



How to learn from violence in everyday life?

In this publication, researchers from widely differing backgrounds analyse the root causes of violence from different perspectives and attempt to discover precisely how violence plays a role in the lives of young people, whether they be victims or perpetrators. The articles collected here are contributions to a seminar organised in the context of the Council of Europe's integrated project, "Responses to violence in everyday life in a democratic society".

Quel enseignement tirer de la violence quotidienne ?

Dans cette publication, des chercheurs d'origine très diverses analysent sous différentes perspectives les racines de la violence et tentent de voir plus précisément quel rôle joue la violence dans la vie des jeunes, qu'ils en soient les victimes ou les acteurs. Les articles rassemblés ici sont les contributions à un séminaire organisé dans le cadre du projet intégré «Réponses à la violence quotidienne dans une société démocratique».



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Learning from violence — Apprendre de la violence

Responses to violence in everyday life

Learning from violence — The youth dimension Apprendre de la violence — Dimension jeunesse



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Learning from violence

The youth dimension

Apprendre de la violence

Dimension jeunesse

Alana Lentin, Editor

Contributions to the researchers' seminar,
Budapest, October 2002

Contributions au séminaire de chercheurs,
Budapest, octobre 2002

**This seminar was organised in the framework of the integrated project
“Responses to violence in everyday life in a democratic society”**

**Directorate of Youth and Sport
Council of Europe**

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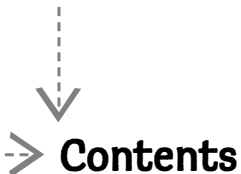
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→ **About the integrated project on "Responses to violence in everyday life in a democratic society"**

All Europeans feel affected by violence and its repercussions. Personal security is threatened every day in a whole range of places and circumstances: at home, at school, at work, at sports events and on the streets. While violence and the fear of violence affect everyone's quality of life, certain groups – such as women, children and the elderly as well as migrants, refugees and particular ethnic groups – may be seen as specific targets.

The integrated project "Responses to violence in everyday life in a democratic society" was launched by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe as a means of mobilising the Council's resources over a period of three years (2002-04) to address the widely shared concerns that violence engenders. Its main aim is to help decision makers and others to implement consistent policies of awareness-raising, prevention and law enforcement to combat violence in everyday life. Significantly, these policies have to be formulated and applied in ways that respect human rights and the rule of law. That is an absolute prerequisite for achieving lasting improvement in the actual situation and in people's feelings about security in Europe.

The project's work on young people has highlighted their different roles (which often combine) with regard to violence: young people may be not just victims or perpetrators of violence but also driving forces in preventing it. The research seminar "Learning from violence – the youth dimension" was aimed at exploring the interaction of these different roles in a number of social contexts across Europe. It was also immediately followed up by a larger symposium "Learning from violence: youth policy responses to everyday violence" which transformed the results and concerns of the seminar into an agenda for action for different authorities and young people alike.



General introduction



Learning from violence – the youth dimension: a research seminar

Budapest, at the end of October 2002: a group of social science researchers from a number of European countries come together to discuss how it may be possible to learn from violence in everyday life. The theme of violence in everyday life is one of the two themes adopted by the Council of Europe as part of its integrated project. The projects are intended to be a red thread that runs throughout the diverse areas of the Council of Europe's work, to which each of these different sectors can contribute, leading to an integrated overview.

The relationship of young people to violence has long been a subject of concern for politicians, policy makers and social scientists alike. It has also been a subject that has encouraged polemics both of the type that lead to a demonisation of the average young person as a potential perpetrator of violence and of those who see young people's violence as a consequence of the dominant atmosphere of violence that prevails in modern societies. The role of the researchers brought together over two and a half days in the European Youth Centre in Budapest, was to attempt to untangle some of the meanings behind such entrenched stances and to begin to see in which precise ways violence plays a role in the lives of young people; as both victims and perpetrators.

The participants of the seminar, for the main part researchers working on various aspects of violence as it affects society, from a sociological, anthropological or philosophical perspective, came from widely differing backgrounds. Beyond the seven countries represented, from both eastern and western Europe, the researchers placed different emphases on the root causes of violence and the question of whether it is on the rise in our societies in the present day. Whereas several of the researchers approached the question from the point of view of societal institutions, such as the police, the youth justice system or reformatory schools, others looked at the cultural and symbolic significance of violence as it is both pinned on and taken up by specific groups of young people. Others still approached the subject of violence in everyday life from a more philosophical perspective that stressed the anonymity of late- or post-modern societies and the *anomie* that this creates among co-citizens.

The diversity of approaches and national and cultural backgrounds made for a fruitful debate that pointed to the necessity of considering more profoundly the ease with which youth and violence are often juxtaposed in the contemporary popular and academic discourse. Despite the range of local realities represented by the participants and their differing methodological and normative approaches,



the seminar came to the conclusion that more research needs to be carried out on this theme that does not separate between the problem of youth violence or violence against young people and the wider societal conditions that appear to be making the topic so pertinent at this point in time.

-----> **Questioning violence in everyday life**

What are the reasons for which youth violence has become such a “hot topic” in political, popular and academic circles in recent times? This was one of the main points of reflection raised by the seminar and one of the central questions in light of which the following collection of papers should be read. It would be easy to read this range of articles about the diverse ways in which violence affects young people in everyday life and to succumb to the idea that violence today is both everywhere and unstoppable. Yet this impression is not a new one. Indeed, every decade of the twentieth century at least invented an image of dangerous youth to signify all that was corruptive about the modernisation of western societies and the rolling back of “traditional values”. Nevertheless, the western world, in particular post-11 September, has promoted a discourse of danger that targets all that which fails to conform to the expectations made in its own image. Often young people are those considered to reject such conformity, the mould into which they are expected to fit, in particular when such young people are of ethnic minority, working class or generally socially excluded backgrounds.

Much has been made in recent times of the increase in young people’s propensity to engage in serious and even lethal acts of violence. No image better portrays the seemingly critical levels to which this type of engagement in violence has risen than the various shootings at US and European high schools over the last half decade. Frustrated, generally male, youth entering their own schools and gunning down their teachers and classmates shocked the world and led us to ask the question: what has influenced our young people to commit such acts of horror? The answers to this question are generally blamed on the influence of the media, most notably Hollywood blockbusters such as *Natural Born Killers* or, more frequently, on the computer simulations of war and violent crime that are targeted at the adolescent market.

Undoubtedly, realising the extent to which games and toys in which young people engage in serious – if make-believe – acts of violence are coveted and sought after by them shocks those of us for whom childhood toys differed dramatically. However, it must be possible to question the extent to which young people themselves are the inventors of such violent repertoires of play, or to what extent, rather, these are symbolic of an altogether more complex structure of profit-making in which young people become the prime target. The logic of capitalist accumulation creates, in turn, a reciprocal system of supply and demand in which it is no longer possible to establish where the demand for violence in films and games actually originates. It is not necessary to exonerate young people from their role in violence, whether real or imaginary. At the same time, however, adequate youth research into this troubled subject must disentangle the grey areas of cause and effect. As it is insufficient to claim that violent computer games have a direct causal link with the perpetration of violence, so it is naïve to state that young people autonomously create a demand for these tropes of violence.

It appears therefore to be more correct to suggest that the proliferation of violence into everyday life is a top-down rather than a bottom-up phenomenon which, in a second step, creates the impression that violence is rooted in everyday



behaviour and that it is from there that it must be eradicated. In other words, the existence of violence at all levels of society profoundly affects the way in which violence is interpreted by all of us and particularly by the most vulnerable: including youth. In this light, it appears paradoxical to speak of violence in everyday life among young people in Europe at a time in which state violence has reached unprecedented levels.

Returning to the imagery of high-school shootings, the documentary film maker Michael Moore in his recent film, *Bowling for Columbine* about the Columbine High School tragedy, in which two teenagers gunned down twelve students and a teacher, attempts to delve behind the reasons for the events. Moore compares the rates of shootings in the US (11 000 a year) to that in other countries to show that there is something significant about American society that yields these figures. It is not merely the ease with which arms can be purchased in the US: 7 million Canadian homes contain guns. Rather, it is the culture of violence that permeates the American conscience through, to a large extent, the bellicose actions of its government that may be behind such dramatic figures. The rhetoric of war – “superpower”, “arms race” and now, “war on terrorism” – dominates US cultural self-understanding and filters down into everyday behaviour.

So too, in Europe, the “securitarian” discourse that dominated electoral campaigns in several European countries, most notably France in 2002, is inextricably linked to a globalised trend towards the fear of violence from an unknown source that has gripped our societies. This fear of terrorist violence must, through the vehicle of the media, be made concrete for the majority of citizens who, in their daily realities, have no means of translating this into concrete experience. Therefore, today a culture of fear permeates western society’s dealings with Islam so that anyone visibly recognised as Muslim comes to pose a threat to our physical safety. This very quickly comes to be extended to the “Other” more generally so that multicultural societies, as at any time of perceived “crisis”, retreat into the comfortable distinction between “friend” and “foe”; insider and outsider. This is an all too common refrain and one which those in power are quick to condone as a means of deflecting criticism and gaining support for radical measures, be they “zero-tolerance” policies or wars on disobedient regimes.

When reading this diverse collection of papers, therefore, it is necessary to consider that while the issue of young people as perpetrators of violence must certainly be tackled, the degree to which young people are in fact victims of violence greatly exceeds this. The control of the means of violence, as Max Weber reminds us, is the highest form of power, one which is only absolutely available to states. Therefore, beyond the extreme case of war – although, as I have shown, this is not irrelevant – the extent to which various institutions of the state play a role in perpetuating violence as a solution to social problems must be brought to the fore. Children and young people in confrontation with the police; the criminal justice system and even institutions generally charged with their care, such as residential reformatory schools, are often those most at risk of violence. Moreover, the fact that violence is most generally perpetrated by a familiar individual puts acutely into question the degree to which are children are safe, even in the home or at school. It is a truism to state that violence breeds violence. Nevertheless, as it is clear that a child soldier in Sierra Leone is able to commit unspeakable acts of violence because he has known nothing but violence, so too for our European societies it is true to say that the more the state and its institutions justify violence so that it filters down into everyday social relations, the more young



people will be prone to enter a cycle of violence. Moreover, the more our lives are dominated by the pressure of success at all costs, even at the expense of others' well-being, the more violent reactions to the frustrations such pressure instils in us may continue to threaten the possibility of living together.

-----> **The publication's outline**

The chapters included in this publication are all written by participants of the research seminar who were requested to produce a paper pertaining to the subject of their presentation and appear in the original language, either in English or in French. They have been grouped into three sections to aid the reader's navigation through the diverse themes raised by the authors. An introduction to each section provides a more detailed overview of the content of each section and knits together the precise themes raised in each of its articles. Part I deals with general perspectives on violence. The papers grouped there are more generally concerned with the broad themes that the consideration of the role of violence in everyday life with respect to youth bring to mind. Part II considers the role of violence in the public sphere. The three articles it contains all focus on manifestations of violence in public spaces, in particular through the media, in "riots" and in sport and, in particular, the phenomenon of hooliganism. Despite the focus on the public nature of violence in these papers, they do not merely consider the treatment of violence at this level. Rather, all three papers attempt to question more profoundly the cultural meanings of the attachment of certain forms of violence to particular groups in society, be they racialised groups or groups of football supporters. The third part of the publication considers institutional violence. In particular, it considers the way in which young people are confronted with violence through their experiences of institutions, such as the criminal justice system or reformatory or state schools.

The collected articles of the contributors to this volume should go some way towards drawing our attention to the issues that need to be explored more deeply in the process of disentangling the thorny question of the relationship between young people and violent behaviour. Whereas the dictum of approaching young people as a resource rather than a threat has long guided youth work in our societies, it is far from being a universally accepted rule of thumb. Yet, is it sufficient to repeat this as a mantra? Or must we also make young people responsible so that they may themselves become actors in confronting both their own violence and that which they may face. The growing involvement of young people in non-violent movements across the world may be testimony to the degree of pre-action in which young people themselves are engaging. It is our role not to treat them as if they were unconscious of their behaviour or that of others. And it is to this which this publication, despite its varying approaches, testifies: to understand the relationship between youth and violence, it is necessary to listen to the voices of young people and to act upon what they are telling us.

Alana Lentin
Strasbourg, December 2002.





Part I: Violence in perspective: general observations



Introduction

The two articles brought together in this section set out in highly differing ways to consider some of the general ways in which violence is of relevance in contemporary society. The paper by Makkonen, a legal scholar, draws the link between violence and the theme of human rights looking at the link between understanding of the various forms of discrimination and the need for more adequate human rights legislation. Makkonen's paper also attempts to make the link between closely interrelated areas of activity within the Council of Europe: the youth sector and the anti-racism campaign. The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) represents the Council of Europe's concern with the fight against all forms of racism and discrimination in all of its member countries. Makkonen's paper points out the extent to which current human rights legislation fails to take into account adequately the multiple, intersectional and compound ways in which discrimination can have an influence on individual lives. When juxtaposed with the issue of violence, the question of the creation of legislation in this direction becomes extremely pertinent. One of the ways in which racism is perpetuated is through the perpetration of so-called "hate crimes" against members of minority ethnic, racialised groups and individuals. Nevertheless, as Makkonen points out if, as is the case at present, there is no means of legislating effectively for the existence of the various levels of discrimination which he describes in his paper, it is difficult also to rule in which cases violence perpetrated against an individual are of a racist nature. In consideration of the integrated nature of the issue of violence in everyday life across the spectrum of the Council of Europe's work, this contribution is an important means of creating a vital link between the work of the youth sector and that of the human rights and anti-racist domains alike.

The contribution of Patrick Laclémence brings together the experience of practical crowd control and academic reflection. Dr Laclémence is both a sociologist and a commandant of the French CRS police force. His paper concerns the focus placed on violence in contemporary society and makes the link between what he views as an almost obsessive level of interest in its manifestations, and the increasingly anonymous nature of life in contemporary urban spaces. The two papers provide us with a useful overview of the issues of concern to this publication, opening the way for the specific discussion of violence as it manifests itself in the daily life of young people in the remainder of the publication.

-----> **Violence: le vertige de l'anonymat**

Patrick Laclémence

Le répertoire de la violence se décline aujourd'hui en des formes extrêmement diverses et variées. Une multitude d'actes qui terrorisent une société où les relations humaines sont devenues anonymes dans le mouvement permanent. Evidemment, je n'ai pas la prétention en quelques lignes de synthétiser la problématique de la violence, je veux seulement fournir quelques pistes de réflexion sur l'anonymat lié aux déplacements humains. C'est à partir de ce constat et en évoquant trois paradoxes que nous aborderons un phénomène qui nous contraint à gérer la violence par nos peurs dans un monde où la communication est intensive.

La violence: une exception?

Il convient, tout d'abord, de savoir de quelle violence l'on nous parle. Quelle est son origine? Quelles formes recouvre-t-elle? Y a-t-il progression ou s'agit-il d'une multiplication des formes d'actes? Les barbaries d'hier sont-elles comparables avec les violences d'aujourd'hui? Comment peut-on la combattre? Y a-t-il une violence légitime? Les questions sont multiples et l'approche en la matière ne peut être que pluridisciplinaire. Et l'une des premières interrogations concerne la perception de ce phénomène. C'est sur ce concept qu'il convient aujourd'hui de s'interroger, en reprenant le premier paradoxe, celui de Tocqueville: «Plus un phénomène désagréable diminue, plus ce qu'il en reste devient insupportable.»

C'est là le débat sur la violence dans notre pays démocratique: elle est exceptionnelle mais surgit au beau milieu de la population. Et plus elle est exceptionnelle, plus cette violence, que l'on a tant de mal à canaliser et que l'on annonce sur tous les territoires à la fois, est difficile à saisir dans une société en mouvement. Elle semble gangrener notre société de part et d'autre, et terroriser dans l'anonymat collectif. Entre l'acte et sa version sous-titrée par la médiatisation, elle terrorise celui qui peut s'identifier à une victime. Face à la violence et à ses multiples facettes, les autorités ont beaucoup de difficulté à répondre aux attentes. Bien sûr, elle est inadmissible et chacun est en droit de revendiquer, au-delà de la sécurité, la sûreté¹, mais elle reste très exceptionnelle dans une société humaine qui n'a jamais autant échangé et communiqué qu'aujourd'hui. Ainsi, le mal est peut-être ailleurs. La cité, centrifugeuse moderne des peuples, détruit l'individu.

Les organisations se hiérarchisent pour gérer la proximité dans la multitude des cités urbaines. Les échanges humains se sont multipliés, entraînant une fragmentation des rapports sociaux. Dans ces flux de populations, l'expression de la violence, sur fond d'animalité, a changé d'image, de rythme, d'apparence, d'échelle.

De l'émeute mise en coupe réglée par les échelles de catégories à l'incivilité, que l'on a définie pour expliquer la crise de citoyenneté, tout a été dit. On a même

1. Il est primordial, pour enrayer la surenchère sécurité/insécurité, d'avoir une vision globale de la gestion des risques. C'est la raison pour laquelle, sous la direction de l'université de technologie de Troyes et de l'Institut des hautes études de la sécurité intérieure, un mastère habilité par la Conférence des grandes écoles offre, depuis septembre 2002, une formation en sûreté civile appliquée. L'approche proposée est novatrice et unique en Europe. Alliant le savoir-être des sciences humaines et le savoir-faire des sciences de l'ingénieur, l'orientation du programme est basée sur trois grands thèmes: sécurité des personnes et des biens, sûreté des espaces vie/économie/industrie, sûreté des systèmes et des réseaux.



fini par la stocker sur des fiches. La délinquance se compte et s'additionne, au point que l'on peut effectuer des comparaisons. Dans cet engrenage, la banalisation des chiffres insensibilise et hypersensibilise en même temps. Insensibilité d'une population qui, pour se rassurer, exorcise son mal en le reconnaissant dans des fiches de stockage prévues à cet effet, et hypersensibilité lorsqu'elle s'effraie en confrontant, d'une année sur l'autre, les résultats de la délinquance. La situation est étonnante et ambivalente: la société est terrorisée par une violence qu'elle s'efforce de traiter au quotidien en l'exposant. Pour satisfaire l'opinion publique et répondre à l'émotion, on nous a fourni un fourre-tout: «violences urbaines».

Sous ce terme, on nous annonce pêle-mêle les actes d'agression, les violences de rue, les instincts agressifs, les vengeances tribales, les conflits de territoire, les barbaries des foules, les actes d'incivilité, les dégradations volontaires, les luttes de trafiquants, les extrémistes, les hooligans des stades. Le citoyen finit par avoir beaucoup plus peur d'un tueur anonyme caché dans la foule que des restes des bombes qui traînent un peu partout dans le monde. La violence est alors à l'image de la société, immergée dans l'anonymat collectif.

Et pourtant, nous n'avons jamais été aussi proches les uns des autres. D'ici peu, 90 % de la population de la vieille Europe vivra dans un milieu urbain où l'anonymat n'apporte aucune solution à la fragmentation du lien social. Les grands centres urbains sont devenus des lieux de vie intenses et impersonnels à la fois. Ils engendrent une forme de socialisation occasionnelle. Dans ce contexte, les relations de proximité sont aléatoires et mettent en place une nouvelle forme de spectacle de rue, celui de l'imprévu. Les acteurs de ce quotidien se bousculent, s'entassent, et se croisent dans une cité qui souffre en fait de l'indifférence. La violence, intolérable pour chacun, n'est plus l'affaire de tous. La citoyenneté de rue est recherchée par les passants qui refusent de s'approprier l'espace. Chacun fuit ce moment de vie qui paraît être une parenthèse. Sans un regard pour l'autre, le passant est un étranger. Toutefois, l'anonyme dans la ville vit une passion occulte, celle de l'extase collective.

Et c'est là le deuxième paradoxe: on peut vivre dans l'indifférence et espérer retrouver la communion.

Vivre l'indifférence dans la communion!

De la fête de quartier à celle de la musique et aux clameurs des stades, le déficit de relations est difficile à résorber. Dans ces conditions, la fête du sport sert de relais social. Cela revient à admettre implicitement que les grands spectacles événementiels sont devenus, au fil du temps et compte tenu des enjeux, des identificateurs puissants pour nos sociétés occidentales. C'est admettre aussi que l'individu dans notre collectivité très fragmentée est en recherche de lien social. Ainsi, au-delà du rôle sociétal, le stade est un des lieux où la société civile retrouve exceptionnellement son entièreté comme communauté.

La capacité de ces temples des temps modernes permet d'accueillir dans un espace de quelques kilomètres carrés la population d'une ville, et cela dans une atmosphère d'extase collective. L'architecture monumentale enferme pendant un temps déterminé une foule d'individus soumis à une pression à la fois physique, par le corps à corps, et psychologique, par l'exacerbation d'une identité collective. La joie de vivre l'instant l'emporte sur tout, et les responsables de ce



moment de liesse se retrouvent au pied du mur lorsque les populations sont massées dans les tribunes.

