, segregation like this has nearly always occurred, and its existence in late-capitalism is rather unremarkable; numerous other consumption practices and markets are separated in similar ways. What is most interesting, though, is that the excluded / segregated groups are continually articulated through contemporary representations of troublesome youth. Out of all the linguistic structures, the terms chav and charver are used due to their capacity to encompass the instantly identifiable markers of deviance – the brand names, baseball caps, tracksuits, shoes and hoodies – that signify those of which society has been told to be wary. Performativity and the embodied aesthetics are also used in the identification process, but are less to do with a policy constructed by operators that define certain unwanted behaviours, and more to do with the discretion of venue door staff and how they perceive potential consumers in line with contemporary cultural identities. As I discussed previously,

bodies and performance have also become ever more important signifiers of class, where those not conforming to new middle-class attitudes and behaviours are increasingly marginalised.

As many academic commentators have suggested, then, contemporary urban landscapes under economic neoliberalism are highly exclusionary, and this is evident in local urban nightscapes, which also witness the performance of entrepreneurial capitalism and its latent spatial effects. As Chatterton and Hollands argue, the “emerging mode of regulation associated with the corporate entertainment city points to intensified social and spatial control of leisure spaces via formal mechanisms such as increased surveillance and door security staff, restrictive by-laws and design of the built environment, in conjunction with attempts to literally ‘sanitise through style’” (2002: 108). It thus reflects the broader processes of post-industrial change where certain spaces are claimed and colonized by the wealthier of urban and sub-urbanites and where others, reconstituted alongside political-economic shifts, can be identified, their spatialities restricted, and participation in certain leisure cultures denied. It may not be appropriate to allude to Newcastle’s night-time economy as ‘revanchist’, but like processes of revanchism, nightlife operators are helping to reconfigure the identity of particular class-based groups through the semantics of troublesome youth and use these vernaculars in the justification of exclusion. Ultimately, for some venues, the propagation of contemporary representations is to identify the already socially excluded so that they may be excluded once again, resulting in unequal access for all social groups.

Chapter 8

Conclusions

Entrepreneurial Urbanism, Exclusion, and the Reconstitution of Troublesome Youth: The New Delinquent and their Restricted Access to Nightlife in Newcastle

There are several conclusions to take from this thesis, the ramifications of which contributing to the development of a number of areas of human geographical enquiry. First, this study opens up the micro-geographies of the night-time economy to a greater degree than before, showing the more intricate and variegated nature of contemporary urban nightlife, its regulation, and some of the resultant spatial implications for different groups of consumers. In this study, the term 'regulation' is not used in the traditional economic sense i.e. the regulation of the economy, but rather, it is deployed to encompass the many varied ways through which access to different spaces is mediated. Thus, inclusion and exclusion are practiced through the regulation of admittance, itself a process heavily reliant on deviancy signifiers, whether it be the contemptuous logos or the embodied cultural digressions from prescribed and approved performances.

Others have examined the state of the contemporary night-time economy, its producers and its arbitrators (e.g. Chatterton and Hollands, 2002, 2003; Hobbs *et al*, 2000, 2002, 2005; Nayak, 2005); this thesis though, examines these issues in more detail at the street level, and as such, offers further insight into the entrepreneurial city's inner workings, how these correlate with the spatial practices of different youth groups but also how they relate to recent articulations of class and masculinity. Of striking importance is the continued subjugation of the young lower-class man in extant urban processes. Whilst folk devils have long been operative in the social consciousness, this study suggests that their form and function continue to transform with the economic and cultural politics of the city. As I argued previously, the figure of the yob perpetuates long-standing fears traditionally associated with young working-class men, and has supplanted, perhaps, the iconic figure of the hooligan. Moreover, the most recent articulation of troublesome youth – the chav – has come to represent a newer and more scathing denigration of non-working-class youth, which has effectively replaced fears in the 1990s of a growing urban underclass substratum. What is perhaps most interesting, though, is that specific commodities, consumer identities and embodied (often masculine) performances continue to dovetail with representations of class in the demarcation of delinquent youth. Thus, in addition to idleness, fecklessness and licentiousness, a myriad of consumer symbols have somehow become signifiers of a class-based delinquency. The resultant discourses of aesthetic impoverishment and 'vulgar' consumption practices, as well as new forms of

embodied deviance entangle themselves in other forms of class condescension and prejudice, seemingly justifying spatial distancing through social and cultural inequality (Hayward and Yar, 2006; Johnson, 2008; McDowell, 2006; Nayak, 2006; Skeggs, 2005; Tyler, 2006).