Les organisateurs d'événements tels que les compétitions sportives sont soumis à des risques qui tiennent à la fois à la gestion des foules et la répression de la violence des individus dans la foule. Car les grands regroupements mettent en place un scénario international pendant lequel les supporters viennent de partout pour reconstituer une identité nationale ou locale pour une fois réalisée au corps à corps.

Que ce soit dans les transports en commun, sur une avenue, au centre d'une place, à l'angle d'une rue ou ailleurs, chacun attend ce moment de vie. De l'allégresse d'être ensemble à celle de la communion, le sentiment communautaire nous permet de redécouvrir la joie de vivre un moment de relations.

Les moments d'extase collective ont pris une place prépondérante dans la cité d'aujourd'hui. Ils nous assurent un calendrier où l'homme anonyme peut retrouver une identité. La communion d'un instant s'inscrit dans l'Histoire. Les événements communautaires sont devenus les derniers rendez-vous avec la collectivité; ils représentent les derniers instants de socialisation de nos sociétés modernes, morcelées et fragmentées. Et ce n'est pas un hasard si les stades sont devenus durant le siècle dernier des lieux d'extase.

Combien d'entre nous transgressent les règles de la vie ordinaire dans l'ambiance survoltée d'un stade, dans une ville où chacun vit désormais en individu et où l'anonymat l'emporte sur le collectif?

Etre d'Amsterdam, de Paris, de Rome, de Berlin peut se sentir, se voir, se forger, prendre une apparence aux yeux de tous. Le stade permet à son public de constituer physiquement le corps social. L'identité d'un peuple est réalisée à ciel ouvert. L'espace de communion exacerbe ce sentiment collectif. L'instant, vécu en même temps par toute une population, s'inscrit dans l'histoire de la communauté. L'espace (le stade) et le temps (le match) marquent suffisamment les esprits pour se vivre comme un moment de conscience collective. Est-ce le stade qui est dans la ville ou la ville qui est dans le stade?

Violence et anonymat

En fait, les moments de liesse collective ne peuvent être évoqués en dehors du temps social. Ils en font partie. La communauté qui se rassemble pour fêter est la même que celle qui vit au quotidien dans l'anonymat de la cité ou de la nation. Il n'est donc pas étonnant de retrouver les problèmes de la société civile au stade et ceux du stade dans la société civile. Le débordement d'enthousiasme attire des individus sans existence sociale sur une scène populaire et médiatique capable en quelques instants de les imposer aux yeux du monde. Peut-on s'en étonner, lorsque l'on espère faire vibrer toute une population en exacerbant son identité? Bien sûr, en fonction des pays, les modèles changent, mais le but reste le même: être. Qui sont-ils vraiment? Peut-on les dévisager et enlever le masque qui leur sert de camouflage? Ont-ils un habillage social? Y a-t-il une version sous-titrée et un temps partiel à la violence? Tant de questions!

En suivant ces pistes, il faudrait rechercher, comme le préconise Raymond Boudon, «l'effet de disposition» de l'individu et sa «disposition» dans la société. La stratégie collective de l'action deviendrait alors complexe, se référant à la fois à l'instinct grégaire et à l'agent social pris dans son environnement. Il conviendrait



alors, comme l'ambitionne Pierre Bourdieu, de dépasser tout clivage entre les actions individuelles, les interactions collectives et les interprétations sociales. Il faudrait supposer que l'action violente se fonde sur différents critères mis en concurrence dans cette spirale entre la nature humaine et la structure sociétale.

Toutefois, tant que nous ne saurons pas si la violence est une réponse à notre environnement ou si elle le crée, il faudra la considérer a priori comme un objet d'étude et non comme une source de vitalité, un acte matériel, un geste illicite qui devient, une fois expliqué, une réaction comportementale face à la société. Evidemment, cette analyse de la violence, en tant qu'objet, risque de faire oublier que c'est elle qui est peut-être à l'origine des relations.

Que ce soit au côté de l'incendiaire de voiture, du casseur de vitrine, du perturbateur dans ou autour d'une tribune, du vandale dans la rue, du voyou de quartier, la scène attire irrésistiblement des adolescents avides de sensations fortes. La violence crée la relation et le regroupement prend une forme opaque.

La minorité agissante est rejointe par des figurants. Le noyau dur entouré par une meute de circonstance fait la une des médias. Tout ce petit monde acquiert une existence officielle de bande. Or, les metteurs en scène sont dans la masse des adolescents. Où se trouve celui qui a mis le feu? Où se trouve celui qui a cassé la vitrine? Où se trouve celui qui a mis à sac un magasin? Etc.

Une mauvaise perception des événements entraînerait les décideurs à fournir une réponse globale, ne serait-ce que pour apaiser le sentiment d'insécurité. La situation est délicate et dangereuse. Obligées d'agir très rapidement, les forces de l'ordre abordent le phénomène en cours de processus. L'amalgame donne un statut collectif d'acteur à tous ceux qui sont là. La violence, de multiforme, finit par être uniformisée et stéréotypée. Elle est réduite à la démonstration globale d'une bande face aux représentants de l'autorité.

La prise d'otage a réussi, les troupes de chocs sont rassemblées et la population est angoissée. Le bal masqué se termine toujours de la même manière: la confrontation avec les représentants de la société.

Le scénario «Nivel» est-il encore possible?

Les agressions finissent par avoir un impact désastreux sur les populations anonymes. Et les exemples ne manquent pas, notamment lors des compétitions sportives de football. En Italie, les groupes «ultras» sont de plus en plus jeunes, violents et impulsifs. Aux Pays-Bas, les auteurs de violence lors des matchs à domicile sont aujourd'hui âgés de 12 à 18 ans (dans les années 1990, les supporters avaient en moyenne de 25 à 30 ans et étaient identifiables). Ils n'hésitent pas à s'en prendre aux femmes, aux enfants et aux supporters de l'équipe locale. Ils sont, telles des hordes, très mobiles et prêts à s'en prendre à tous ceux qui sont sur leur route. Le plus étonnant dans cette spirale de la violence, c'est qu'elle s'exprime à l'encontre de ceux qui soutiennent l'équipe. Ces meutes semblent faire de l'acte d'agression leur seul but et refusent toute culture de hooliganisme. Ils ont repoussé les supporters les plus âgés et frappent sur tous les publics en les poursuivant jusqu'au centre-ville. En fait, les résultats de l'équipe ne les intéressent pas et la violence s'avère être leur vrai mobile.

En Allemagne, la recherche d'une identité sociale a amené un certain nombre d'individus à trouver une manière d'exister aux portes des stades par la violence. Ils finissent par être reconnus pour leur activité. Les mesures éducatives et



répressives ont repoussé les plus violents dans la marginalité. Ainsi, la hiérarchie des tribunes a changé. Dans les années 90, le noyau dur se trouvait au centre et organisait tous les mouvements. Aujourd'hui, les «hools» sont refoulés sur le haut des gradins par des ultras, qui accaparent l'espace pour mettre en place des chorégraphies très démonstratives. La permanence de ces cliques transforme la culture en scénario ultra. Ainsi, le hools vieillit mal. Il se marginalise et exploite l'image négative qui a été transmise par les derniers survivants des temps passés. Croyant être un digne successeur des derniers hools allemands, il adopte un comportement élitiste par rapport aux jeunes générations. Conséquence, il n'y a pas de contact avec les nouvelles générations. De moins en moins nombreux, ils se radicalisent de plus en plus dans leur action.

On se rappelle, en France, le gendarme Nivel, lâchement agressé à Lens. Après plus d'un quart de siècle, sur fond de gestion de crise, tout a été dit sur ce phénomène. Un processus au cours duquel, après avoir identifié les premiers supporters violents émergeant des tribunes, nous avons vu arriver de la ville des acteurs bannis dans la société. Des skinheads aux extrémistes, ils cherchent une célébrité qu'autrement ils n'auraient jamais pu avoir. En bénéficiant de l'image du corps social regroupé exceptionnellement, le voyou venu des rues a porté un nom: «hooligan». Observé et recherché, il s'est peu à peu immergé dans la foule pour mieux la violer. Instrumentalisant la violence, ces actions ont été comptabilisées et analysées pour mieux le combattre. Chaque pays a mis en place des plans de lutte contre la violence. Des cartes d'abonnés données aux supporters néerlandais, aux éducateurs et travailleurs sociaux en Allemagne, à l'accompagnement des supporters en Italie, les différentes approches ont eu une conséquence inattendue: le traitement des acteurs au niveau national a fini par repousser les plus violents sur la scène internationale. Pourchassés chez eux, ils se sont externalisés. Les uns et les autres se sont donné rendez-vous sur les sites web pour créer une autre identité transfrontalière. Ainsi, les politiques sociales nationales ont eu de bons bilans mais ont marginalisé les plus violents sur d'autres scènes. Ils sont devenus de plus en plus mobiles, prônant une représentation élitiste à l'instar des hools allemands. Refusant toute forme d'autorité, ils entretiennent leur notoriété en frappant très rapidement au cœur des flux de population. De plus en plus âgés, ils ne transmettent pas leur culture et se radicalisent en prônant des propagandes extrêmes. Quel résultat!

Aujourd'hui, les politiques socio-éducatives ont réussi à suivre les uns et à refouler les autres sur une autre plate-forme de démonstration: la scène internationale.

En février 2002, à Hambourg, c'est ce genre d'individu de plus de 30 ans qui frappa un jeune garçon de 22 ans jusqu'au coma. Qu'il soit hools, extrémiste ou intégriste, pour survivre il est prêt à plagier le scénario Nivel, voire à aller plus loin. Cette évolution s'inscrit dans le mouvement global de nos sociétés occidentales. Ceux sont les mêmes qui se regroupent à Gênes, Göteborg ou ailleurs pour former ces «commandos de black-block» prêts à gâcher toutes les manifestations et à en découdre avec les forces de l'ordre.

Violence et conscience

L'ouverture sur le monde est sans précédent dans l'histoire de l'humanité. En corollaire, les motifs d'agression se multiplient au rythme des échanges humains, économiques, financiers et sociaux. En perpétuel déplacement, l'individu et la matière parcourent la planète. Et dans une société bruyante et impersonnelle à la fois, les acteurs les plus violents n'ont aucune peine à terroriser. La violence



ne semble plus s'inscrire dans une continuité historique ou sur un territoire déterminé, mais surgir au beau milieu de la population au quotidien. Elle se diffuse si vite qu'elle finit même par être confuse lorsqu'elle se perd dans une collectivité livrée aux secrets des nouveaux modes de communication. Téléphone portable à l'oreille, les uns entretiennent une mystérieuse conversation avec l'au-delà pendant que les autres se croisent sans se voir. La violence prospère au milieu de ces déplacements où le rapport social se résume à la rapidité des contacts. Aujourd'hui, sur les trottoirs de la ville, une nouvelle forme de relations se met en place: l'instantané et l'imaginaire.

Dans cet univers, deux mondes se superposent, celui de la communication et celui de la relation humaine. De la rue à l'intimité du foyer, la correspondance et l'indifférence engendrent une forme de socialisation intéressante, celle de l'anonymat dans une société de confidences intensives.

Et c'est là le troisième paradoxe: l'homme peut être partout et nulle part à la fois.

La violence d'un seul d'entre nous peut rejaillir et terroriser la planète entière. Et depuis le 11 septembre 2001, à New York, la réalité a rejoint la fiction. En replaçant la réflexion sur ce dernier point, la problématique de la violence prend une nouvelle forme, celle de l'immensité de l'inconscience. La pensée peut voyager librement dans un espace sans bornes, sans limites, sans frontières. Dans ce monde, pourrions-nous toujours maîtriser les plus violents? Serons-nous encore capables de faire face à notre violence? D'assumer la différence entre l'agressivité naturelle chez les animaux et la violence hantant le souvenir des hommes? Car c'est bien de cela qu'il s'agit: les scènes de notre violence nous reviennent des profondeurs de la mémoire pour nous obliger à construire cette conscience qui nous a permis, au cours de l'histoire, d'élaborer une morale.

-----> **Multiple, compound and intersectional discrimination²**

Timo Makkonen

The emergence of intersectional analysis

The concepts of “multiple discrimination” and “intersectional discrimination” were initially introduced and analysed by African-American feminist scholars³ in the late 1980s and in the beginning of the 1990s. The introduction of these terms was related to their observation that African-American women faced particular kinds of stereotyping and discrimination not faced by African-American men or other women in general. From there the recognition of these phenomena and their importance has incrementally grown, especially in the field of human rights and in academic circles, where these subjects have already been institutionalised through specific courses on intersectional discrimination, particularly in the United States. As regards the field of international human rights, the adoption of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action by the UN World Conference against Racism in 2001 represented a major milestone in recognising the way discrimination on the basis of origin and on the basis of sex/gender respectively can, and do in fact, interact and produce previously unrecognised forms and manifestations of discrimination.

Despite this positive development the recognition and analysis of multiple and intersectional discrimination by governments and human rights organisations at the national level has, generally speaking, remained rather modest. This has probably to do with the fact that the issue at hand is still a relatively newly recognised one and hence its practical implications have not yet been analysed and articulated in a clear way. The discussion on the subject has also been quite theoretical and abstract in nature, emphasising the need for practical analysis as well as for evidence of the way in which this analysis can be useful in dealing with various real-life problems.

Conceptual issues

Considerable conceptual disorganisation is involved in the discussions around these issues: several different concepts, such as “multiple discrimination”, “double/triple discrimination”, “multidimensional discrimination”, “intersectional discrimination” and “intersectional vulnerability” are used to describe essentially similar or comparable situations. In the social sciences, the concept of “intersectional discrimination” is favoured while references to “multiple discrimination” are scarce, while in the field of human rights the opposite is true. There is thus a need for a single conceptual framework, which is why a suggestion for such a framework will be provided in what follows.

When analysed more closely, it can be observed that the phenomenon under consideration consists of three different main components (situations), for each of which a term can be coined:

- first, there is the situation in which one person suffers from discrimination on several grounds, on the basis of one ground at a time. This is basically a

2. This article is based on a research report entitled “Multiple, compound and intersectional discrimination: Bringing the experiences of the most vulnerable to the fore”, by Timo Makkonen. Abo Akademi Institute for Human Rights. Research Report No. 11 (2002) Available also from the following Internet address <http://www.abo.fi/instut/imr/norfa/timo.pdf>.

3. The most eminent of them being Kimberle Crenshaw.



recognition of the accumulation of distinct discrimination experiences. It is suggested here that this first type of discrimination should be termed multiple discrimination;

- second, this phenomenon refers to a situation in which discrimination on the basis of two or more grounds add to each other to create a situation of compound discrimination;
- third, the phenomenon refers to a situation involving discrimination which is based on several grounds operating and interacting with each other at the same time, and which produces very specific types of discrimination. This one is called intersectional discrimination.

All of these types of discrimination would best be jointly called intersectional discrimination.

Multiple discrimination, as defined above, should thus be taken to describe the phenomenon in which one person is discriminated against on several grounds at different times. A disabled woman may be discriminated against on the basis of her sex in recruitment, and on the basis of her disability in a situation in which an office building is not accessible to persons in wheelchairs, for example. Multiple discrimination is an apt term to describe this kind of situation, as the term “multiple” has mathematical connotations, and as this type of situation is one in which a person suffers discrimination on the basis of, for example gender + disability + age. Exactly because of these mathematical connotations, the term “multiple” (or double, triple and so on) should not be used in connection with situations in which different grounds operate simultaneously and not separately. So, for instance, a disabled woman may experience specific forms of discrimination, in which discrimination on the grounds of being a woman and a disabled person interact, and which should not be called multiple but intersectional discrimination.

This is because in some situations discrimination on the basis of, for example, gender and origin are inseparable in the concrete lives of people to the extent that simplistic mathematical equations are completely out of the question; for instance it would be a grave mistake to assume that the “typical experience of a woman in the USA” + the “typical experience of an African-American in the USA” = the “typical experience of an African-American woman in the USA.”⁴

Compound discrimination should be taken to refer to such a situation in which several grounds for discrimination add to each other at one particular instance: discrimination on the basis of one ground adds to discrimination based on another to create an added burden. There can be two or more types of discrimination at play in a given situation. An illustrative example would be, to continue along the intersection of origin and gender, a situation in which the labour market is segregated on a multiple basis leading to the creation of typical “women’s jobs” and typical “immigrant jobs”. In such a situation the prospects of an immigrant woman finding a job matching her merits are markedly reduced because of compound discrimination.⁵

4. Fredman and Szyszak write: “The cumulative effect of race and sex discrimination is not simply additive. Black women experience problems not shared by either white women or black men”, and provide an example of such a situation: “for instance, in contrast to white women, black women view abortion as a coercive mechanism, and not as a question of autonomy”. Fredman and Szyszak, 1993, p. 221. Quite interesting in the above passage is the way in which the universality of experiences of all women is denied while the universality of experiences of black and respectively white women is supposed instead.

5. See UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women, 2001, p. 10, and Kimberle Crenshaw 2000.



Intersectional discrimination, in its narrower sense, should be taken to refer to a situation in which there is a specific type of discrimination, in which several grounds of discrimination interact concurrently. For instance, minority women may be subject to particular types of prejudices and stereotypes. They may face specific types of racial discrimination, not experienced by men from the same community. Crucial to this kind of intersectional discrimination is thus the specificity of discrimination: a disabled woman may face specific types of discrimination not experienced by disabled men or by women in general. One example of such discrimination would be the unjustified subjection of disabled women to undergo forced sterilisation, of which there is evidence around the world: this kind of discrimination is not experienced by women generally nor by disabled men, at least not anywhere near the same extent as disabled women.

This specificity of intersectional discrimination has been emphasised by Kimberle Crenshaw who has noted that the “intersection of racism and sexism factors into black women’s lives in ways that cannot be captured wholly by looking at the race or gender dimensions of those experiences separately.”⁶

An interesting example of intersectional reasoning is evident in the following case before a US court, which concerned an Asian woman: “Where two bases for discrimination exist, they cannot be neatly reduced to distinct components. Rather than aiding the decisional process, the attempt to bisect a person’s identity at the intersection of race and gender often distorts or ignores the particular nature of their experiences. Like other subclasses under Title VII, Asian women are subject to a set of stereotypes and assumptions shared neither by Asian men nor by white women.”⁷

One might also create a fourth category: that of overlapping discrimination. This would refer to a situation in which a person is discriminated against in one situation on several grounds that operate independently. If, for instance, a firm has a (hidden) policy of not hiring immigrants or disabled people, a disabled immigrant job seeker is discriminated against on two grounds operating simultaneously but individually. In such cases where the employer is aware of the existence of both of these traits it is patently difficult, if not impossible, to establish the grounds on which that person was discriminated against. Yet in other cases one factor may be decisive, in which case the employer never gets beyond this first factor to take note of the other factor. It is enough that the person is an immigrant, for instance, and that he is disabled may or may not add to the decision not to hire that person.

All these types of discrimination would be best called intersectional discrimination, to the extent there is a need for an overarching term. This is because the term is already rather well established, and perhaps best captures the idea of the phenomenon as a whole. However, given that the concept of multiple discrimination is rather exclusively used in the field of human rights, it may be necessary for practical reasons to use that concept as an overarching one in that specific context if conceptual accuracy is not needed – at least until the time that a new conceptual framework is adopted.

6.. Kimberle Crenshaw, 1991, p.1243.

7. Lam v University of Hawaii, 40. F.3d 1551, 1562 (9th Cir. 1994).



Discrimination, disadvantage or subordination?

The definitional issues, however, do not stop there. Should we speak of discrimination, or should we instead speak of, for example, intersectional, compound and multiple disadvantage, subordination or perhaps vulnerability? This question arises because the concept of discrimination is used in different ways, and its use may sometimes be somewhat misleading. As discussed above, discrimination refers primarily to the making of an unjustified distinction, that is to adverse treatment on the basis of, for example, sex, age, origin, etc. Intersectional discrimination is “discrimination” in this sense, as it is about unjustified distinctions and adverse treatment on forbidden grounds. But both in everyday language, as well as in law, one does not necessarily label something as “discrimination” even if there is an element of discrimination involved. The systematic killing of Tutsis by Hutus in Rwanda, though it involved adverse treatment on the basis of ethnic origin, was not, and should not, be described and classified as “racial or ethnic discrimination”, but as “genocide”. Similarly, phenomena such as trafficking⁸ and rape during armed conflicts are often mentioned as prime examples under the rubric of intersectional or multiple discrimination, while there is much more than just discrimination involved. For instance, trafficking, along with its various side-phenomena, violates the right to life, the right to dignity and security, the right to just and favourable conditions of work and the right to health.⁹ There is no reason to reduce trafficking to “mere” discrimination.

None of the suggested terms is able, for different reasons, to be descriptive, unambiguous and wide enough in application to be useful for our purposes. Thus the concepts of discrimination, subordination and vulnerability can all be used depending on the particular context at hand. For all practical purposes, when academic precision is not needed, “intersectional discrimination” should perhaps be used, as the use of the concept has to a certain degree already become customary. But as a general recommendation, one should always use specific concepts (such as “genocide”) where they exist, and use the intersectional terminology for analytical purposes only. Though intersectional discrimination is a very useful notion for the purposes of identifying and combating specific forms of discrimination, the purpose should not be to create such a new overarching category that would replace the existing specific categories of human rights breaches.

Some real life examples of intersectional discrimination

In the following some examples of intersectional discrimination on the basis of gender and ethnic origin are provided.¹⁰

8. Trafficking as a term refers to trafficking in migrants for the purposes of sexual servitude, sweatshop, domestic, or agricultural labour, forced or fictitious “mail order” marriages, as well as buying and selling young women for brothels and strip clubs. Trafficking is essentially about movement of people for the purposes of forced labour or other forms of involuntary servitude. See OSCE 1999.

9. UNHCHR, 2000, p. 8.

10. These examples deal with the intersection of ethnic origin and gender, not because the author would think that this particular intersection would of necessity be the most important or the most worrying one, but because of the simple fact that there are not many data or studies on the other types of intersectional discrimination, a matter which obviously is worrying and indicates a kind of structural discrimination in itself.



The structural intersection of “racial” and ethnic origin and gender is often evident in the labour market.¹¹ For instance in South Africa the unemployment rate is 11.5% for men and 14.7% for women, and when broken down by “race”, 3.9% for white women and 17.9% for black women.¹² The intersection of “race” and gender is obvious, with white males holding the most advantaged position and black females the most disadvantaged position with respect to access to the labour market. Once in the work life, intersectional discrimination often manifests itself in wage disparities.¹³ According to a study carried out in the United States “... for every dollar the average man earned in 1999 in the USA, women earned 72 cents; African-American women earned 65 cents; Latina women earned 52 cents and Asian-Pacific-American women earned 80 cents”.¹⁴ Similar examples can be found the world over.

Evidence exists also of the way in which intersectional discrimination on the basis of gender and origin has effects on the justice systems. Kimberle Crenshaw demonstrated in her analysis of rape trials in the USA that it was much more likely that the offender was acquitted or that he received a lenient punishment, if the victim was a black woman and not a white woman.¹⁵ According to Crenshaw, this possibly was because jurors had been influenced by sexualised propaganda according to which black women are more likely to consent to sex.¹⁶ This is one example of a situation in which black women suffer from specific stereotypes and their consequences in ways that black men or white women do not.

Gender-based sexual and other violence perpetrated against “enemy women” in situations of armed conflict is also a deplorably common real-life example of intersectional discrimination and violence. During the genocide in Rwanda many Tutsi women were gang-raped and made sex slaves to Hutu soldiers.¹⁷ Rape and sexual assaults also took place in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as in Kosovo.¹⁸ In Indonesia, the 1998 riots targeted the Chinese community in general and numerous Chinese women in particular.¹⁹ Such crimes have also reportedly been perpetrated by Russian soldiers in Chechnya.²⁰ Many women decline from reporting the sexual abuse they have experienced, due to a fear of being excluded from their own community, as well as due to fear of rebuffs by the police.²⁰ This means that this kind of intersectional violence and discrimination is particularly likely to remain hidden.

Every year, millions of men, women, and children are trafficked worldwide into conditions amounting to slavery. Among these, many thousands are young women and girls lured, abducted, or sold into forced prostitution and other forms of sexual servitude. For instance in 1997 an estimated 175 000 women and girls were trafficked within the OSCE area alone.²² Intersectional aspects of trafficking

11. This has to a great extent to do with the way in which stereotypes and prejudices regarding the physical and mental abilities of women/men and ethnic minorities/majorities operate, and as regards intersectional discrimination, operate in an additive and interactive way.

12. Georgia Tsaklanganos, 2001.

13. Unifem, 2001, paragraph 27.

14. Women's Institute for Leadership Development for Human Rights.

15. Kimberle Crenshaw, 1991, p. 1269.

16. Kimberle Crenshaw, 2000.

17. Unifem, 2001. Philip Gourevich, 2001.

18. *Idem*.

19. Unifem (a).

20. UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, 2002.

21. See, for example, Unifem (a).

22. OSCE, 1999.



and exploitative migration are rather evident. Among those who are trafficked, clear gender and nationality patterns can be detected.²³ The intersectional aspects of trafficking and other exploitative migration are further underlined by the fact that trafficking and the stigmatisation it arouses affects all women from the ethnic origin associated in popular discourse with trafficking.²⁴ Further disadvantage follows from the fact that trafficked women are often viewed by the authorities as illegal migrants, and hence victims officially labelled and treated as perpetrators, which further aggravates their condition.

Intersectional discrimination and anti-discrimination law and politics

Previously the starting point for both the theory and practice of law has been that discrimination on the basis of origin, and discrimination on the basis of sex/gender are two distinct phenomena that should be dealt with along mutually exclusive lines. This one-dimensional approach is evident, for instance, in the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination as well as in the UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women, as well as in the recent EU directives on equal treatment. However, the assumption that the different forms of discrimination are separate from each other has contributed to the situation in which some manifestations of intersectional discrimination have remained undetected and thus unaddressed in anti-discrimination policies.

This observation emphasises the need for provisions and institutions that are flexible and broad enough in nature even if they are designed to target only one particular kind of discrimination. Thus, for instance, the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) should also address the gender and age dimensions of racism and racial discrimination.

One reason that has previously contributed to the invisibility of intersectional discrimination has to do with the way in which single-issue groups, such as the feminist movement and the anti-racism movement, and their agenda are formed. It is often only such interests that affect all people in a certain group, or the majority of that group, or an elite within that group, that are recognised in the group agenda. This means that experiences, concerns and interests that are particular to a subset of individuals within that group are often excluded from the group agenda. Small groups of people and their needs tend to get lost within broader categories, which on the other hand need to be broad enough in order to influence policy-making. Thus there often are, whether we speak of interest groups or of ethnic groups, people who are disadvantaged within that particular disadvantaged group and the general society alike, people who constitute a minority within a minority. This leads to a situation in which their concerns and interests become the most marginalised ones in the consideration of problems that need to be addressed.²⁵

23. As noted by UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, “trafficking in women and girls frequently involved racist attitudes and perceptions and was often directed at certain racial and ethnic groups, indigenous women and migrants”. UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, 2001, p. 7.

24. European Women’s Lobby, 2001.

25. As noted by the UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, “intersectional subordination by its very nature is often obscured both because it tends to happen to those who are marginalised even within subordinate groups and because existing paradigms do not consistently anticipate the discrimination”. UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, 2001, p. 4.



The identification and remedying of intersectional forms of discrimination are often more complicated than for other types of discrimination, which is another reason why this phenomenon has hitherto not been adequately addressed. Furthermore, intersectional discrimination often involves elements from indirect and structural discrimination in it, while it is direct discrimination that is more easily identified and condemned.

It is important to note also how structural factors contribute to situations of multiple, compound and intersectional discrimination and disadvantage. By structural factors are meant such phenomena as poverty, illiteracy, cultural barriers, linguistic barriers and, for example, globalisation. Emphasis on structural factors stresses the need to analyse in detail the context in which discrimination or other disadvantage takes place. Without such an analysis anti-discrimination policies can never be effective enough.

Another point which is crucial to note in this regard is that multiple, compound and intersectional discrimination may involve discrimination by the general society (out-group discrimination) and/or by one's primary reference group (in-group discrimination). As regards the latter, attention has to be directed at such cultural, religious or traditional practices that, for instance, negatively affect women: in such a situation they face intersectional discrimination on the basis of their gender and origin. Examples of such practices that have aroused concern in, for example, Nordic states include forced marriages, female genital mutilation and "honour" crimes practised by some members of immigrant communities.²⁶ Only such multicultural policies that secure the rights of the individual members of the community along with the group rights of that community are acceptable from the point of view of human rights and anti-discrimination.

Compatibility of the human rights system

Intersectional discrimination poses two major challenges to the system of human rights. First, is the human rights system able to recognise intersectional discrimination, given that such discrimination has in the past remained largely unrecognised? Second, is the legal framework of human rights able to cope with intersectional discrimination?

As regards the first question, it can be noted that as the human rights system, especially within the UN, has increasingly started to recognise the existence of intersectional discrimination, there is nothing that would in principle inhibit the recognition of intersectional discrimination as such. This recognition has, however, been very limited in nature: it is mainly the intersection of origin and gender that has been recognised and addressed, to the exclusion of all other possible intersections. It is very disturbing indeed to note this discriminatory tendency in action which itself aims to address multiple and intersectional discrimination and disadvantage. However, the failure is not entirely that of the system of

26. One might consider the vulnerable situation of an immigrant or minority woman: she may, first of all, face discrimination from the side of the general society on the basis of her origin and on the basis of her gender in various ways (multiple, compound and intersectional discrimination); second, she may face intersectional discrimination on the basis of her gender and because of harmful cultural practices within her own group; third, these forms of discrimination can further interact or accumulate to create an even greater degree of disadvantage and subordination, not to speak of structural disadvantage that is often experienced by a vulnerable group and its members.



human rights, as it cannot recognise phenomena which have not been adequately documented: hence the problem is more that of the lack of production of relevant information and data.

As regards the second question, the ability of the legal framework of international human rights to deal with intersectional discrimination, three observations can be made. First, it is possible that new regulation is needed to address the specific concerns that surface when an intersectional approach is adopted. It is nowadays widely accepted that human rights provisions of general application are not sufficient for the protection of the most vulnerable members of the society, exactly because these rights of universal application do not completely cover their specific situation and needs. Reference in this regard can be made to specialised conventions and declarations that address women, children, disabled people, indigenous and tribal peoples, refugees, migrants and minorities. This kind of approach emphasises that efforts of protection need to be well targeted and specific to the situation and problems faced by persons experiencing, for instance, intersectional discrimination.

Second, one has to take note of the fact that legal instruments and provisions that are grounds-specific differ from each other. Hence the level of protection in situations involving compound or intersectional discrimination is contingent on whether the discrimination on several interacting grounds can be established to constitute discrimination on one specific grounds. Third, given that structural factors, which are to a great extent beyond the reach of discrimination law, do contribute to situations involving intersectional discrimination, it is the consequences of such discrimination and disadvantages that have to be addressed. This means that positive action measures are needed to redress the situation of those suffering from structural intersectional disadvantage. By way of conclusion, then, one can note that there may be a need for further regulation in this field of law.

Benefits and pitfalls of an intersectional approach

The most important benefit of an intersectional approach is its ability to unveil previously unrecognised forms and manifestations of discrimination. Intersectional analysis is also able to detect the various backgrounds and other factors that have contributed to such discrimination and disadvantage. And a more comprehensive understanding of the different forms and background factors behind discrimination and disadvantage obviously provides a better platform for political and legal action aimed at combating discrimination.

There is also one particular pitfall that might emerge from a misuse of the intersectional approach. This is the incorrect assumption that intersectional discrimination is the only form of discrimination, or only form of discrimination worthy of being addressed. This kind of assumption would create new and harmful stereotypes, such as that “all Muslim women are victims of (intersectional) subordination”.

The whole point of an intersectional approach is to detect and analyse discrimination and disadvantage in all of its diversity, and not to render some other forms of discrimination invisible.



Recommendations

Recommendations of a general nature:

- there is a need to mainstream an intersectional approach and analysis into all action on human rights, including the work of the Council of Europe;
- there is a need to promote and adopt an unambiguous conceptual framework for these phenomena;
- a new kind of approach to discrimination should be adopted; this approach has to be holistic and has to be built from the ground up;²⁷
- other intersections besides those of “racial” or ethnic origin and sex/gender need to be increasingly recognised and studied;
- promotion of economic, social and civic rights is especially needed to deal with the many background factors that contribute to intersectional and compound discrimination;
- promotion of positive action which is specifically targeted on those most disadvantaged is particularly needed.

International system for the protection of human rights:

- all human rights bodies need to make a conscious effort at fully integrating an intersectional analysis in their work, and address all kinds of multiple, compound and intersectional discrimination, within the limits of their respective mandates, for example, the CERD Committee as well as ECRI need to take into account fully the gender and age dimensions of racism and racial discrimination;
- treaty bodies and other human rights institutions should request, and engage in, collection of data disaggregated by different grounds, such as origin, sex, health status and age, where viable; qualitative data, including case studies, should be requested in addition to quantitative data;
- it should be considered whether a UN Special Rapporteur on Multiple, Compound and Intersectional Discrimination should be established, especially in order to increase both knowledge and awareness of these phenomena;
- the need to draft new provisions and international human rights instruments, and consider updating existing ones (especially instruments focusing on a single ground) should be assessed;
- as national recognition of multiple, compound and intersectional discrimination is largely lacking, international human rights bodies should work towards raising awareness of these issues and develop recommendations on the ways in which these issues can be acknowledged and tackled on a national level.

Empowerment of vulnerable groups and persons:

- comprehensive and context-sensitive action aiming at the empowerment of all groups vulnerable to intersectional discrimination needs to be taken;

²⁷. Crenshaw argues that “because the specific experiences of ethnically and racially defined women are often obscured within broader categories of race or gender, the full scope of their intersectional vulnerability cannot be known and must in the last analysis, be built from the ground up”. Kimberle Crenshaw, 2000.



- it is extremely important to support in all possible and politically viable ways specific subgroups, including, but not limited to, immigrant, minority and indigenous women, disabled, gay and elderly women and their organisations;
- it is important to facilitate international networking of those groups and individuals who are vulnerable to multiple, compound and intersectional discrimination and disadvantage, such as indigenous women;
- policies aiming at increasing the participation of immigrant, minority and indigenous women in decision- and policy-making need to be taken, including in the field of human rights;
- especially minority and indigenous women need to be made more visible: for this purpose, international and national seminars, symposiums and conferences are most useful and should be funded;
- people vulnerable to multiple, compound or intersectional discrimination, including migrant and disabled women, need to be made aware of their rights;
- whenever studies, on-site visits, human rights missions, election observation missions or other information-gathering activities are carried out, particular attention has to be paid to those most vulnerable, including minority, immigrant and indigenous women, and a conscious effort needs to be taken in order to ensure that their views are properly heard.²⁸

Multiculturalism and harmful in-group practices:

- multicultural policies that at the same time protect the fundamental interests and rights of the group and its members need to be studied and developed; these policies need to acknowledge the dynamic and heterogeneous nature of immigrant, minority and indigenous communities, and should reflect the experiences of marginalised women in order to guarantee their full enjoyment of all rights;
- problems that are internal to vulnerable groups need to be addressed, but this has to be done in a way that does not increase negative attitudes towards that group and also positive matters related to that group need to be taken up for the sake of providing a balanced view on them; these internal problems should principally be addressed in a way suggested by the group itself;
- the development of legal instruments and provisions, both international and national, combating harmful traditional practices, including female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriages, as well as trafficking and gender-based violence during armed conflicts, need to be considered in a comprehensive way from the point of view of intersectional analysis.

Action on a national level:

- the constructive role that the civil society can have in identifying and dealing with intersectional discrimination should be fully recognised;

28. On this question Unifem has noted that “[s]ince community spokespeople are often men, information-gathering activities should specifically seek out the perspectives of women. This may require confronting language barriers, women’s inability to travel freely or learn about opportunities to speak with factfinders, and community norms that pressure women not to speak about their rights violations. For instance, on-site visits should seek access to facilities and sites where women can speak directly to officials and staff should include individuals with gender expertise and female interpreters”. Unifem, 2001, paragraph 42.



- theoretical and practical research on all forms of multiple, compound and intersectional discrimination and disadvantage needs to be taken;
- national legislation, especially integration and immigration laws, need to be reviewed from the point of view of multiple, compound and intersectional discrimination;
- intersectional analysis has to be carried out in drafting and designing all policies and legal instruments;
- a comprehensive human rights education programme should be developed with a view to creating a value system that is supportive of human rights for all;
- support structures need to be established for victims of, in particular, exploitative migration, domestic violence, and in-group discrimination and subordination.

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Part II: Violence and the public sphere



Introduction

The papers in this section can rather loosely be grouped together under the heading of “violence and the public sphere”. That is because they all, in different ways, deal with public manifestations of violence: through football hooliganism, through so-called “race riots” and in the media imagery of violence as glamorous. Despite this red thread, the papers differ significantly from each other, in particular the first from the latter two. Bodin’s paper focuses on the phenomenon of hooliganism in France. He argues that while hooliganism has been generally perceived to be an “Anglo-Saxon” phenomenon it has become a major factor in understanding the organisation of French supporter clubs in recent years. Interestingly, and contrary to popular expectations, the involvement in such acts of violence in the name of a given club is generally the activity of middle class young men. This contradicts the image of the football hooligan as monolithically working class and disaffected.

In contrast, Huq’s paper turns the attention to Britain and, in particular, to the explosion of what were quick to be dubbed “race riots” in several northern English towns in the “long hot summer” of 2001. Huq focuses on the racialised image of the perpetrators of these “disturbances”, as they were known in official discourse; mostly second or third generation British Asians. She demonstrates how the image of “Asians” (people of Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi or Sri Lankan origin) as weak, compliant and estranged from everyday society contrasted strongly with the new image of them as perpetrators of acts of violence and vandalism. To a certain extent this shift has been linked to the popular linkage of acts of violence with Islam in the post-11 September world, and the separation made in such discourse between Muslims and other “Asians”. Despite the fact that this has no bearing in reality – many young people of varying religious backgrounds were involved – this explanation seems to have served as a legitimate explanation from the passage of Asians from “submissive” to “scary”. Moreover, the “riots” appeared to be discontinuous with Britain’s history of “racial unrest”. Comparing the 2001 riots to those of the 1980s, for example, Kundnani remarks: “Their violence was ad hoc, improvised and haphazard. It was no longer the organised community self-defence of 1981, when the Asian Youth Movement burnt down the Hambrough Tavern in Southall, where fascists had gathered, or when twelve members of the Bradford Black United Youth League were arrested for preparing petrol bombs to counter violent fascist incursions into their community. And whereas the 1981 and 1985 uprisings against the police in Brixton, Handsworth, Tottenham and Toxteth had been the violence of a community united

– black and white – in their anger at the “heavy manners’ of the police, the fires this time were lit by the youths of communities falling apart from within, as well as from without; youths whose violence was, therefore, all the more desperate. It was the violence of communities fragmented by colour lines, class lines and police lines. It was the violence of hopelessness. It was the violence of the violated” (Kundnani, <http://www.irr.org.uk/pdf/OldhamBradford.pdf>).

Finally, Murji’s paper deals with another aspect of the intersection of youth, violence and racialisation. In particular, he examines the glamorisation of violence to be found in the lyrics and behaviour of so-called “gangsta rap”. Murji focuses on the way in which media images of these stars of the rap, hip hop and R&B world, are established as gurus of violence followed by millions of young fans the world over. In particular, a strong connection is drawn, in such popular discourse, between black male (sexual) potency and the naturalised “urge” to commit violent crimes. The dominance of the image of the black male as inherently violent is not tempered by any historical analysis of the ways in which violence, strength and sexual prowess have been imposed on black males throughout history, most notably through the experience of slavery. This paper raises some extremely pertinent questions about the tendency to associate violence in everyday life with media images of glamorous violence that often have no grounding in reality. It begs us to consider to what extent there is a causal link between the proliferation of these images and the actual perpetration of violence or to what extent record companies and the media have created symbols that are easily saleable because they conform to the racist images of racialised masculinities that have become internalised by western societies.



-----> Hooliganisme: de la question de l'anomie sociale et du déterminisme

Dominique Bodin

Les violences des foules sportives qui se donnent à voir dans, à proximité ou même parfois loin des stades, communément dénommées hooliganisme, concernent essentiellement les publics juvéniles. A contrario des idées reçues, ces violences ne répondent pas à la logique du déterminisme social. Elles prennent source à la «période de latence psychosociale», les jeunes hooligans n'ayant encore ni intégré, ni rejoint les rôles et les statuts d'adultes empreints de retenue, et s'inscrivant dans une logique de concurrence intergroupes et de construction identitaire. Un des facteurs principaux de l'émergence de ces violences juvéniles est le contexte d'anomie sociale dans lequel s'exerce l'activité de ces supporters.

Mots clefs: hooliganisme, jeunes, anomie sociale, déterminisme social.

Introduction

Après avoir longtemps collaboré avec le professeur E. Debarbieux sur la violence en milieu scolaire, mes travaux portent sur la question de la délinquance et de la déviance juvénile abordée selon deux axes principaux:

- le sport en tant que porteur ou catalyseur de violences: c'est mon travail sur le hooliganisme, qui a donné lieu à différentes publications dont *Hooliganisme, vérités et mensonges*;
- le sport comme moyen de prévention des violences: c'est le travail mené durant trois années sur la question du «sport dans la cité» et, depuis quelques mois, sur la question du «sport en prison».

Ce chapitre est le fruit d'un travail de recherche qui dure depuis 1994 et qui m'a amené à interroger 131 supporters/hooligans membres des noyaux durs des clubs de supporters, à questionner près de 2 500 supporters et à travailler en immersion avec eux et parmi eux, que ce soit à l'Olympique de Marseille ou au Paris Saint-Germain, au Toulouse FC, aux Girondins de Bordeaux, au FC Nantes, au RC Lyon, à l'AS Saint-Etienne et au Stade Rennais FC.