The case of Newcastle's night-time economy therefore illustrates how these current representations are intertwined in the form and function of the entrepreneurial city, operating in and alongside the spatial directives of the night-time economy, which are also symptomatic of current urban landscapes, cultural politics and their class relations. Furthermore, that masculinity has been made implicit in articulating these representations of delinquent youth in Newcastle's night-time economy is a telling sign of the continued apprehension toward the young man – and especially the non-working-class young man – and his marginalisation under neoliberal rule. As others have shown before, those already alienated by broader economic restructuring and accelerating processes of globalization have been further marginalised through various socio-spatial exclusions at the urban scale. As this thesis shows, whilst there is no specific discursive attack on young men outright, certain displays of masculinity seems to make lower class status more visible and verifiable, informing wider understandings of non-working-classness and its increasingly diminutive place in the entrepreneurial city.

Second, this study points out the convolution of exclusion at the street level in the micro-geographies of the night-time economy. As I have suggested throughout this dissertation, the entrepreneurial city possesses an exclusionary character, but, as this thesis indicates, it is not always as systemic as some would aver. The recent political-economic change toward neoliberalism that I noted earlier, characterised at the urban scale through entrepreneurial governance, has indeed produced a multitude of retrenchments in people's access to certain spaces within the city, at the same time as opening up the urban realm to facilitate even greater capital accumulation. Without reviewing these arguments again here, it is important to note that this exclusionary disposition is also evident within contemporary spaces of nightlife, as the case of Newcastle suggests, where those lower in the social structure – already largely disqualified from participating in numerous cultural spheres – are excluded from particular nightlife spaces as well as other urban spaces at other times. Whilst the exclusion of specific youth groups brought to light in this research is not predicated by state actions or instituted by local government powers, the economic imperative to restrict their access – to protect place image, reputation and capital – remains, though, and as a result, a number of fluid and contested exclusions are practiced.

However, as I outlined in the previous chapter, there remain spaces in which those branded socially delinquent can still occupy, to which the Bigg Market testifies, just as there remain run-down sink estates to house the socially excluded. That these kinds of spaces exist should therefore prompt geographers to examine the more nuanced, subtle and contested nature of exclusion. Contrary to revanchism and the annihilation of space, then, this thesis posits exclusion as a redistributive and filtering process rather than a blanket spatial injunction. As Chatterton and Hollands (2003) argue, residual, run-down spaces such as these are being peripheralised or slowly replaced with more homogenous, sanitised, corporate nightlife spaces in which only the more affluent are allowed to consume. It is entirely possible that in the future, if the potential for profit increases even further in Newcastle's night-time economy, areas such as the Bigg Market will change, become branded, sanitized, and even gentrified, further marginalising residual nightlife spaces and those on which they depend.

Third, notwithstanding the fluidity of exclusion, that there is restricted access to the more profitable spaces in Newcastle at night exemplifies an urban landscape devoid of equal access, and specifically one that includes / excludes on class grounds – a telling sign of class-based segregation at work. As Linda McDowell argued recently, “contacts between the classes are becoming increasingly rare as the middle classes construct a *cordon sanitaire* around their lives through strategies of spatial distancing, such as gated communities and the declining use of public transport” (2006: 838). This thesis follows along such lines and proposes that the normalization of specific regulatory cultures based on class representations in the night-time economy can only exacerbate this separation, contributing to a normative landscape in which certain groups increasingly experience these spatial restrictions. Whilst some have shown that city space is not always exclusionary and unequal, that can be ‘emancipatory’ (Lees, 2004) and subject to resistance (see for example Pile and Keith, 1997; Sharp *et al*, 2000), this research shows contrary that representations of the new delinquent continue to pervade a range of constraints on peoples access to urban space at various times.

Fourth, and finally, this thesis presents a ‘down link’ from the level of the entrepreneurial city to that of the micro-geographies of regulation and exclusion inside the city, but also to the bodies of those that are excluded. In tackling exclusion more deeply at the street level, this thesis shows how urban entrepreneurialism – manifested by the function of the night-time economy – representations of delinquent youth, class and masculinity converge to disseminate a series of multi-scalar relationships which represent the inner workings of contemporary urbanism. From this thesis it is clear to see exactly what effects entrepreneurialism has on the non-working-class, stigmatised, largely *male* body, which is sought out and marginalised to the peripheral hinterlands of the glamorous centre, whilst

those who consume and perform in conjunction with late-capitalist culture continue to dominate economically, culturally and most importantly, spatially.