Anomie et déviance

La sociologie de la déviance²⁸ a depuis longtemps montré qu'une situation d'anomie, d'absence de normes (du grec *a-nomos*) ou de délitement et de perte de sens de ces dernières, pouvait engendrer des comportements violents ou délinquants. Le concept d'anomie dont l'ambition était de préciser la «notion vague de dérèglement social» (Boudon & Bourricaud, 1982) est en fait un «nid de concepts» (Boudon & Bourricaud, *op. cit.*), comme le montre, entre autres, l'utilisation différente qu'a pu en faire Durkheim dans *De la division du travail* (1893) et *Le suicide* (1897). Merton (1965), en introduisant la notion de «désorganisation sociale», considère la déviance comme marquant une rupture définitive de certains individus avec les habitudes et les règles habituelles de l'échange social. Etant écartés par les autres membres de la société alors qu'ils poursuivent les mêmes buts, certains individus en arriveraient à développer des conduites déviantes et conflictuelles. L'anomie est considérée alors comme un processus amplificateur venant renforcer l'impossibilité de participer à une action par des

28. Considérée ici comme un contournement des normes et règles communément admises pour régir la vie en société.



moyens licites et conduisant de fait certains individus à la «rébellion» ou à la «contestation». Quelle que soit la position adoptée, l'anomie traduit fondamentalement l'idée d'un dérèglement dans les relations sociales entre un individu, ou un groupe d'individus, et la société.

La question du hooliganisme en France

Parler de hooliganisme en France tient de la gageure tant cette question est déniée, éludée, évitée, au point que le football français semble être le seul en Europe à être épargné par un phénomène qui touche pourtant ce sport dans l'Europe entière.

Parler de hooliganisme oblige donc, bien souvent, à dépasser les représentations sociales, préjugés ou jugements de valeurs qui prévalent en la matière. Ainsi, dans l'imaginaire collectif, le hooligan est anglais, jeune, pauvre ou mal inséré socialement, délinquant dans la vie quotidienne, «étranger» au monde du football; il viendrait au stade uniquement pour y commettre des méfaits, imbibé d'alcool, se revendiquant d'une idéologie d'extrême droite ou appartenant à des groupuscules néo-nazis (Bodin, 1999, 2000, 2002). Se dessine ainsi un portrait archétypique, qui naturalise et sociologise la violence des foules sportives en faisant des hooligans les «bidochons» des stades des temps modernes, où s'exprimerait un populisme au sens poujadiste du terme, c'est-à-dire l'engagement des plus démunis dans des dérives extrémistes visant à la discrimination des individus selon leurs origines ethniques et culturelles et favorisant la préférence nationale dans le but de retrouver place et rang au sein d'une société qui les exclut. Ces représentations sont le plus souvent issues des études anglo-saxonnes des années 1980 reposant sur les statistiques policières. Elles sont de fait fausses et tronquées (Bodin, 1999b).

Ce qui se donne à voir dans les stades de football en France est bien différent des représentations collectives. Il faut tout d'abord accepter l'idée que le hooliganisme, caractérisé essentiellement par les violences physiques entre supporters ou avec les forces de l'ordre et les dégradations de biens et de matériels à l'intérieur ou à l'extérieur des enceintes sportives, n'est pas le seul fait des Anglo-Saxons. Le hooliganisme français est identique en nombre d'affrontements, en fréquence et en dureté à ce que la Grande-Bretagne connaît. Les actes hooligans sont tout simplement moins visibles. La raison essentielle tient à l'efficacité du contrôle social mis en place, qui a conduit les violences à s'exercer loin des stades (Bodin, 1999, 2002). La récente proposition du préfet de Paris (22/10/2002) de faire jouer les matches à risques du PSG hors Parc des Princes prouve bien l'existence de ce phénomène particulier. A toutes les causes explicatives de ces comportements agonistiques (raisons sociales, sportives, âge, etc.) viennent s'ajouter des oppositions idéologiques remarquables dans bon nombre de tribunes françaises. Ainsi, il existe un peu partout en France des hooligans. Pour le contrôleur général Rouibi (1989), la tribune Boulogne «rouge» du PSG est même devenue «hools» dans sa totalité, à partir de la rencontre PSG-Strasbourg du samedi 16/01/93, et l'Olympique de Marseille possède le groupe le plus violent de France: les South Winners.

La genèse du hooliganisme

Un bref rappel historique s'impose. C'est un changement de paradigme qui marque la genèse de la notion de hooliganisme. Celui-ci est apparu en Grande-Bretagne dans les années 1960 et marque le passage d'une violence ritualisée et



dionysiaque, relative à la logique du jeu, à une violence exercée de manière préméditée et organisée. Le terme de hooligan est né d'un jeu de mot de journaliste qui, pour désigner les auteurs d'un nouveau type de comportement violent qui apparut alors, les affubla du nom d'une famille irlandaise particulièrement violente sous le règne de la reine Victoria: les Hoolihans. Jeu de mot, coquille d'imprimerie (le *g* et le *h* se jouxtant sur les claviers anglo-saxons comme sur les claviers Azerty): le terme de hooligan était né. Pour l'anecdote, seuls les Français, les Belges et les Allemands l'utilisent encore, les Anglo-Saxons lui préférant le terme de *thugs* (voyou), qui est aussi le nom d'une secte sanguinaire et adoratrice de Kali en Inde, dénomination aux multiples sens et qui constitue en soi-même un stigmaté.

Les actes de hooliganisme seront tour à tour étudiés – essentiellement dans les pays anglo-saxons, les premiers à connaître ce type de problèmes – sous l'angle des modifications de l'espace social du stade (Ehrenberg, 1991; Sansot, 1990), de l'autonomisation de la jeunesse dans les années 1950/1960, de l'émergence de cultures ou sous-cultures jeunes (*rough*, *skinhead*, *punk*, etc.), de la déstructuration de la classe ouvrière (Taylor, 1971; Clarke, 1973) ou comme le résultat du fonctionnement social de la classe ouvrière sous la forme du lien segmentaire (Eliás & Dunning, 1986), ou encore du point de vue de l'extension du phénomène à l'Europe entière par mimétisme suite aux dramatiques événements du Heysel en 1985.

Football, anomie et hooliganisme

Une reconnaissance déniée aux jeunes supporters du football

Lorsque l'on observe l'organisation, la structuration et les relations entre clubs sportifs et clubs de supporters en basket-ball et en football, le déni de reconnaissance et l'absence de relations devient évidente entre les clubs de football et leurs fans.

Les clubs de supporters du basket-ball et du football se distinguent par l'engagement dans la voie de l'institutionnalisation, de l'officialisation et de la reconnaissance.

Une question d'âge?

Plusieurs explications peuvent être avancées. Tout d'abord, la question de l'âge des supporters, évoquée précédemment, qui se conjugue avec une volonté d'autonomie d'action et de décision, au sortir de l'adolescence et au passage dans la vie adulte. Cet âge influe sur le désir d'indépendance de groupes qui se sont souvent constitués en dehors de toute aide des clubs de football. Ce désir d'indépendance et de réussir seuls en dehors de toute aide extérieure est d'ailleurs exacerbé très fortement lorsque les groupes sont composés d'éléments très jeunes ou rassemblent des personnes issues de quartiers défavorisés et de zones sensibles.

Ainsi, lors de notre première rencontre à Marseille, RZ, un des leaders des South Winners, groupe composé essentiellement de jeunes issus des quartiers nord de Marseille et du Panier, nous a-t-il fièrement montré le local du groupe et les aménagements effectués, insistant, d'une part, sur le fait qu'il était le fruit d'un travail communautaire, réalisé en dehors de toute aide du club, par des adhérents souvent exclus socialement et qui ont su mener à bien de manière indépendante



des choses dont personne ne les croyait capables, et, d'autre part, sur le fait que ce n'est pas comme les Ultras, qui, eux, collaborent avec le club et touchent fréquemment des subsides.²⁹

Cette opposition entre «jeunes» et «vieux» supporters est très nette lorsque l'on observe l'adhésion aux différentes fédérations. Le CCS marseillais, les Violets toulousains font partie de la FAS, mais la moyenne d'âge de leurs supporters est nettement plus élevée que la «normale» – 48 % des supporters «Violets» ont plus de 40 ans –, les Violets refusant même d'accueillir les jeunes supporters depuis leur malheureuse et tragique expérience de 1991.³⁰

Si au football plus de 61 % des supporters ont moins de 25 ans, ils ne sont que 28 % de cette classe d'âge au basket-ball. L'adhésion aux fédérations est un moment de convivialité et d'humanisme où la classe d'âge, souvent associée à une intégration et à un respect plus important des normes sociales, joue un rôle primordial. Pour Galland (1997), les jeunes se distinguent et s'opposent à la génération précédente dans les espaces de liberté et d'autonomie dont disposent les adolescents, et «en prenant de l'âge, les jeunes adoptent progressivement les rôles et les statuts adultes» (Galland, 1998, 28).

Age Sport	17 ans	de 17 à 24 ans	de 25 à 39 ans	de 40 à 59 ans	60 ans et plus	Total
Basket-ball	5,33 % (8)	22,67 % (34)	40,00 % (60)	22,00 % (33)	10,00 % (5)	100 % (150)
Football	10,37 % (45)	51,38 % (223)	29,03 % (126)	7,37 % (32)	1,84 % (8)	100 % (434)
TOTAL	9,08 % (53)	44,01 % (257)	31,85 % (186)	11,13 % (65)	3,94 % (23)	100 % (584)

La dépendance est très significative ($\chi^2 = 68,47$, $ddl = 4$, $1-p = > 99,99$ %).

Figure 1: Catégories d'âge des supporters du basket-ball et du football.³¹

Une distanciation de plus en plus marquée entre supporters et joueurs

La distanciation sans cesse croissante entre les joueurs et les supporters au football observée par Wahl (1990) et d'autres chercheurs se retrouve également dans l'absence de relations entre les dirigeants de clubs et les clubs de supporters. Broussard remarque que «le fossé qui s'élargit entre les fans et le reste d'un club accentue toujours le sentiment d'isolement des plus extrémistes. Ainsi, ignorés ou méprisés par les cadres de leur propre club, ils s'en trouvent renforcés dans leur conviction, finissent par se persuader qu'ils sont les seuls à aimer l'équipe, à la défendre dans l'adversité» (1990, 210-211). Chacun vit à partir d'un objet et d'un lieu commun une existence indépendante en revendiquant le bien-fondé, la pertinence, l'intérêt et la primauté de ses actions.

29. B. Tapie avait cependant octroyé une subvention aux Winners afin qu'ils puissent acquérir leur local.
30. Lors d'un déplacement à Saint-Etienne en 1991, des jeunes supporters des Violets se sont arrêtés en cours de route pour acheter les ingrédients nécessaires à la fabrication de feux de Bengale (sucre...). Durant le trajet, après avoir réalisé le mélange, un mégot est tombé dans le bus, enflammant instantanément celui-ci, et causant un mort et de nombreux blessés dans un état grave. Précisons que le chauffeur du bus avait enlevé, afin que les supporters ne fassent pas de dégâts, les marteaux qui servent à briser les vitres. Le club des Violets est toujours en procès avec certaines familles.

31. Les valeurs du tableau sont les pourcentages en ligne établis sur 584 observations. Ce tableau est construit sur la strate de population «supportérisme» contenant 584 observations et définie par le filtrage suivant: supportérisme = {oui} et Groupes # {Non-réponse; Fan club; Fanatics}.



Deux mondes s'affrontent: les possesseurs du pouvoir décisionnel et financier, représentants de l'ordre établi et de la classe bourgeoise, et ceux, souvent issus des classes populaires, qui revendiquent la passion pour le football et opposent l'aide qu'ils apportent à l'équipe par leurs animations et leur soutien inconditionnel à une simple logique commerciale. Les clubs possèdent en fait deux présidents: le détenteur du capital et «un président parallèle.» (Broussard, *op. cit.*).

A l'image du club de Pau-Orthez, les dirigeants de clubs de basket-ball français entretiennent de réelles relations avec leurs clubs de supporters. Ainsi l'Elan béarnais entend-il aider, favoriser, voire financer l'action de ses supporters, mais également les contrôler afin de prévenir tout incident ou débordement. Les mêmes relations existent au football avec les Violets toulousains, représentatifs chez les supporters de la catégorie qui ne participe pas ou peu aux affrontements. Il existe des liens très étroits avec le club, même si le Toulouse Football Club n'aide pas financièrement ou matériellement ses groupes de supporters.

Ces différentes relations, que l'on peut qualifier de contractuelles, tant au sens moral qu'écrit, semblent pourtant être un élément modérateur du comportement des supporters. Certains délégués à la sécurité remarquent que tout se passe mieux lorsqu'ils «gèrent» eux-mêmes les déplacements de leurs supporters.

Les relations entre les clubs et les Ultras, susceptibles de modérer les incidents et de modifier le comportement belliqueux de certains supporters, sont en fait bien souvent inexistantes au football. Cela tient tant à l'âge des fans et au crédit que les dirigeants leur accordent, comme le suggère Broussard (*op. cit.* 210): «de nombreux présidents, mais aussi la plupart des responsables de ces respectables associations de supporters qui ne représentent qu'eux-mêmes, ne considèrent d'ailleurs pas ces jeunes comme des interlocuteurs valables», qu'à l'inconstance des supporters, en partie due au fait qu'aucune relation contractuelle véritable n'est instaurée. Il s'agit davantage d'une navigation à vue cherchant à se prémunir d'incidents divers que d'une politique de concertation qui considérerait les supporters comme d'authentiques interlocuteurs favorables au développement des clubs.

Le football change d'objet et n'est vraisemblablement plus seulement un sport, ni même un spectacle sportif où les spectateurs peuvent réellement participer à – et être concerné par – son devenir; il est devenu autre chose, dépassant la simple praxis, et la distanciation va s'accroissant entre les clubs, les joueurs et le public à qui il est demandé de plus en plus souvent de payer, de s'asseoir et de se taire, certains dirigeants oubliant, «à force de concentrer leur attention sur les revenus publicitaires et les droits de retransmissions télévisées, à force d'assurer en priorité leur propre promotion [...] qu'après tout le football appartient aussi à ces «cochons de payants» que sont les spectateurs» (Broussard, *op. cit.* 211).

Des relations ambiguës à l'ambiguïté des relations

Une question est fondamentale dans le contrôle, mais surtout dans la prévention de la violence des supporters: le hooliganisme est-il la conséquence d'une désorganisation sociale et d'un vide social utilisés par les supporters ou l'émanation de certains clubs?

Des relations ambiguës...

Le supportérisme s'est développé en France dans les années 1980-1990. On assiste à cette époque à la structuration du Kop de Boulogne, à la création du





CU 84 (Commando Ultra de Marseille en 1984), au groupe UB 85 (Ultras Bordeaux en 1985). Cette période correspond à une situation économiquement difficile où le chômage croît, tout comme l'inflation, et où les jeunes sont en proie à de vives inquiétudes concernant leur insertion sociale.³² L'inscription dans le monde des Ultras est un moyen d'évasion et un exutoire face aux incertitudes sociétales pour la plupart de ces jeunes. Le football est le support privilégié de leur passion. Sport simple et populaire, compréhensible par tous et pratiqué par beaucoup d'entre eux, il exalte la réussite sociale et la méritocratie. Ils s'identifient aux joueurs, au club, à leurs réussites et à leurs échecs.

A cette époque le football se transforme profondément. Il n'est pas encore en situation monopolistique vis-à-vis des médias et a besoin d'attirer un public plus nombreux pour augmenter les recettes, asseoir sa crédibilité et se professionnaliser davantage. En augmentant son public, en offrant des places moins chères, en fournissant un spectacle de plus grande qualité, le football a fort logiquement drainé un public en nombre croissant et de plus en plus passionné. Lorsque ces groupes se sont organisés, les instances dirigeantes du football n'ont pas su, car ce n'était pas leur objet, ou n'ont pas voulu, car ce sujet n'entraînait pas en compte dans leurs finalités, ou s'y sont pris trop tard pour gérer les passions qu'elles ont pourtant de fait créées et suscitées. Les dirigeants ont su gérer l'activité sportive et les retombées économiques mais, en aucun cas, les «effets pervers»³³ dont ils nient ou feignent d'ignorer toute responsabilité.

S'ils n'ont pas obligatoirement ou directement suscité la mise en place d'une quelconque forme de supportérisme, ils ont cependant laissé un vide social qui a permis à ce phénomène de se développer et de s'organiser sans concertation, sans aide, sans communication, mais également sans repères et sans limites. Cette situation pose problème, car ces supporters étaient composés dès l'origine de jeunes (15 à 18 ans), qui non seulement sont traditionnellement plus permissifs en matière de normes sociales que leurs aînés, «condamnant beaucoup moins souvent des comportements déviants ou inciviques [...]» (Galland, 1998, 27), mais également se socialisent dans un espace distinct de celui des adultes, au sein de groupes de pairs et en dehors de toutes normes et règles. L'appartenance au groupe conduira certains, dans une logique de défi, d'opposition, de construction identitaire, de vendetta, d'obtention de statuts et de rôles (Linton, 1936; Goffman, 1961), à adopter des conduites violentes.

Mais dans certains cas, les rapports de police vont plus loin et font état du laxisme total des dirigeants devant l'apparition des formes les plus violentes de supportérisme au sein de leur club. Ainsi le contrôleur général Rouibi note-t-il que «les responsables du PSG m'apparaissent dépassés et effrayés par cette évolution que leur laxisme et leur mercantilisme a passablement encouragée dans le passé [...]» (1989, 4).

Certains supporters du football n'hésitent pas à voir dans le hooliganisme une réelle connivence entre quelques dirigeants de clubs, qu'ils ne nomment pas, et des groupes qui s'avèrent recourir plus souvent que d'autres à la violence. Remarque qui trouve d'ailleurs un écho favorable dans le rapport du contrôleur

32. Le taux de chômage en France en pourcentage de la population active est passé de 3,7 % en 1975 à 11,1 % en 1993 (source INSEE, enquête emploi 1993). Le taux de chômage des jeunes de 16 à 25 ans était de 21 % de la population active en 1994, et de 10 % de l'ensemble de la population de 16 à 25 ans – jeunes scolarisés ou non – (INSEE première, n° 323, juin 1994).

33. Au sens où l'entend Boudon (1977).



général Rouibi, affirmant que «[...] les responsables de la sécurité dans les clubs sont partagés le plus souvent entre des objectifs contradictoires. Sensibilisés par les risques de débordements que représentent les éléments hooligans, ils admettent volontiers que toute équipe de football a besoin de ce type de supporters pour “mettre la pression” sur les joueurs.» (*op. cit.* p. 39).

Exagérés ou pas, ces propos montrent la difficile position du «mouvement supporter» dont le fondement originel était la passion du football et qui, en l'absence de toute collaboration réelle avec les clubs dès leur genèse, est devenu parfois et dans certaines conditions déviant et violent du fait de la compétition accrue entre les groupes, de l'effet catalytique de certains médias, et de l'apparition d'un supportérisme politique.

... à l'ambiguïté des relations

Mais les relations entre clubs et supporters peuvent être également pleines d'ambiguïté. Quelques exemples suffiront à le montrer.

Premier exemple: celui de ce club qui a engagé comme responsable des stewarts³⁴ un ancien supporter néonazi dont la photographie, le montrant en tenue panzer et effectuant le salut nazi, circulait il n'y a pas si longtemps dans tous les clubs de supporters de France.

Deuxième exemple: celui d'un responsable de la sécurité d'un club de 1^{re} division venu demander au commissaire chargé du Parc Lescure d'abandonner les poursuites contre deux supporters arrêtés pour violence dans les tribunes: «préférant régler l'affaire en interne», selon les propres mots de ce délégué.

Troisième exemple, enfin, au Parc Lescure toujours: celui d'un supporter ceinturé par les stewarts bordelais après en avoir molesté un autre et qui s'est avéré être le fils d'un ex-ministre. Il n'a fait l'objet d'aucune poursuite malgré les procédures prévues, en ce cas, de comparution immédiate et la présence du substitut au procureur de la République dans le stade.

Ce ne sont là que des exemples parmi beaucoup d'autres. Le journal *L'Equipe* (18/4/96) se faisait ainsi l'écho de la mise en examen du directeur général du Paris Saint-Germain pour «complicité d'introduction de fumigènes dans une enceinte sportive lors de la rencontre PSG-Metz du 30/3/96», affaire pour laquelle il a été relaxé. Quel sens donner à ces violences? La signification sociale des violences politiques et racistes présentes au PSG est une combinaison de domination et de ségrégation, pour reprendre la typologie de Wieviorka (1998), et non l'expression d'une paupérisation de certaines couches sociales. En effet, «les fondateurs du Kop de Boulogne, notamment les skinheads, sont originaires des classes supérieures (familles d'avocats ou de classes supérieures)» (Mignon, 1995, 31). La tribune Boulogne est devenue une tribune politique, visant au recrutement d'éléments nouveaux mais servant également de vitrine. Si aujourd'hui les drapeaux celtiques n'existent plus dans cette tribune, on peut légitimement s'interroger sur les raisons qui ont conduit les dirigeants du PSG à laisser se développer de pareilles organisations.

34. Personnes chargées de prévenir les incidents dans les stades depuis que la loi «Pasqua» fait obligation aux organisateurs de spectacles sportifs ou culturels d'organiser eux-mêmes la sécurité des stades ou des salles.



Que dire, en effet, lorsqu'un club recrute comme responsable des *stewards*³⁵ un ancien hooligan d'extrême droite? S'il connaît bien le milieu, est-il crédible pour autant auprès de ses anciens condisciples? Certains leaders Ultras font ainsi part de l'intérêt que peuvent trouver les dirigeants dans les débordements de leurs supporters les plus violents et les plus extrémistes: ils se concilient tout à la fois les faveurs d'un public «délicat», tout en faisant peur et pression sur les publics adverses qui n'osent plus venir. Affabulation ou dénigrement?

Où il est question du déterminisme social

La question du déterminisme social est loin d'être évidente au PSG, comme dans le reste du football français. La répartition des PCS montre que tous les hooligans ne sont pas des déshérités sociaux. En effet, tous sexes confondus, 39,21 % d'entre eux sont élèves ou étudiants et 83,7 % sont insérés professionnellement.

37,8 % des «élèves et étudiants violents» ont un père cadre supérieur. Ce chiffre est au-dessus de la moyenne nationale (35,7 %, source ministère de l'Education nationale 2000). 21,3 % ont des parents appartenant aux professions intermédiaires et seulement 3 % d'entre eux ont un parent au moins au chômage. 67,5 % possèdent un bac + 3 ou sont en licence. La catégorie «élèves étudiants» ne relève en rien d'un quelconque défaut dans la structure sociale qui pourrait les conduire à se comporter de manière violente.

La catégorie «chômeurs violents» représente, quant à elle, le double de la population normale du stade. Pourtant peu d'entre eux sont des déshérités sociaux en situation précaire. La plupart (71,17 %) appartiennent à la catégorie des 17-25 ans, diplômés mais en recherche d'un premier emploi, leurs parents ne sont pas exclus socialement. Pour nuancer ces propos, il faut remarquer que les enquêtes ont été essentiellement effectuées entre 1995 et 1998, époque à laquelle le chômage était encore fort. Le taux de chômage des jeunes, leurs difficultés à trouver un premier emploi est évidemment plus important en temps de crise qu'en période de croissance économique ou de plein emploi.

Les «violents insérés professionnellement» ne forment pas une catégorie homogène, bien évidemment. Mais il faut néanmoins remarquer que 12 d'entre eux sont commerçants ou chefs d'entreprise, 41 appartiennent à la catégorie des «cadres et professions intellectuelles supérieures», 30 aux professions intermédiaires. Le point commun n'est donc pas l'appartenance à une classe sociale défavorisée, mais le recours à la violence d'individus socialement hétérogènes. Certes, l'insertion professionnelle n'implique pas obligatoirement l'épanouissement de chacun dans son travail. Certains peuvent ressentir un désarroi ou une désillusion face à des possibilités de mobilité sociale réduites, à des perspectives professionnelles incertaines, ou encore à cause d'une contre-mobilité sociale intergénérationnelle ou personnelle. Nous touchons aux limites de cette étude, qui ne fait pas apparaître les professions précédemment exercées par ces individus. A l'inverse, ils possèdent deux caractéristiques majoritairement communes: 88,2 % d'entre eux sont des hommes et 74,9 % d'entre eux ont moins de 27 ans. Ces observations rejoignent celles de la délinquance ordinaire: l'exclusion ne peut pas expliquer seule la délinquance et les comportements déviants. Elle n'est qu'un facteur de risque parmi d'autres. Ce n'est que «lorsque les désavantages sociaux se cumulent – faible revenu familial, habitat et quartier délabrés, famille

35. Personnes chargées du contrôle des foules dans les stades depuis la loi d'orientation de la sécurité de 1995.



nombreuse – qu'il apparaît une corrélation statistique significative entre pauvreté et délinquance» (Filleule, 2001, 66). Les résultats diffèrent ainsi d'une manière importante des études anglo-saxonnes, issues, rappelons-le, des statistiques policières, alors qu'il s'agit ici d'une enquête de «violence auto-révélée».

La transgression des normes procède ainsi parfois de la convergence d'intérêts. Le football ne trouve-t-il pas son compte ou tout au moins une contrepartie aux activités déviantes de ses supporters dans l'ambiance, l'animation des stades et la logique partisane qu'ils apportent? «Les normes sont transgressées impunément parce que deux groupes [...] trouvent leur avantage mutuel à fermer les yeux sur ces transgressions» (Becker, 1963, 150). Comment expliquer différemment que les feux de Bengale ou les fumigènes puissent être introduits en grand nombre en toute impunité dans les stades alors que la loi Alliot-Marie l'interdit?³⁶

L'anomie participe de la complexité du hooliganisme

La non-application des normes peut cependant être considérée «comme un vecteur de violence» (Bodin, 1999a), comme le montrent les propos du délégué à la sécurité des Girondins de Bordeaux: «Lorsque la loi a été publiée, le calme est revenu dans les tribunes et aux abords du stade mais, lorsqu'ils ont vu petit à petit que rien n'avait changé, qu'ils pouvaient faire comme avant et qu'elle n'était pas appliquée, alors là ils ont remis cela de plus belle.» Propos fermes, lucides et cohérents qui s'opposent aux exemples fournis précédemment et qui montrent, si besoin était, comment la transgression des normes est un construit social, qui s'inscrit dans le cadre d'interactions subtiles et complexes résultant de la compétition intergroupes, des constructions identitaires personnelles et groupales – «l'identité se pose en s'opposant» –, de rites intégratifs mais aussi tout simplement d'un jeu à une période transitoire de la vie où ces supporters qui abandonnent l'adolescence n'ont pas encore intégrés les rôles et les statuts adultes.

La circulaire de la Direction centrale de la sécurité publique est à ce sujet on ne peut plus explicite: «Il apparaît que ce phénomène – le hooliganisme – pourra être contenu à la condition que chaque partenaire prenne ses responsabilités. Les services de police [...]. Les organisateurs qui doivent s'impliquer sans réserves [...] et adopter des positions intransigeantes vis-à-vis des supporters auteurs de délits. Les magistrats qui doivent appliquer les textes [...]» (DCSP, 1995, 5).

Sans adhérer au «tout sécuritaire», et en étant totalement conscient que nos propos s'inscrivent dans une perspective utilitariste de la peine dans laquelle la menace de la répression suffit bien souvent à éviter le passage à l'acte, il est indéniable que les manifestations de violences doivent être sanctionnées. Ces sanctions doivent cependant être justes et adaptées, de façon à ne pas attiser les sentiments d'opposition qui peuvent induire le «début d'une chaîne sans fin: transgression/punition/agression» (Debarbieux, 1992, 23). La socialisation comporte nécessairement une dimension répressive, sous peine de voir disparaître la volonté de chacun à s'auto-contrôler, «condition commune de l'humanité» (Elias & Dunning, *op. cit.* 58).

Certes, ce «dérèglement social» n'est pas le seul facteur explicatif. Mais il est certain que les violences trouvent leur ancrage préférentiellement dans le vide social laissé par les dirigeants de clubs.

36. Loi 93-1282 relative «à la sécurité des manifestations sportives». Lire à ce sujet le texte de Dominique Bodin et Dominique Trouilhet.





Ce n'est pas, en effet, en aidant les supporters «violents» ou «déviant» à échapper aux condamnations qu'ils encourent, ce n'est pas en fermant les yeux sur certaines exactions, ou encore en facilitant le franchissement de quelques interdits que le problème sera résolu. Cette attitude ne fait qu'accentuer le «no man's land» dans lequel ou grâce auquel les exactions se commettent, renforçant ainsi l'impression chez les supporters que le stade est un espace social doté d'une sorte d'extraterritorialité où les conflits peuvent se régler en interne.

Ce vide, ce laisser-aller, ce laisser-faire, cette «complicité» ou cette mansuétude de la part des dirigeants n'est pas sans nous rappeler les propos et travaux de Debarbieux (1996) sur la violence en milieu scolaire. Celle-ci trouve son origine préférentiellement dans les collèges et lycées où existent un conflit d'équipe et un déficit en matière de projet d'établissement.

Et si c'était cela, le fondement de ces phénomènes de violences: l'absence de contrat et de projet commun qui ferait pourtant du football réellement un «fait social total», prenant en compte la société sportive dans son intégralité? Car inclure, collaborer, reconnaître n'est-ce pas une autre manière de mettre en place des droits et des devoirs, des possibles et des interdits?

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-----> **Urban unrest in northern England 2001:
Rhetoric and reality behind the "race riots"**

Rupa Huq

In the course of this paper, I want to attempt to disentangle some of the issues behind the urban unrest witnessed in the UK in the calendar year of 2001 which the media were quick to label "race riots". Images of young British citizens of Asian origin on the rampage filled newspaper front pages for weeks on end. The insurrection took place at an interesting moment, as it occurred at the same time as it could be stated that Asian immigrants have, in some ways, been accepted into mainstream British society. This raises a number of questions. Do these events then demonstrate a crack in the multicultural model of race relations in contemporary Britain or are they an inevitable by-product of integration? Will the rise in support for the far-right BNP (British National Party) following 2001 in the area be a temporary blip or turn out to have more lasting results? I shall explore various causes and consequences of the disturbances which took place across northern England in 2001, using the Lancashire town of Burnley as a case study. An ethnographic episode will follow, drawing on interviews with key figures and further comments made at an anti-BNP political event organised by the local Labour Party and MSF (Manufacturing and Science Federation) trade union in December 2002 exactly a year after the appearance of the official report into the violence. I will however begin by contextualising what I mean by "Asian", what traditional conceptions of this group have been and the accompanying public policy context. I will finally draw the threads of my argument together to make some conclusions for ways forward.

The population of Britain's post-colonial present reflects its imperial past so descendants of its ex-empire are the biggest minority groups in the UK. Thus when the British refer to "Asians", we must be clear that this term does not refer to the entire continent of Asia but, rather more narrowly, to ex-British ruled India that is Pakistan, India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. The main influx of immigration from these countries to the UK took place in the 1960s and 1970s. By the mid 1970s and 1980s academic literature had begun to acknowledge British Asian youth. This was however frequently with a range of negative stereotypes described by Banerjea and Banerjea (1996:113) as revolving around "durable notions of odour, passivity, squareness [conformity] weakness and weirdness in no particular order". Asian youth were most usually present in portrayals on the receiving end of the racist white skinhead sport of "Pakibashing" – derived from an amalgamation of the abbreviated pejorative form of the word "Paki" to connote "Pakistani" and "bashing" that is physical blows (Pearson, 1976). This fed into a general culture of victimology which saw Asians as violence casualties rather than its perpetrators. Hebdige (1979:58) for example wrote: "Less easily assimilated than the West Indians into the host community ... sharply differentiated not only by racial characteristics but by religious rituals, food taboos and a value system which encouraged deference, frugality and profit motive, the Pakistanis were singled out for the brutal attentions of skinheads, black and white alike," raising the spectre of Asians as un-assimilables. These long-received stereotypes of Asian youth explains some of the disbelief which greeted the events of 2001 when Asian youth, along with young whites, in their hundreds took part in the vandalism of shops and throwing of petrol bombs in the towns of Oldham, Burnley and Bradford.



The UK has always prided itself on generally good race relations in broadly following a policy accepting ethnic difference rather than taking the assimilationist model of integration as practised in the secular state of France, for example. The UK school system teaches world religion, for example, and Eid, Diwali and Hannukah are all celebrated alongside Christmas and Easter by pupils in non-denominational establishments. Following the election of New Labour in 1997 the state-funded “single faith school” appeared. The first example was the Al Furq’an School in Birmingham which has a roll of exclusively Muslim pupils and timetable to match within the boundaries of the government’s national curriculum, although the admissions policy does not prevent non-Muslims from applying for places. Labour’s justification for this has been that whilst schools of other faiths, that is Christian denominations, are eligible for such status it is indefensible to allow others not to do so.

Measures of the success of UK racial harmony commonly cited used to include the fact that, until recently, the extreme right had almost no presence in British politics unlike other countries of continental Europe such as Austria and France. Yet by the close of 2002 things were changing. Not only had the riots of 2001 made their mark with various pronouncements and reports having been broadcast worldwide on the television airwaves but the BNP had succeeded in having three councillors elected in Burnley and neighbouring Blackburn. The evidence of 2002 suggests that the Party is organising at grassroots level, using various pubs and public meetings as platforms to build a base aimed at getting a European Parliamentary seat in the north-west UK region. This is the arena in which xenophobic politics work best and where the single transferable vote electoral system coupled with their dispersed concentrations of support may assist their fortunes in 2004.

The years leading up to the riots had already seen some of the old certainties on race challenged from two widely publicised reports. The Runnymede Trust’s Commission on the future of multi-ethnic Britain (Parekh, 2000) addressed the question of national identity and indicated deep uncertainty as to the exact meaning of Britishness in the light of the end of the British colonial era against a background of increasing Europeanisation and wider globalised interdependency. Since 1997 the UK has seen political power devolved away from London to other centres such as the Scottish and Welsh Parliaments, providing reconfigured relationships and new variables in any equation of an all-embracing concept of Britishness. The Runnymede results made front page news with largely negative and highly selective coverage. The headline “British is just another word for prejudice” (*Daily Mirror*, 11 October 2000), was typical of the reporting. A year earlier the watershed McPherson Report, compiled following the racist murder of black teenager Steven Lawrence, came up with a definition of institutional racism which was seen to apply to the Metropolitan Police. This was seen to occur where ethnicity was taken as the criteria for differentiation and to refer to collective action not individuals in either direct, indirect or even unwitting forms. The effects of both of these flashpoint reports could be seen in the clutch of enquiries that appeared after the summer of 2001 which suggested “solutions” to the circumstances and outcomes of the violence.

While there have been recent attempts then to update our received notions of what Britishness may or may not entail, ethnic groups have always been defined in opposition to the British majority population which has for the most part been seen as stable, unproblematic, white and as a discrete entity. Accordingly, popular



wisdom relating to Asians sees this group as consistently holding a set of “Asian values”: the members of this diverse grouping are seen as holding, cohering around traditional dress codes, religious observance, respect for elders, community languages and self-reliance seen in small business and private property (Huq, 1998). A desire to maintain traditional values is seen underscoring all of these elements. These ideas have informed governmental policy research on race relations issues at times, for example the Foreign Office report on forced marriages (2002). Successive post-war British centre left and right wing governments have managed the fact of ethnic diversity with a broad policy of multicultural tolerance coupled with immigration control. This can be crudely summarised with the unofficial dictum “keep them [immigrants] out. Keep those who are in happy”. This seems to have worked with the first generation of Asian settlers who were perceived as a relatively unproblematic group, largely employed in factories or small-scale commerce. By 2001, however, any idea of the authorities pacifying their children seemed to have been exposed as a failure with a summer of violent disorder enacted by Asian youth. So what exactly went on and how can we explain the transition of Asian youth in the popular imagination from peaceful, compliant even cowardly young people to rampaging rioters?

The most memorable images of the riots of 2001 are of police in riot shields – appearing more as Robocop than the traditional British reassuring “bobby on the beat” figure juxtaposed with the burnt out carcasses of cars, damaged shops and businesses. A large spread in the right-wing *Daily Telegraph* carried the headline “City left to smoulder after night of hatred” (9 June 2001) on the subject of unrest in Bradford. In pinpointing causes of the disorder it is instructive to look at the geographical background to the occurrence to the riots. The epicentre of the violence clusters around northern England. Of the towns implicated Bradford lies in west Yorkshire while Burnley and Oldham are in east Lancashire, located in England’s north west. The nearest major urban conglomeration to both is Manchester. Characteristic of this stretch of the UK is industrial decline. These are mill-towns based on the once prosperous and now non-existent cotton trade. The parents of many of the youth who were active in the 2001 riots were recruited to the UK to work in the textiles industry yet by the 1980s found themselves unemployed. By the 1990s and beginning of the new century with the collapse of the UK’s manufacturing base their children are now often faced with low level service sector work such as driving minicabs (Kalra, 2000). Another growth industry in some parts of the north have been telephone call centres sited thus due to comparatively inexpensive labour and land. Indeed these considerations led to the North West Development Agency advertising campaign proclaiming “It’s grim down south” in an inversion/rewrite of the 1989 JAMMS hit song title “It’s grim up north” to encourage businesses to invest in the region. The economic explanation for the 2001 violence could be taken alongside the concurrent specifically London-centric and highly selective media adoption of imagery of Asians as “fashionable”. Such ideas were fuelled by Tony Blair’s “cool Britannia” initiative to update traditional images of Britain with more forward-looking culturally diverse ones using personalities such as the Mercury prize-winning musician Talvin Singh or the team behind the hit BBC comedy series *Goodness gracious me*. This glossy version of Asianess can be seen as superficial and metropolitan, ignoring the daily realities for many British Asians.

A second explanation for the disturbances can be seen in the argument that this sort of activity is almost inevitable. This can be interpreted in a number of ways. Asian youth violence contradicts received notions of Asians as weak, inert and



pacifist but the rioting could be seen as signifying Asian offending coming into line with that of the indigenous population or indeed that of other ethnic minorities. In the 1980s young black African-Caribbeans, drawn from much longer established minority groupings in the UK, expressed their dissatisfaction with the Thatcher government and rising unemployment with riots in Moss Side in Manchester, Brixton in south London and Toxteth in Liverpool among other places. Inevitability can also explain the parallel mainstream acceptance of British Asian arts across the spheres of music, drama and comedy on, for example, the BBC. Whereas the first generation had basic concerns to establish themselves in a new country, seeking employment and residential security, their children can use these foundations in ways that the parent generation, constrained by the imagery of “back home” which has been termed “the myth of return” (Anwar, 1979), were unable to do. Today’s British Asian youth are just that: British and Asian and therefore do not behave with the same deference that their parent’s generation did. Kaur and Kalra (1996:219) have gone as far as to coin the neologism “Brasian” which “refers to the complex subject positions of migrants and their offspring settled in Britain with links both imagined and material to South Asia. It is intended to be an open term, beginning the exploration of shifting identifications”. Amin (2002:9) goes further in stating: “By asserting a presence on their own terms within British public life, the Asian youths challenged those that want to keep them in their own minority spaces, and they unsettled the majority opinion that minorities should behave in a certain way in public (essentially by giving up all their folkloristic cultural practices). It is this disruption of the racialised coding of British civic and public culture that has made these riots politically significant”.

Whilst the last decade or so has seen a disaggregating of the once widely used singular term “black” (used in a dualism with “white”) into “black and Asian”, it is not clear that Asians themselves identify with a hybridic pan-Asian identity akin to that which the media conceptualises them as adhering to in some of its celebratory reports of Asian youth culture. The British use of the term “Asian” is narrow for reducing an entire continent to ex-British India but it is also paradoxically wide for aggregating people of diverse linguistic, religious and cultural practices together: Pakistanis, Bangladeshis and Indians who between them speak Punjabi, Hindi, Gujarati, Urdu and Bengali not to mention numerous dialects such as the Bengali-derived Sylheti. Various published studies have shown that most Asians reject defining themselves as “black” (for example, Bauman 1996) although this is a term that can still be used in a political sense, for example in the title of the largely Asian organised west London pressure group Southall Black Sisters.

Following the 2001 violence some Hindus sought to distance themselves from the events, labelling them as “Muslim riots” as opposed to “Asian riots” given that Bradford, Burnley and Oldham are principally areas of minority Bangladeshi and Pakistani settlement (*Hindustva News*, 2001). Following the terrorist attacks on the US on 11 September 2001 the UK has witnessed increasing numbers of physical attacks on Muslims and reportedly also other British Asians. It has been widely commented (Amin, 2002) that 11 September has legitimated racist feeling directed towards Muslims. Such sentiment since the early 1990s with events such as the controversy surrounding Salman Rushdie’s book *The Satanic Verses* has bequeathed a new term into the English language: “Islamophobia”, initially the subject of a ground-breaking report that was concerned with its definition (Runnymede Trust, 1997), although now accepted as a given, as seen in its use without definition by Amin (2002). The practice of Islamophobia in varying degree





has oddly united the extreme right with other non-Muslim Asians. Extreme Muslim groups such as Hiz B'ut Tahrir and Al Khalifa have become increasingly vocal on university campuses in the UK. However it is all too easy to attribute the violence mistakenly to Islam itself when other structural factors have been at play. After all there is evidence of Hindu and Sikh gang activity in, for example, the district of Southall in west London (Gillespie 1995).