In conclusion, I want to make two brief points that should be of continued interest for contemporary urban and cultural geographers. First, that class should remain high on the geographical agenda, and second, that unequal access to urban space for all social groups should be of continued academic importance, particularly where young men are concerned. As David Harvey and other urban commentators argue, cities primarily function for the circulation of capital. In doing so, however, the trenchant economic performances which act to maximise capital also “point to clear winners and losers in the urban realm” (Zukin, 2006: 103). The winners are those who have embraced the onset of neoliberalism – the new middle classes, the mass consumers, the entrepreneurial stakeholders, and those who comply with the development of post-industrial urban culture. The losers remain the working and lower classes – the urban poor, the homeless, the underclass – those who have been reconstituted as deviant to the putative success of neoliberalism whilst they have simultaneously become disenfranchised from its development. These reconfigurations of class commensurate with the advancement of neoliberalism and entrepreneurial urbanism serve to exacerbate social and spatial exclusion, reconstructing ideas of publicness and citizenship to an abstraction recognized only by late-capitalist culture. In the words of Alison Stenning (2008: 11):

“Why are working class geographies important? As a number of geographers have recently argued, our neoliberal times are remaking class relations every day in all corners of the world ... The continuing presence, and perhaps exacerbation, of class inequalities globally, nationally and locally demands that we pay close attention to these processes”.

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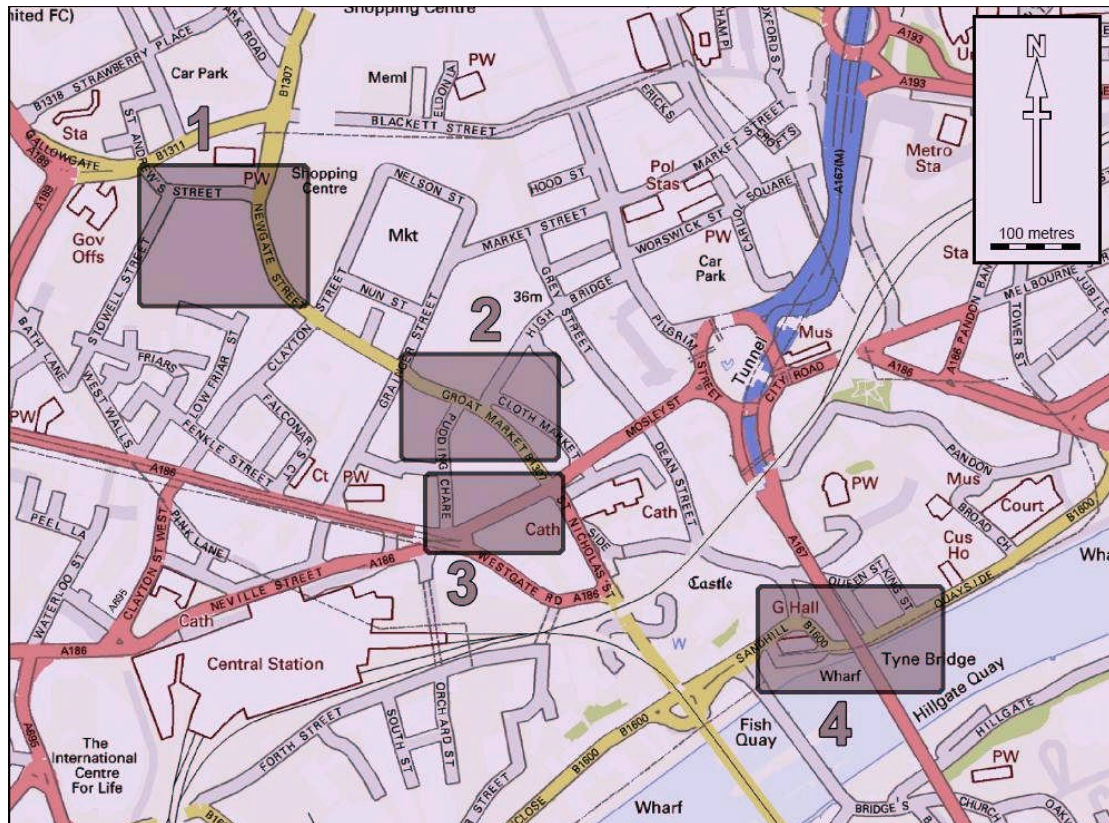
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Appendix

Map of Newcastle City Centre



The locations of the four principle mainstream nightlife locales. From North West to South East: 1) The Gate complex; 2) Bigg Market; 3) the Diamond Strip; and 4) the Quayside