The last and most controversial explanation for the Asian youth violence of 2001 has been that indicated by a number of official reports on the troubles: the failure of public policy and in particular British multiculturalism as practised since the 1980s. The official enquiry into the 2001 disturbances, the Cattle report of 2001, blamed segregation, both in residential and educational terms, as the cause for the riots, this being seen as a by-product of multiculturalism. One of the most controversial and much quoted aspects of the report was that ethnic groups in the implicated areas had been leading “parallel lives” and not interacting with the white mainstream population. Faith schools were warned against in the conclusions. Home secretary David Blunkett blamed a lack of civic values. Suggested ways forward include the idea that children should grow up speaking English in the home as opposed to community languages. Such suggestions have angered many liberals. Political imperatives may be part of the explanation to the advancing of these solutions. It has been a longstanding strategy of Labour to reclaim the ground of the law and order agenda which has traditionally been seen as a right-wing issue from its Conservative opponents. In comments coinciding with the publication of the reports, Faz Hakim, a former race adviser to the government wrote (*The Guardian*, 12 December 2001) that Blunkett “wants to prove he is no soft touch on race, not politically correct, and who will stand up for white Britons. This isn't the time to do it.” She has also claimed that there is a tension between wooing Asian voters and pacifying the white electorate. None the less there is often a gulf between the initiatives favoured by central government and the pace of change in local government at municipal level and vice versa. It is this mismatch of expectations and realities that I wish to examine in the next section of this paper in which I return to a concrete example of an area which witnessed some of the violence in 2001: Burnley in east Lancashire.

Ethnographic case study: Burnley 2002, a year after the reports

Smoking chimneys and desolate, boarded-up industrial buildings long since deserted by industry signal the approach to Burnley on the train in. The architecture is largely of the heavy-set stone variety built from the Victorian era to the turn of the (twentieth) century. The overall solid, if occasionally stolid landscape is typical of many parts of north-west England with the same socioeconomic background. The rain beats down on Burnley. Buses come and go on the winding main Manchester Road as I disembark from the train. The scene seems humdrum enough yet Burnley, here in this corner of east Lancashire out towards Yorkshire is now known as the racist capital of Britain. Here in this former mill-town in 2002 three councillors were elected from the far right BNP (British Nationalist Party) – an unprecedented result in the UK. The results can be traced further back however, including the incidence of what many were quick to term youth-initiated “rioting” in the town the summer beforehand but what is known in official terminology as “disturbances”. The fact that both the extreme right and young immigrants were implicated in the violence meant that the events fast took on the significance of “race riots”. I want however to examine what lies behind the



headlines of 2001 and explore further some of the causes and consequences of the events that took place that summer.

It's a bitterly cold Saturday afternoon in December 2002. Alice is 74 years old and a stalwart of Burnley Labour Party. As a handful of campaigners including some who have come into the area from outside for a weekend of political activity to organise against the BNP, she applies herself with vigour, despite the intermittent lashings of rain, to the task of distributing leaflets advertising the New Labour government's tax cuts for working people. We are in a town where significantly 40% of households depend on state benefits (Clarke, 2001). A common theme that keeps recurring in conversations with anti-BNP sympathisers is the idea of perceptions and misperceptions. "This area's seen different influxes," explains Alice. "A hundred years ago it was the Irish navvies. More recently [over the last 30 years] it's been the Asians. They are seen to keep themselves to themselves, to not mix with us [whites] and congregate together. There's this idea that all the money is going to the Asian areas but it's natural that people want to live where their own are. It's just convenient to scapegoat Asians. People always want someone to blame." As is the case elsewhere, the areas of the town that have qualified for central and local government funding as well as money from Europe's Single Regeneration Budget include neighbourhoods predominantly inhabited by Asian residents. Yet this is because across England's north, it is often the Asians that were left in poorer inner-city districts with older terraced housing after white people moved out towards more prosperous suburban areas. Alice is a veteran of various left wing causes including the peace movement at Greenham Common and the miner's strike of 1984. She is well-placed to have noticed change in the character of Burnley in her time. How would she explain the events of 2001? "There was an element of suspicion", she begins. "It didn't really surprise me."

Many of the voters of Burnley out doing their Christmas shopping in the pedestrianised 1960s concrete precinct of Burnley town centre are indifferent to the leafleting process going on. "Labour?" enquires a white man, who I would judge to be in his forties. "Give the firefighters a working wage", he suggests alluding to the fire union industrial dispute under way where a salary increase of 40% is being sought. A middle-aged white woman makes a comment about Cherie Blair. "The press are picking on her and she's a lovely lass", she claims referring to a scandal that the Prime Minister's wife has got herself embroiled in. People aren't really making comments to me. Most hurry by. Some refuse the leaflets I proffer. I wonder if it may be due their BNP affiliations and my obvious brown-skinned appearance. The most open controversy that I witness are youth taking the balloons that we are also handing out in order to puncture them and inhale the helium for prankster purposes thus giving them high pitched squeaky voices. Some of the other team members have other reactions though. Dave who has come along from Stockport to lend support to Labour in Burnley has a long discussion with a family. He relates some of the conversation to me afterwards. The husband apparently confessed to having voted BNP in the last lot of council elections, much to his wife's horror. "Look at the state of round here", he had urged, justifying the choice in Burnley's decline. "The people at Westminster need to be sent a message", he had insisted. This man is not alone. The BNP polled 10 000 votes in 2001 in the town. All the wards in which they were elected are predominantly white. The town's member of parliament Peter Pike like Alice claims of the BNP success: "It didn't come as a surprise to me. I could feel the undercurrent of tension".





Back in London, central government are relaying a message of community cohesion, a term that does not seem to be in particularly common usage on the streets of Burnley. The leader of the local council Stuart Caddy sniffily dismisses it as a “buzzword”. He is scornful of the official enquiry into the events, the Cante report and its chair Ted Cante both for their methods employed and the conclusions reached. “There were six pages on Burnley and eighty-eight recommendations”, Caddy asserts. “I said to them ‘thank you for the eighty-eight recommendations but an 11-year old child could have wrote them.’ He [Cante] spent half a day in Burnley in Daneshouse and Stoneyholme [areas of the disturbances]. Ten of them [government officials] came in four chauffeur-driven £50 000 Mercedes. They left after half a day and wrote six pages on Burnley. I told them that it was a sham and a disgrace. Cohesiveness should start with the community. It’s not about segregation as the report put it.” Caddy attributes events surrounding BNP success in Burnley to a problem of misperceptions. As council leader he proficiently reels off numerous statistics illustrating how Burnley Council has received external monies from various sources £5 million from the Surestart, £20 million SRB and £350 000 community cohesion funds. However if people do not recognise tangible results this seems to have little effect.

Colette Bailey is councillor for Rosehill and Burnley Wood where the headquarters of the campaigning event to beat the BNP are. The surroundings look pleasant enough but Bailey describes large swathes of her constituency elsewhere as “a wilderness of nothing, a mass of dereliction”. She is unimpressed with the actions of the Labour government that is perceived as having failed its people; Burnley’s core voters who have always stayed loyal to the party including during the period whilst much of the United Kingdom deserted Labour in the 1980s and 1990s when it was out of power nationally for eighteen years. “Burnley wanted a sticking plaster twenty years ago. Now it’s in need of a blood transfusion because it’s dying”, she declares. Like the man in the shopping centre who openly admitted voting BNP, many feel powerless. There is a sense that decisions are being taken elsewhere; be it London or at a European level against a background of which “bogus” asylum-seeker issues play on people’s fears and EU enlargement ushering in migration from the former eastern bloc is seen as a threat rather than an opportunity. Back at the last general election, money was allegedly promised by “the big guns from London” who put in appearances aimed at delivering votes. “Come up and smile at us but don’t go away and forget us – that’s exactly what they [central government] are doing”, implores Bailey.

Many are quick to point out that Burnley itself is not racist but that the 2002 BNP result was largely a protest vote against the status quo and Labour domination. Stuart Caddy claims: “Whatever happened in Burnley could happen in any city or town in the country”. Indeed Burnley is not an isolated case. Oldham in Lancashire and Bradford in Yorkshire have seen similar youth violence with ethnic minorities implicated. Exploiting the economically depressed situation and blaming both Labour and new Commonwealth immigrants in these towns is an undeniable factor in the BNP’s electoral strategy. The closure of Burnley’s Michelin factory, for example, saw a loss of 420 jobs from the town. There is no university or higher education institution in east Lancashire. Many of the first generation Asians in the area came to work in textiles rather than following the more entrepreneurial small-business template of other Asian communities elsewhere. The Asians themselves are largely from the Pakistani community with a minority of Bangladeshis. Whilst out leafleting I encounter a young Bangladeshi man with his veiled wife and two daughters and am curious to gauge his opinion. It is clear



from his accent that he is from the Sylhet region of Bangladesh. Here he works as a waiter in an Indian restaurant. I ask about how things are living in the town, if not exactly throwing in the phrase “the UK’s racist capital”, alluding to it. He shrugs claiming that things are not bad and that he was down in London in Aldgate (a well known area of high concentration of Bengalis to the east of the city) on the days concerned. Stuart Caddy too is careful to play down the significance of the events that were so widely reported by the press in summer 2001. He rejects them being called riots, for example. “That weekend, the Sunday, was the one shown all over the world. That was about 100 white youths who’d been on beer since 7.30 that evening on the hottest day of the year. That was the cause. Not one indigenous person struck an Asian. Not one Asian struck an indigenous person. It was dreadful, shameful. Ninety-nine per cent of people didn’t know anything about it until they saw it on TV or in the papers the next day.” Others cite the attack of an Asian taxi driver as the provocation for three nights of rioting that resulted in thousands of pounds of destruction to property.

Whilst the campaigning event that took place in late 2002 described above was convened specifically to address the electoral strength of the BNP rather than investigate the 2001 violence, the two are inextricably linked. The case of Burnley is in some ways generalisable to the other areas where the disorders of 2001 took place, although obviously there will be unique circumstances in each case. There are clearly a number of grievances in Burnley. Housing is widely seen as a key problem with some 4 500 residential properties empty and many others in a poor state of repair judged unfit for habitation. According to the Clarke report of 2001 “Burnley speaks, who listens” compiled by a local task force, Asians comprise 7.5% of the 90 000-strong population although amongst many of the white population this is perceived to be at a much higher level. Education too is a related problem as many parents cannot get their children into their first choice school and there is resistance from them in accepting places at what are seen to be “Asian schools” – again signalling an undercurrent of racism. Environmentally there are other difficulties connected to broader quality of life issues. Some of these can be relatively small-scale such as litter and garden fences in disrepair. Such issues nevertheless have the cumulative effect of breeding resentment that is ripe for exploitation by white racists along with the collapse of traditional manufacturing industry and presence of minorities. In Burnley the BNP have opposed multicultural initiatives such as the council’s race equality unit and translation and interpretation services although they have followed a policy of not speaking or voting in the council chamber. Gary Titley MEP warned at the campaigning event “The BNP fill a vacuum. It’s up to us to prevent that happening.”

Discussion and conclusion

A number of policy reports have now appeared on the subject of the disturbances of the “long hot summer” of 2001 with various recommendations. As well as the Cattle Review Commission and the Burnley Task Force findings discussed above there has been the Ousley report on Bradford (2001), the Ritchie and Audit Commission reports on Oldham and the Home Office’s Denham Report which took its name from the minister John Denham. Other publications on related issues if not precisely the riots themselves include those of Amin (2002), Bemelmans and Freitas (2001) and Choudhury (2002). The reports between them shared certain common themes. Urban regeneration was urged by all alongside a recognition of poor council management of services and claims of misunderstanding between ethnic communities. The phrase “community cohesion” too emerged as a result of



these, although we have seen how some have dismissed it as a meaningless sound bite. Reverberations continue to be felt. A meeting held at the Home Office in December 2002 with various policy makers, community leaders and the Minister Lord Filkin began to discuss whether it may be worth considering British Muslim alienation and exclusion in isolation from subsumed “ethnic minority” issues at large. The urban disorder then did not start and end with the actions of the rioters in the summer of 2001. In September 2002 the Bradford rioters received their sentences. A petition of 3 000 local signatures collected in protest at the supposed harshness of the penalties imposed was presented to the Home Secretary in London. Again political concerns and in this case an element of making a public example of those involved to act as a deterrent was claimed by demonstrators.

If we look at the possible explanations for the summer 2001 violence in the UK – structural reasons, cyclical inevitability, the failure of multiculturalism and Islam – there are probably elements of each of the above that have some resonance. Islam per se is not in itself a contributory factor but its exploitation by the neo-fascist BNP who did much to provoke the troubles by, for example, holding rallies in Oldham and Bradford is a consideration in fuelling the flames of the riots. It has been claimed by numerous Labour activists in Burnley that the election of BNP councillors there has made the open expression of racist sentiment acceptable in the same way as 11 September acted as a trigger for isolated anti-Muslim attacks on both individuals and mosques. While many whites have felt that local authorities and the government have ignored their needs, UK Muslims too have often felt the same way for various reasons not least of all in foreign policy terms where the government line on Palestine, Kashmir and Iraq are all sources of discontent. We should also rethink the old idea of “Asian values”. These were always suspect and obviously change across generations. Amin (2002:6) rightly rejects the segregationist claims of the reports into the riots that hark back to early academic work that saw Asians as unassimilable, claiming “rather too much has been made of Asian retreat to preserve diaspora traditions and Muslim values, while not enough has been said about white flight into outer estates as ethno-cultural in character – deliberately escaping Asian ethnic contamination and wanting to preserve white Englishness”. Perhaps rather than blaming a single cause, mixed models offer the most fruitful way forward. It is also important not to conflate the disturbances to issues of immigration or asylum seekers as the BNP seek to do in their literature. Those who were responsible were second generation British-born Asians as well as white racist youth.

Young British Asians have demonstrated a new willingness not to be subordinated and their actions have caused a serious rethink of various areas of public policy provoking, for example, a debate on citizenship which has never really been a big issue in the UK where we are traditionally conceived of as subjects (loyal to Her Majesty the Queen) as opposed to citizens. The riots were seen as headline-worthy but in some ways they can be seen to signal continuity. Riot and affray are not new to the UK as the history books show. Davies (2001:28) claims of Bradford: “Similar types of unrest which have occurred in white areas received much less publicity”. Alexander (2000) puts forward a similar argument seeing Asian gangs and violence as a new folk devil for the media. The 1847 Indian Mutiny also demonstrates that Asians too have not traditionally been immune to this. The combination of circumstances that culminated in what was dubbed by the media paraphrasing Shakespeare as the “summer of discontent” of 2001 are,



however, a historic first. Whether they are a one-off occurrence or set the scene for further repeated instances remains to be seen.

Fieldwork note

The meeting referred to was entitled “Campaigning to win in May”, organised by MSF and Burnley Constituency Labour Party held at Rosehill House Hotel, Rosehill Avenue, Burnley 14 December 2002.

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-----> **Gangsta glamour: youth, violence and racialised masculinities**

Karim Murji

“So solid, ladies and gentleman, I’m about to resort to violence. Yo, this is a So Solid criminal gangster production, Listen ‘cause you don’t play games you know trust me, Ha Ha Ha Ha”. These words are the opening to a recent song by UK garage pop group So Solid Crew.³⁷ In the past couple of years this group, whose members hail from south London, has been the subject of sometimes intense media coverage. So Solid Crew has been accused of encouraging a “gangsta” (gangster) culture through their lyrics and demeanour, and of promoting a culture of violence, particularly among their young black fans. This chapter draws upon some of the media coverage of this group to situate gangsta culture’s supposed influence on young people who are seduced by its images of drugs, violence, guns and gangs. So Solid Crew and rap/hip hop and related musical styles are accused of making these associations seem worth emulating and thereby promoting criminality. For some, this sense of glamour is seen as sufficiently powerful to be implicated in rising crime rates, ranging from minor theft to gang wars and murder. I argue that a view of such assumed influence is itself problematic and, more than that, actively misleading in understanding issues about young people, consumption and violence. I focus mostly on the UK, and to a lesser extent on “gangsta rap” and violence in the USA. This has the disadvantage that the situation in various European countries is not examined here, though there are elements of the global and transnational media and of the circulation of labels, styles and patterns of consumption that may also apply to some extent to the European mainland.

In drawing upon the media as a source I consider representations and discourses about crime and violence. I realise there is a danger that this may seem to ignore the “reality” of gang and street violence. Consequently, at the outset, it is important to say that I do not believe it is useful to draw an artificial distinction between representation and reality. Reality is subject to discourses of representation; this means that the media cannot be seen simply in terms of distortion and misrepresentation. Rather, the media plays “a part in the formulation, in the constitution, of the things they reflect. It is not that there is a world outside, ‘out there’, which exists free of the discourse of representation. What is ‘out there’ is, in part, constituted by how it is represented” (Giroux, 1996: 51).

An immediate parallel between the coverage of rap and hip hop musicians in the USA and UK is that they are accused not merely of singing about violence in everyday life but of actually having a personal involvement in gang culture. Individual members of So Solid Crew have been convicted for possession of a shotgun, accused of murder and of serious assault and, in 2001, the group’s UK tour was curtailed because of fears about violence at their concerts. Similarly, commenting on *Newsweek*’s cover story of US rapper Snoop Doggy Dogg, Giroux (1996: 28) notes that “according to *Newsweek*, violence is not just in the music – it is also embodied in the lifestyles of the rappers who produce it... Citing a wave of arrests among prominent rappers, the [magazine] reinforces the emergence of crime as a racially coded word associating black youth with violence”. The association between young blacks and violence positions them – and rap singers – as

37. “They don’t know”, taken from the CD of the same title by So Solid Crew (Independiente, 2001) which has sold around 600 000 copies.





both victims and perpetrators. Rivalries between east coast/west coast rappers in the USA have been held to be complicit in the violence that led to the violent deaths of two major figures in the scene, Tupac Shakur and the Notorious B.I.G.³⁸ Incidents such as these and other lesser cases have led David Toop to comment that: “Death is a constant in the imagery of gangsta rap, with album covers, lyrics and videos dominated by guns, gravestones, funerals and retribution. The law of Hollywood’s wild west – all problems can be solved with a gun – were now echoed by rap” (Toop, 2000: 18). Gangsta culture as exemplified in the songs and demeanour of rap musicians has become synonymous with the portrayal of crime, drugs and violence in urban settings – conditions that they both “reflect” and are seen as participants in and instigators of.

The links between crime and culture in gangsta rap occur at several levels. One of these is to do with the culture of consumption and excess. US and UK rappers and garage bands adopt a particular pose or comportment, they wear casual designer sports clothes, often oversized, they display flashy gold jewellery. Style and fashion through labels and brands are therefore also seen as part of this gangsta culture and its influence on young people who copy these styles. Aspects of this “street style” probably pre-date rap and hip hop and, as part of a transatlantic crossover, have made dress styles such as baggy jeans, walking boots, caps worn the “wrong way” and so on, a familiar part of young people’s appearance. This has been so influential that it has to a large extent ceased to be a “black thing” and become part of the urban landscape of youth fashion: “Middle-class white kids take up the language of gangsta rap spawned in neighborhood turfs far removed from their own lives” (Giroux, 1996: 31).

However, the discourses of criminality and of culture/consumption have not been hermetically sealed off from one another. Indeed in rap and hip hop culture – especially that emanating from the USA from the 1980s onwards – the two can be said to have criss-crossed and fused and found their fullest expression in gangsta style – one that is parodied by the British comedian Ali G through the excessive display of gold chains, trainers, shell suits, caps, etc.³⁹ It is So Solid Crew’s (mis)fortune that they have tapped into and been seen as a UK exemplar of the largely American-imported gangsta culture. For Lee Jasper, the race relations adviser to the Mayor of London, So Solid Crew’s lyrics “glamorise a ‘thug life’ of shootings and selling crack cocaine to young black children” (*Evening Standard*, 28 February 2002, p. 8). The band and gangsta culture exemplify the consequences of a “moral vacuum” in which “Britain’s capital is awash with cocaine, guns and drugs money” (Jasper, 2002: 31). Similarly the Chairman of the UK Youth Justice Board warned that “Gangsta rap music is spawning a generation of young muggers desperate for the flashy status symbols of street criminals” (*Daily Mail*, 10 April 2002, p.4). According to Simon Woolley of Operation Black Vote (an organisation that seeks to promote black political participation): “hip-hop and elements of R&B have become increasingly profane with lyrics that are just plain nasty, these records are backed up with videos that leave nothing to the young imagination and seek only to glorify the hedonistic pleasures of a million dollar star who has a custom made Ferrari and a platinum coated ego. Violence, sex and money brought together in a misogynist articulation of greed, selfishness and violence”

38. These rappers are the subjects of the Nick Broomfield film *Biggie and Tupac*.

39. For example see the recent film *Ali G Indahouse*. Ali G is the creation of Sacha Baron Cohen who uses the character to deliberately cross and confuse the boundaries of ethnic identities, as well as parodying the adoption of US-gangsta style and slang in the UK.



(Woolley, 2002). Although Toop (2000) points out that not all rap and hip hop is the same (there are noticeable differences between musicians and groups), depictions of gang culture and violence in rap tend to homogenise the musicians and the audiences so that even when distinctions are made it is always in the context of violence. The associations are so deeply embedded that it becomes seemingly impossible to consider them separately. When the rapper Jam Master Jay of Run-DMC was shot, the news coverage and obituaries found it impossible not to discuss this without reference to violence: “While gun violence has stalked hip-hop since its inception, Run-DMC’s music, far from celebrating the gangster lifestyle, preached unity and peace with an almost religious zeal” (*The Guardian*, 1 November 2002, p. 17).

Rap musicians and bands like So Solid Crew are far from the first popular music group to be caught in tales of being personally involved in rock ‘n’ roll excess – or of encouraging their followers and fans in behaviour that is illegal or deemed immoral.⁴⁰ Probably every generation since the 1950s has witnessed something along these lines. For instance, in 1956 the *Daily Mail* called rock ‘n’ roll the “music of delinquents” and said that it had in it something of “the African drum and the voodoo dance ... We sometimes wonder whether this is the negro’s revenge” (Pearson, 1983: 24). Many popular music groups have been accused of personal depravity and of encouraging similar tendencies among young people (Petley, 1997) – though how these events get remembered or forgotten is an interesting question of cultural history and popular memory (Pearson, 1983). Placed in this context, the reaction to So Solid Crew could be regarded as “more of the same” – something that we can recognise and locate within a history of respectable fears, with its shifting combination of themes around youth, sex, violence, consumption, etc. There are those who make much of such continuities (for example see Petley, 1997). But while I have some sympathies with it, I think that just because we can see continuities with the past this should not lead us to conclude that the social reaction is another example of a “moral panic”. This has the danger of overlooking what is distinctive and specific about the coverage of gangsta rap. We need to understand both the continuities and the changes that recent phenomena such as the coverage of So Solid Crew and of gangsta rap represent. Attention to the “changing same” will, it seems to me, be useful in serving to highlight what is specific about recent events, as well as how we might locate them against a broader historical background. It is to that end that this chapter is directed.

The quote from Pearson provides my starting point and key theme – the issue of race. Despite the difficulties with the term or category “race”, I employ it here as shorthand for groups who are commonly racialised – that is, racial minorities where the minoritisation often relies on the differentiation of skin colour. Most of what I have to say concerns black people, that is, those of largely African and Caribbean descent in the UK, or African-Americans in the US. There is a convention among some academics to put “race” in quotes to signal its problematic status, but I will not be adopting that here, partly because many of the words could also appear in quotation marks. As I hope is clear, I do not take suggestions about “glamour” and “influence” at face value.

40. Nor is popular music the only form through which this is alleged to occur. In Britain gang members are said to “listen to gangsta rap and idolise the heroes of films like *Scarface*, *Goodfellas* and *Menace 11 Society*, adopting their values and some of their language” (*The Observer*, 8 September 2002; see Giroux 1996, for a discussion of other films).



There is a long-established history that associates black people with crime, disease, immorality and violence. What is significant for current purposes is not race per se but the process of racialisation. Miles (1993) uses this to refer to the means by which particular groups are identified as a collectivity sharing real or imagined phenotypical characteristics. More broadly, it is also used to indicate the ways in which social structures and ideologies become imbued with racial meanings (Murji, 2001). The idea of racialisation connects race thinking in ways that are not necessarily linked to skin colour, so that Jews and sub-sections of the “white” population, such as Irish, Italian and Slavic peoples, can also be said to be racialised at particular times when they are “signified as a distinct category or type of human being by reference to real or alleged biological characteristics, a signification that has usually been accompanied by an explicit or implicit use of the discourse of ‘race’” (Miles, 1993, p.135). Aspects of “white” youth cultures can also be racialised, for example, through the ways in which rappers such as Eminem have been depicted as exemplars of “white trash”. Racialisation is however a shifting and specific process with changing boundaries of inclusion and exclusion, that can mean the same “type” of people are simultaneously in and out. It overlaps with categories of age and gender – thus while race or blackness seems to overdetermine the coverage of gangsta rap, I would maintain that masculinity and youth are intricately tied in with the ways in which it is thought about.⁴¹ I argue that the process of racialisation around gangsta rap has drawn upon long established narratives of “blacks as trouble” (combining elements of criminality, masculinity and drugs in urban settings) with a more recent narrative of consumption and identity (featuring youth, fashion, particular drugs, especially crack-cocaine).

To set this in context, the coverage of So Solid Crew’s personal involvement in crime and their assumed influence on young fans can be seen as the further extension of the longstanding and damaging history of racialisation and criminalisation of black people particularly through the media and the agencies of the criminal justice system (Keith, 1993). In the 1970s criminality – especially “mugging”, a particular type of street crime that fitted no legal category – defined the ways in which young males of African-Caribbean descent were framed. Police forces in Britain began to say they had previously seriously underestimated the amount of crime being committed by young blacks and went on to disseminate racially coded crime statistics that portrayed young black males as the main perpetrators of mugging. Part of what made the term mugging powerful and lay behind its rapid increase at this time was that it was used to describe different legal offences ranging from simple theft to violent robbery. The extent (for example, “A mugging every hour in London”, *Evening Standard*, 18 October 1976) and apparently trivial gains that muggers sometimes made (for example, “Muggers murder for 20p”, *Daily Mirror*, 19 October 1972) were two features of media coverage. But these were minor compared to the idea that mugging was often a black-on-white crime and, moreover, it was a means by which (young) black males preyed on (elderly) white women, an image that recurred in popular press coverage during this time. As Hall et al. noted, “For all practical purposes, the terms mugging and black crime are now virtually synonymous... The two are indissolubly linked: each term references the other in both the official and public

41. To the extent that gangsta rappers have been presented themselves as homophobic and hyper-sexualised, this would include sexuality too.



consciousness.” (Hall et al., 1978, p.217).⁴² In some cases the trivial amounts gained in mugging were highlighted but there was little indication that mugging was glamorous or the media’s blanket coverage of it meant that it was being glamorised – though there were some suggestions of “copycat” crime.

While mugging remains a powerful signifier, in the 1980s it was accompanied by images of young blacks involvement in “steaming” and “wilding” – both forms of collective involvement in crime, of stealing while rushing through a crowd of people, or of preying on individuals. The most infamous example of the latter occurred in Central Park, New York in 1989 when five young men were convicted of the rape of a female jogger – though doubt about their guilt remains (see *The Guardian*, 6 December 2002, p. 17). Associations such as these were used to yoke race and crime – particularly street crime – to discourses of the nation and to mark out young blacks as other, as belonging outside the boundaries of Britishness (Gilroy, 1987; Keith, 1993). The riots or urban disturbances in Britain in the early and middle 1980s were also used to tie together race, crime, masculinity and urban location (the inner city) in ways that made race (or “blackness”) a medium through which fears and anxieties about crime were focused and given a recognisable shape. Race, crime, culture and geography were mutually coded as layers of otherness (Gilroy, 1987; Keith 1993; Giroux 1996).

While the riots or uprisings of the 1980s in the UK were sometimes depicted as a form of consumerism (“radical shopping”), the more decisive links between crime, consumption and racialised masculinities occurred in the later 1980s and especially in the 1990s through the figure of “yardies” in the UK (or “posses” in the USA).⁴³ One of the significant things about yardies is that the conspicuous consumption of designer goods enters explicitly into the picture. This is not to say that the earlier crimes such as mugging were not seen as motivated by financial gain but rather that these were often trivial – crimes of survival rather than crimes of excess. In contrast, in police and media discourses, yardies are often seen as motivated simply by money and power, and by their high profile willingness to show off the trappings of success – cars, jewellery, guns, clothes, women, etc. Lethal aggression, sexual promiscuity and conspicuous consumption have thus defined yardies. As some of these terms indicate, it is significant that yardies are not just racialised but also sexualised as hyper-masculine figures of excess. The rise to power of the yardies was linked to their domination of one main commodity, crack cocaine. The apparent characteristics of the drug – an intense rush and feelings of excitability – are mirrored in the erratic and unpredictable behaviour attributed to yardies, establishing a homology between the drug and its main sellers/users. Hence, crack tales combined a dizzying depiction of black men with a fondness for guns and extreme violence, loose-living and a fragile valuing of their own and other peoples lives. Yardies were said to be “sociopathic” in their apparent readiness to kill and be killed.

Significantly, yardies are entwined in the cultural industries such as music clubs in ways that strongly link crime with culture, music, clubs and so on. A Metropolitan Police memorandum to a parliamentary inquiry said that: “Many of those involved [in drugs distribution] are Jamaican illegal immigrants who have no

42. The continuing power of mugging as a way of connoting black criminality recurred in subsequent decades. For example in the 1980s, newspaper headlines spelt out the race-crime link more starkly than ever: “Black crime: the alarming figures” *Daily Mail*, 11 March 1982; “Black muggers blamed by the Yard”, *The Sun*, 11 March 1982.

43. For a fuller account of representations of yardies see Chapter 8 of *Policing drugs* (Murji, 1998).



fixed addresses but who are bound by their Jamaican origin and reggae culture and who travel from one location to another with regularity. Such is their nomadic lifestyle that serious offences, for example murders, have been and will continue to be committed wherever the cultural bandwagon happens to stop” (Metropolitan Police, 1989: 47). So this provides another association between crime and violence on the one hand, and race and culture on the other. Conventionally, offences such as mugging and street crime were blamed on alleged weaknesses in black family life such as the absence of a father figure, a high proportion of single parent families, and/or a lack of respect and morality (Gilroy, 1987). These are held to produce weak social bonds that enable young black males to engage in predatory crimes on the defenceless and the weak. While this view still exists to some degree, in more recent times the focus of racialised culture has shifted to other aspects of “black culture” – particularly the cultural industries of music production, dance and clubbing. These are held to be imbued with forms of criminality, indeed they are even said to provide a “cover” for criminals, an arena where they can operate almost freely, as well as being the site of shootings and violence such as the murder of prominent rappers, or the incidents at some So Solid Crew events. For blacks, the vortex of crime and culture become heavily entwined, perhaps even indistinguishable in ways that make it difficult to consider the “black cultural industries” without reference to the ways in which blacks have been and are still criminalised in the media, and by state institutions.

Hence there is a general background of racialised youth masculinities and a more specific and more recent discourse of clubbing, consumption and gangsta style in which the reaction to and representations of So Solid Crew can be located. Their adoption of the traits of gangsta culture could be seen as acknowledgement of the heavily racialised representations of black masculinities. Indeed their lyrics might be seen as complex statements of this conundrum that are both reflective and productive of racialised meanings. At the same time, their comportment and the fact that they are part of a commodified culture means that the shock value of their songs and activities makes for easy media stories and perhaps stimulates sales of their records and merchandise – points that Toop (2000: 27) makes about rap in general: “the confrontational rapping style ha[s] become standard in the world of multi-million selling parental-advisory-stickered albums.”⁴⁴ Consequently, it is misleading to see popular culture in terms of (in)authenticity. Popular culture cannot be viewed as a site of resistance that stands outside of commodified social relations, or as unmarked by racism and sexism (Giroux, 1996). Culture and consumption operate within a seemingly seamless link to the music, the performers, their promotion, images and lifestyles, product placement, etc. – and all the details of their personal lives that make up the hyper-mediated culture of celebrity.

For some what matters in all of this is the influence that rappers and other music personalities have upon their young fans. “What is without doubt, however, is the fact that top selling artists have much more influence on young people than politicians could dream of having. These artists could, if they so wished, tell their audience that their music reflects aspects of life in general and not their personal beliefs” (Woolley, 2002). This view, also reflected in the earlier comments from Jasper and the Chairman of the Youth Justice Board, seems to me to share much in common with the tradition that stresses the powerful “effects” that the media

⁴⁴. I make a similar point in relation to ecstasy, rave culture and moral panics in Chapter 6 of *Policing Drugs*.



have on their audiences. Like others (see Barker and Petley, 1997) I think the effects tradition is misleading and patronising. “Upon whom are the media supposed to have their ‘effects’? Not the ‘educated’ and ‘cultured’ middle classes, who....are fully able to deal with it. No, who are most ‘effected’ are the young, and especially the working class young.” (Barker and Petley, 1997:5). In emphasising the power of producers, the effects model tends to view audiences and consumers as largely passive and as “cultural dopes”; it has elements of behaviourism in it (Barker and Petley, 1997). It prefers to think of language and meaning as wholly reflective of the intention of the speaker. In this view, there is no sense that the meanings of language are slippery, or that the lyrics and deportment of gangsta rappers can be complex and playful (Toop, 2000). To return to the few lines of the So Solid Crew song at the opening of this chapter: how does the laughter line “Ha Ha Ha Ha” modify or change the earlier claim of resorting to violence? The effects model does not see that audiences and consumers can be knowing and active co-shapers of the meanings of the songs and images that they are subject to, or that adopting identities and styles can be a source of pleasure and performance.

The effects tradition is usually contrasted with the “active audiences” perspective that stresses the role of consumers in making meaning. It is important not to replace a model that stresses heavy influence with one that suggests that there is no influence at all, indeed I think that the either/or approach that each of these offers is misleading. I am not denying that there are media and popular cultural effects, indeed the earlier discussion of mugging signals that the media can and do have effects. In dis-entangling what “effects” mean, Buckingham (1997) distinguishes between three types of effects. Behavioural effects are where consumption of media violence is seen to lead directly to aggression; emotional effects are ones where the media produce a sense of anxiety or excitement; and ideological/attitudinal effects are ones that lead people to believe they are more prone to be victimised by particular types of people. In terms of this approach, mugging is an instance of the media’s ideological effect – the criminalisation of young black males. However, while Buckingham’s distinction between behavioural and other effects is useful, in practice they may well overlap. Studies of the fear of crime for instance indicate how the ideological effect and the emotional effect combine to produce a behavioural effect among those who feel most vulnerable, or most at risk. In other words, particular types of people – mostly, the elderly and women – take “avoidance” action because they believe themselves to be at risk. Because this outlook creates anxiety it leads to changes in behaviour patterns.

So, as well as types of effects we also need to distinguish between types of people – and no doubt both of these are mediated by categories of gender, age, ethnicity, class and so on, and between effects among potential “perpetrators” and “victims” of violence (and among young people these two categories do overlap). The idea of media effects in the narrow behaviourist studies is highly problematic, but the broader ways in which the media shape and inform our sense of self, community and issues of vulnerability remains a complex matter.

In relation to young people, consumption and the influence of fashionable brands, there can be an uncomfortable degree of overlap between “active” and “passive” models of consumption and influence. For example, gangs are said to be identifiable by their “colours” – particular clothes and fashion labels – to an extent that it has become sufficiently entrenched for it to demarcate belonging. In



a comment on the shootings at Columbine High School in the USA in May 1999, Patricia Williams says: “The whole school seemed divided not just by personality or activity, like an athlete, but each group was clustered around a brand name, like pathetic little territorial flags. The nation-state of Gap over here. The empire of Abercrombie and Fitch. The tattered loincloths of the low-status K-Mart tribesmen, the Timberland types, and the Tommy Hilfigers. Not that this is a shallow matter of demarcation. Consider the complications of Tommy Hilfiger alone; a white designer of colourfully preppy, Ralph Lauren-ish clothing who became wildly popular among black teens. So many black kids tried to “style” with Hilfiger’s increasingly oversized logo that it soon became known as a black label. At which point, of course, it enjoyed renewed popularity among young white men hoping to look like rap stars.” (Williams, 2000: 152).

By stating this in terms of fashion and clothing, Williams’ comments take us to the heart of issues around glamour, influence and violence. In the USA, young people were said to be being targeted, in one case even murdered, for the designer trainers on their feet (see Chin, 2001). In the UK, the same has been said of mobile phones, which has probably had a significant impact on rates of particular crimes such as theft and robbery. In both cases there is a view that particular consumer goods are so desirable and highly prized that those without the means to obtain them legitimately will do so illegitimately. Without discounting the view that objects are desired and valued, I do want to question what this says about the power of brands and of young people as gullible “brand fiends” whose consumption desires are shaped by peer pressure, the need for conformity, the influence of celebrities and popular music and of “conformity to the corporate allegiance” as Williams (2000: 152) puts it.

Two approaches – normally regarded as opposing explanations – in understanding consumption and influence overlap here in an odd way. On the hand, the “mass culture” school suggests that global brands and advertisers are sufficiently powerful to make people into mostly passive subjects who consume more or less as they are told – this is akin to the effects tradition in media studies. In contrast to the determinism of the effects perspective, the opposite view stresses that individual consumers are not “cultural dopes” – rather they are creative and can fashion and re-appropriate labels and styles in particular ways. While this perspective suggests that consumers exercise agency, it shares with the first view the idea that particular things are prized and valued, even if these are modified in the process of consumption. In other words, both share a view of influence in which consumers or audiences, and particularly young people, are driven by the need to acquire and display the trappings of contemporary cultural style – clothes, trainers, caps, jewellery and other accessories – either because of the power of brands and advertising, or because of the need to belong or to shape particular identities.

A better way of understanding the complex and contradictory processes is through detailed and careful attention to young people’s lives and discourses. Elizabeth Chin’s (2001) recent study provides a detailed ethnography of young black people’s consumption in the US, observing their attitudes and patterns. Attention to the lived realities of everyday consumption choice among the poor indicates how conscious young people are about money and what it will buy. Rather than being “brand-addicted”, Chin’s study shows how young children make careful and controlled choices about consumption. For example, she gave children \$20 to spend as they liked and observed their choices. The girls in the



sample spent nearly a fifth of this on “pro-social” consumption – gifts for other people. Almost half of the children in her sample bought shoes and bragged about how little they had paid for them (Chin, 2001).⁴⁵ As this indicates, the issue of how consumption and identity are influenced by popular culture, brands and styles is a matter of some complexity to which there is a political-economic dimension. I have argued that the impact of racialising crime, violence and particular youth cultures such as gangsta rap is that it ignores this complexity and reduces young people to ciphers and dopes who are assumed to un-reflectively swallow all the images and consumer goods they are confronted with – especially when they are faced with images of violence in songs and films.

In terms of the media and the criminal justice system, I believe that the focus on race in discussions of crime and violence induces what Williams calls “moral blind spots”. While some things are the objects of attention, others are simultaneously overlooked. For example, Williams suggests that the two young white males responsible for the school shootings in Columbine had been carrying weapons in a car boot, perhaps for weeks. Yet they had never been stopped – perhaps because their whiteness made them invisible in ways that make blacks highly visible to law enforcement and the media. Another moral blind spot is that focusing on stranger and gang violence and the glamorisation of violence through pop culture overlooks the fact that young people are more at risk of victimisation by people they know, and in the home. In this sense, violence is routine and everyday rather than exceptional, it is close to home as well as in the street, it is mundane as well as dramatic. A focus on only part of the picture will not be useful in understanding all of the things that can be grouped under the heading of violence.

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⁴⁵ Brand-awareness around shoes mostly centres on Nike trainers, which have become racially coded. As Williams says, “Nike is so hyped as the brand of choice for inner-city youth that its name has become almost synonymous with thwarted black male aspiration... Young black men found shot dead are always imagined to be wearing Air Jordans on their splayed, helpless, and upturned feet.” (Williams, 2000, p. 152). Interestingly Chin (2001) says she saw only two pairs of Air Jordans in her two years of fieldwork in New Haven, Connecticut.



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Part III: Institutional violence



Introduction

The final part of the publication examines the way in which violence becomes a reality for young people in institutional settings. Whereas the first two articles approach the subject of young people in confrontation with the youth justice system in the UK and Finland respectively, the third chapter focuses more on gender differences in attitudes to violence. However, as this article looks at young people in school and, specifically, in a special programme on non-violence created for the school-going participants of this pilot project it has been included in this part of the publication. Marinova's article raises interesting issues concerning the ways in which socially constructed attitudes to violence shape girls and boys' often highly differing approaches to the ethics of violence. Most importantly, Marinova demonstrates how the influence of non-formal education for non-violence can positively affect both boys' and girls' attitudes towards violence, notably in relation to the self-confidence of girls to speak about the issues that concern them and the self-examination by boys of preconceived notions about the validity of violence handed down to them through familial and social relations.

Evans' article examines the way in which young people are treated by the legal system in England and Wales. In particular, he contrasts the approaches of social workers and youth justice authorities of the 1970s, the 1980s and the present day and concentrates on a political analysis of the effects of New Labour policy on the criminalisation of young people. He claims that the low age of criminal responsibility (10 years of age) in England and Wales contributes to the integration of young offenders into the criminal justice system at too early an age, leading to a situation in which, for many, there is no longer a way out. He argues for a principle of minimum sufficient intervention in dealing with young people involved in violence and other crimes that would avoid criminalising individuals at too early an age, leading to the risk of them knowing no life other than one dominated by a cycle of crime and punishment.

Honkatukia and Pösö's paper focuses on a youth-centred discussion of the effects of violence on young people's everyday life. It looks particularly at young people placed in reformatory schools for many of whom violence has been a part of their daily realities for many years, both at home and in the institutions in which they currently find themselves. Honkatukia and Pösö stress the need for letting young people talk for themselves about how they perceive violence and the role it plays in their lives and those of others around them. The authors emphasise the difference between two sets of interviews in two reformatory schools: one in which the

school's teachers decided who would participate in the interviews with the researchers and when, and the second in which the young interviewees themselves decided to participate in them or not. The second set of interviews yielded more openness between interviewers and interviewees. This paper raises crucial questions of ethics with regards to the study of vulnerable young people, a question of central importance to the particularly sensitive theme of violence and its effects on young people's lives. An important lesson to be learned from Honkatukia and Pösö's work is that while there is a need to address the interrelationships between youth and violence, this cannot be achieved at the expense of young people's confidence and trust in others.

All three papers stress the importance of taking young people into consideration both as actors in and as interpreters of violence.

-----> **Young people and violence: youth justice in England and Wales**

Jonathan Evans

Introduction

In this paper I explore issues of violence in relation to young people and the youth justice system. The parameters of the paper are somewhat parochial in that I will be drawing upon the experience of my own country, Wales, and that of our neighbours, England. It is my hope that sharing this experience will be of some interest and relevance to those in other places.

The paper is structured into four substantive sections. The first provides an overview of those salient youth justice themes that have run through our history. This will include a brief – and necessarily selective – critical overview of the history of juvenile justice. An account of the acute pressures placed on political rationality in this field of policy and practice will also be introduced.

The second section outlines the contours of the so-called “new youth justice”. New Labour’s “Third Way” juvenile justice reforms are described, contextualised and analysed in relation to domestic historical experience and international conventions.

The third section addresses the seminar’s core theme of violence (young people, violence and the youth justice system). Some preliminary consideration is given to definitions of violence before exploring young people’s experience as both victims and perpetrators of violence. The new youth justice system’s response to the issue of violence is also duly considered.

The conclusion attempts to draw together the disparate strands of the paper. It is my argument that youth justice policy needs to be thoroughly and thoughtfully integrated into wider youth social policy. Some overarching principles of good practice in youth justice are identified to assist in this important project of policy integration. In the case of England and Wales, however, any argument for political rationality in respect of criminal justice policy has high risks for those in government. In the circumstances, the role of “enlightened” international institutions could be crucial in shifting the attitudes of British politicians and the wider public.

Youth justice themes

In order to make sense of the English youth criminal justice system – of which Wales is an integral part – it is important to understand a few things about Britain. It has been argued persuasively that it is a place that – deep down – does not really like children and young people. Haines and Drakeford (1998) believe that it is possible to discern two essentially contradictory – but simultaneously held – public attitudes: envy and fear. In terms of the first sentiment, “young people are regularly portrayed as having the times of their lives, untrammelled by responsibility or restraint, a group for whom life is simply an extension of a Club 18-30 holiday in which sex, stimulants and sleep are mixed in a cocktail which was never on the market when the commentators themselves were their age. These are the beautiful young people of the colour supplements and advertising hoardings, high priests of the consumer culture, wearing pairs of trainers which cost more than a family of four had to live on for a month only shortly before they were born.” (Haines and Drakeford, 1998: 3).





Paradoxically, this attitude is contrasted with a palpable sense of fear. “These are the youngsters who are out of control, who do not know how to behave, who have been brought up by parents who are too soft, who congregate on street corners in order to intimidate passers-by, who have no respect and show no consideration. There is a physical menace which is never far from the surface in these encounters. These young people are dangerous. They need to be avoided or, better still, kept away. Suspicion, hostility and oppression are the products of fear and, in the demonising of young people which has been the hallmark of the 1990s, full rein has been afforded them.” (Haines and Drakeford, 1998: 3-4).

It is beyond the scope of this paper to examine in detail the historical reasons for this peculiarly British attitude towards young people. Hendrick (1994; 1997), however, has argued that three main constructions of children are represented in British social policy: investment, victimhood and threat. The first representation – children as an investment – implies that the value of children resides not in what they can contribute now, but in what they can deliver in future. The projected benefits of prudent investment will – so the argument goes – not only be realised by individual citizens; it will also “trickle down” to families, communities and, of course, the “nation” as a whole. Although – as we all know – the value of investments can depreciate as well as grow, the optimistic forecast suggests that handsome dividends will be paid to all. A report by the Commission for Social Justice illustrates this kind of thinking. “Children are not a private pleasure or a personal burden; they are 100% of a nation’s future...the best indicator of the capacity of our economy tomorrow is the quality of our children today.”(Commission for Social Justice, 1994: 311).

New Labour’s 1997 General Election campaign mantra of “Education, education education” is a more recent example of investment values being invoked in the interests of public service and the economy.

The second construction centres on children as victims or potential victims. In this account children are constructed in terms of their vulnerability; being defined largely in terms of welfare needs. The advantage of this construction is that young people are, at the very least, viewed within an essentially protective framework. The disadvantage of this construction is that young people are not necessarily assessed as being fully competent human beings. Thus, policies – often paternalistic in character – are designed to protect this vulnerable group from physical and moral danger. This construction often emerges in the discourse surrounding child abuse (Parton, 1985), official public inquiries investigating child deaths (Butler and Drakeford, forthcoming) and some media representations of young people abused by paedophiles. Parton (1985) suggests, however, that constructions based purely on notions of victimhood tend to appear only episodically. It is more usual for such representations – and the policies and practices that proceed from these representations – to be conflated with other constructions; most commonly the concept of threat.

Although many positive welfare policies have been founded on these first two constructions, it is worth noting that there are obvious dangers in perceiving young people as “incomplete adults”. The pitfall of viewing children as “human becomings” rather than “human beings” (Qvortrup, 1994) can result in adults believing that they always “know best”. The obvious danger of this construction is that children’s voices are stifled and their rights overlooked – especially by those appointed to positions of professional authority and guardianship. Consequently young people are at risk of being victimised by systems designed



to protect them. The consequences of not listening to children have, indeed, been vividly recorded in Wales (Waterhouse, 2000). It would be no exaggeration to suggest that in Britain, at least, the clouds of scandal (in respect of neglect, physical assaults and sexual abuse) have overshadowed debates about residential care for young people. Nevertheless, despite the inherent problems of residential social work's troubled history of state paternalism, one returns to the point that it was at least founded on an underlying commitment to meeting children's welfare needs.

The third representation of children is as a threat: a threat, that is, to us – middle-aged adult society in general, and the “respectable classes” in particular (Pearson, 1983; 1987; 1989; 1993; 1994). This threat can take the form of robust challenges to the prevailing moral order by older children/adolescents/youth (depending on one's preferred terminology). Such challenges often involve “unearned pleasures” (good sex, loud music and illicit drugs), antisocial behaviour (sometimes constituting relatively innocuous misdemeanours such as gathering in large groups in public places and making offensive comments about passers-by) and, of course, infractions of the criminal code (Campbell, 1993).

On the whole such negative representations of “youth” are accepted uncritically. “Youth” and “deviancy” have become almost synonymous terms in public discourse. “Adolescence” has been constructed as an essentially troublesome and challenging condition. The psychological and behavioural disorders that are supposed to cluster around young people in their teenage years are commonly regarded as a “natural” and integral part of childhood and adolescent development. Although most of Hall's (1905) ideas have been jettisoned by the academic discipline of psychology, the vivid image of adolescence as a time of “storm and stress” with hormonally driven crises endures and has become embedded in folk wisdom. The traces of these ideas are still clearly discernible in contemporary accounts of youth (Harber and Harper-Dorton, 2002). The “psychologisation of ‘youth’” has, according to Jones (2002), recruited willing accomplices from the social work profession since the nineteenth century. Historically, he argues, the profession's supine adoption of individualised and quasi-psychodynamic forms of casework has helped to foster an essentially reactionary practitioner culture. There has been a consequential tendency to explain “offending behaviour” in terms of individual and family pathologies. The dysfunctional working-class family has thus become the principal target of criminal justice policy. Even contemporary rhetoric about service-user empowerment, it is implied, is not so very far removed from the Victorian belief in moral autonomy and self-help.

Some of the psychological labels attached to “challenging” young people have been popularised in many mass media representations of youth. The “disturbed adolescent” occupies a prominent position in the familiar diagnostic trinity of the “mad, sad and bad”. The mass media has, of course, long played a key role in the creation of “moral panics” about the condition and threat of youth: from the excitable apprentices in the nineteenth century London mob (Pearson, 1983) to “mods and rockers” (Cohen, 1980) and other postwar youth cultures. Most people in early twenty-first century Britain are more media-literate than their forbears and, as such, appreciate the ironised nuances of many of these popular representations. Less appreciated, though, is the influence of the sophisticated briefing and lobbying practices undertaken by special interest groups such as the police and the probation service (Brown, 1998). The impact of sensationalist reporting also continues to have a profound effect upon public opinion and the political



process (McRobbie and Thornton, 1995). Moreover the news media's concentration on youth offending as opposed to other forms of crime (tax fraud, corporate crime, domestic violence, etc.) ensures that the diminutive, hooded figure of the "juvenile delinquent" looms large in the public mind. Young people are, after all, more visible on the streets with their scary haircuts, challenging music and incomprehensible demotic street argot. Youth – so often the object of envy and fear in equal measure – are highly susceptible to being represented as the dangerous "other" and "enemy within" the city walls. The challenges experienced by youth – delayed and often fractured transition into the labour and housing markets, for example, (Furlong and Cartmel, 1997; Ball et al. 2000) – tend to be presented as social problems of their own making. Whilst it would be misleading to suggest that all youth crime is the result of social and economic trauma, there are dangers in over-emphasising the "pleasures of youthful transgression" thesis (Katz, 1998; Hayward, 2002). The reasons underlying crimes like "joy-riding" are complex and go well beyond the more reductive versions of the "late modern teenage kicks in a risk society" account. Issues of power, social inequality and masculinity require closer intellectual inspection.

Although there are middle class versions of youthful rebellion involving cautionary narratives of "falling" into "bad company" or "descending into drugs hell", for the most part the dominant constructions of juvenile delinquency are masculine and class specific. The feral offspring of the Victorian "residuum" bear a striking resemblance to contemporary representations of the modern "underclass" (Murray, 1984; 1990; 1994). Like their nineteenth century counterparts, the post-modern poor are contrasted with a noble but fast-vanishing respectable working class. According to Pitts (2000), New Labour invokes a nostalgic "vision of a 1950s municipal housing estate where fully employed, skilled, solvent, working class artisans took care of their families and kept their children under control." (Pitts, 2000: 4).

Although the main threat to respectable society is perceived as being mainly from youth, pre-pubescent children also have a long history as a source of fear and anxiety. There is evidence to suggest that the children of the poor have been constructed in these terms at least as far back as Elizabethan times (Dingwall et al., 1983). More recently, of course, the media representation of Robbie Thompson and Jon Venables – the two ten-year old boys convicted of murdering the infant, James Bulger (Smith, 1994) – has played a significant part in demonising young children in general. Indeed the satanic representation of the two boys helped feed an intellectually frenzied debate about a supposedly more general "crisis in childhood" (Scraton, 1997). Paradoxically, the Bulger case contained the two most potent constructions of childhood: victim and threat. Some media representations actually portrayed the horrific – but highly atypical – events of February 1993 as the day that childhood innocence was murdered.

Given this historical and cultural context, it is, perhaps, unsurprising that youth justice policy and practice has been described as swinging between discourses of "welfare", on the one hand, and "punishment" on the other (Haines and Drakeford, 1998). Indeed, it could be said to be a logical extension of young people's construction as "objects of concern" (Butler-Sloss 1988; Oppenheim and Lister, 1996; Parton et al., 1997) or "sources of fear" (Pearson, 1994). They are, in other words, treated as either "victims" or "villains" (Hendrick, 1990). Sometimes, moreover, they can be simultaneously represented as both.



Policy debates about children in trouble with the law tend to hinge on questions of agency and structure; between those who perceive young people as being in possession of a significant degree of moral agency and others who take the view that such criminal behaviour is more usually a manifestation of other difficulties associated with personal life, family life, social disadvantage or the life of the neighbourhood. Whilst this tension between agency and structure is also present as a feature of social and criminal justice policy in relation to adults, it is more acute in respect of children because there are usually at least some concessions to ideas about age, maturity and relative powerlessness. Such concessions, moreover, imply a duty of care to the child. Consequently, policy responses to the criminal behaviour of the young can be represented on the one hand by interventions that will deliver some form of welfare drawn from a list that includes care, protection, treatment, education, training, rehabilitation and community reintegration; and on the other, more “punitive” measures selected from an inventory encompassing retributive justice, control, surveillance, public protection and “naming and shaming”. Indeed, social and criminal justice policy in this area – as indicated above – is often presented in dualistic or “pendulum-swinging” terms. Whilst the idea of a punishment – welfare continuum offers a certain seductive analytic clarity, its use as a narrative device for presenting the history of youth justice fails to take full account of the underlying complexities in the way in which these themes interweave. Very often such seemingly opposing binaries overlap. The history of child incarceration is a case in point. The incarceration of young people can be represented simultaneously as child-rescuing care and punitive custody. Institutional regimes may be informed by seemingly diverse philosophies: soft-centred treatment and education programmes, on the one hand, or hard-edged disciplinary training on the other. What they will have in common, though, is the turn of a key. Child confinement is just one area of practice where welfare and punishment can appear indistinguishable – especially to the child behind the locked door.

A further irony in the history of youth justice is that those who desire to promote the welfare of children often do the most harm. This is well illustrated by the contrasting practices of the 1970s and 1980s. In the 1970s the road to high levels of juvenile incarceration was paved with the good intentions of liberal reformers and “child-friendly” social workers. Clarke (1985) has identified two good intentions underpinning the Children and Young Persons Act 1969: the first was the “anti-institutionalist and decarcerationist pressure to remove juveniles from state institutions”; and the second was recognition of the “... class inequalities of juvenile justice” (292). As far as the latter point is concerned, the White Paper that preceded the 1969 Act (Home Office, 1965; Home Office, 1968) certainly acknowledged social problems as causative factors in criminal behaviour; however, this Act was underpinned by an individualised treatment philosophy. As Brown observes: “Primacy is given to the family and the social circumstances of the deprived and underprivileged whose circumstances caused crime, truancy, lack of control and neglect – but it should be noted that primacy was accorded to individual factors rather than structural factors such as poverty or poor housing.” (Brown, 1998: 59-60).

The Act’s language of welfare, moreover, should not distract attention from the Foucauldian (Foucault, 1991a; 1991b) extension of social control over children from poorer backgrounds. “Care” and “control” have long been recognised as two sides of the social work coin (Davies, 1986). When this is understood it is, perhaps, unsurprising that the decarcerationist spirit of 1969 should have resulted



in a sharp increase in custody rates for young people in the decade that followed. In 1977 38% of convicted juveniles were sentenced to detention centres and borstals compared with only 21% in 1965 (Pitts, 2001:179). A government report (DHSS, 1981), moreover, identified a fivefold increase in the juvenile custody rate between 1965 and 1980. Part of the explanation for this upward trend lay in the pitfalls of early intervention with young people considered “at risk” of offending (i.e., working class youth). In 1977, for example, some 12 000 children were participating in the first wave of community-based Intermediate Treatment (IT) (for example, groupwork, supervised “youth work-style” activities, etc.); only 1 500 of these were actually adjudicated “offenders”. As Pitts observes: “early informal intervention revealed a tendency to draw youngsters further into the system as the discovery of new needs and new problems appeared to necessitate the formalisation of such interventions. In consequence, larger numbers of children were appearing in the juvenile court and a higher proportion of these was receiving custodial sentences.” (Pitts, 2001: 179).

Whatever the noble intentions of those social workers operationalising this legislation, the outcomes were both deleterious to the interests of young people and woefully ineffective as a crime reduction strategy. It was, indeed, very much upon the outcomes of the so-called “welfarist” movement that the slowly emerging justice movement concentrated its criticisms. The 1969 Act had delegated social workers discretionary powers of intervention into the lives of young people. This discretion – exercised in a dangerously secluded legal vacuum of professional privacy – was, it was argued, scandalously misused. The absence of “due process” and the deprivation of legal rights to meaningful defence effectively provided a fast track from “care” to “custody”. It is often the case that when treatment appears to fail (as the “net widening” strategies of IT undoubtedly did), punishment almost invariably becomes the next destination for the young person.

Whilst acknowledging the role played by many social workers in this debacle, Clarke (1985) implies that social workers fell victim to a process of scapegoating by the justice movement. There were, he says, “suppressions of argument” (286) at work in their incomplete analysis. The subordinate structural position of social work within a wider framework of “punitive juvenile justice” (287) was, Clarke claims, widely ignored. Moreover, the sentencing practice of the time did not take place within a political and social vacuum. Well-organised briefing campaigns were conducted by influential special interest groups (the police, for example), which resulted in many politically predisposed journalists sounding alarm bells about a juvenile crime wave (Brown, 1998: 61; Pearson, 1983: 217).

Whilst conceding the validity of the above points, it cannot be denied that many social workers collaborated with the prevailing sentiments of the time. Some of these social workers were genuinely committed to various psychological treatment-based models of practice. Others simply failed to believe that they had the power to challenge sentencing habits by risking unpopular or “unrealistic” recommendations in Social Inquiry Reports (SIRs). Whilst it is true to say that many critics of 1970s orthodoxies were influenced by the “Nothing works” fallout from inconclusive evaluation studies of rehabilitative programmes (Martinson, 1974; Lipton et al., 1975), I think this can sometimes be overstated. I am not convinced that the collapse in professional social work’s self-belief was of the magnitude that is sometimes claimed (McGuire, 1995). It is, though, possible to view this period as a time when a gradual paradigmatic shift occurred among many juvenile justice workers. Social work with young offenders was certainly recast in a



“systems” mould. One version of Fabian, treatment-based work was replaced by a more sociologically-informed practice. Whilst the new orthodoxy of the 1980s was informed by breadth of vision, its *modus operandi* was narrowed by the constraints of the time. Histrionic gestures of ideological purity and full-blooded oppositionism were abjured in favour of modest, pragmatic objectives. Little victories achieved “under fire” were deemed preferable to “heroic defeats”.

Haines and Drakeford (1998:33) describe the new justice orthodoxy that emerged in the 1980’s as a “quiet consensus”. Given the shrill, declamatory conviction politics that characterised the Thatcher decade, its only chance of survival was to be as unobtrusive as possible. The consensus – though not without a few high-octane squabbles between friends in private – was constructed fairly discreetly between academics, sympathetic senior civil servants, “wet” Conservative cabinet ministers and practitioners. The academic community divided between those who focused on the “rights” abuses of 1970s practice (Morris et al., 1980) and those (like Thorpe et al. 1980; Tutt, 1982; Tutt and Giller, 1987) who examined the criminogenic mechanisms at work within the closely related systems of welfare and justice. Senior civil servants at the Home Office were particularly receptive to this research, whilst the alliance between Douglas Hurd (Home Secretary) and David Faulkner (senior civil servant) – influenced, in part, by the high cost of imprisonment – proved to be critical (Windlesham, 1993; Rutherford, 1996) in creating a conducive policy environment in which “experts” occupied a pivotal position in the political process. It should not be assumed, however, that practitioners waited deferentially to receive instructions from this impressive cadre of the “officer class”. They, too, brought to the debate practice wisdoms and acute insights on how different points in the system could be manipulated to serve the new policy objectives. Indeed, the impact of the practitioner movement cannot be underestimated.

Haines and Drakeford (1998: 48) claim that the practitioner movement was based on a set of core beliefs derived from a mixture of research findings and the distillation of practitioners’ collective experience. These beliefs are summarised below:

- the “triviality reality”: most youth offending is petty;
- the “growing out of crime” rationale: for most young people offending is simply a transient phase;
- labelling theory: labelling young people as “offenders” is damaging and runs the risk of confirming them in a criminal career;
- the “up-tariffing effect”: the imposition of formal criminal justice interventions – such as supervision orders – at an early stage in a young person’s offending history increased the likelihood of more punitive, liberty-restricting sentences in the event of subsequent offences being committed;
- the “school of crime” argument: custodial institutions are ineffective in the sense that they demonstrably increase the likelihood of reoffending on release;
- the “net-widening principle”: agencies charged with criminal justice responsibilities should not engage with those who have not committed criminal offences. Although young people who exhibit acute welfare needs (or happen to reside in socially disorganised, high crime neighbourhoods) may be considered “at risk” of offending, their needs are better served via mainstream





welfare services. Drawing young people into the ambit of criminal justice agencies not only introduces them to those already entrenched in offending behaviour, but also exposes them to the spotlight of criminal justice surveillance. “Deeds” not “needs” should be the only route of access to criminal justice agencies;

- radical non-intervention. Given the trivial nature of most youth crime and the dangerous toxicity of the criminal justice system, in most cases the interests of young people were best served by non-intervention. The chances are they would “grow out” of crime before anything really serious happened.

Arising out of this belief system emerged two main modes of intervention “(i) diversion from the formal criminal justice system through the development of cautioning and (ii), the targeted provision of community-based treatment programmes operating largely with an alternative-to-custody aim and developed through the use of supervision orders.” (Haines and Drakeford, 1998: 33).

The use of a “systems-management” approach (Tutt and Giller, 1987) was instrumental in ensuring that petty and first-time offenders were diverted from the stigmatising effects of the criminal justice system whilst those who were more serious or persistent “offenders”, as far as possible, were dealt with by way of supervised programmes in the community. The application of principles of proportionality (later and very briefly embodied rather schematically in the Criminal Justice Act 1991) to the sentencing process helped protect young people from being sentenced on the basis of their background. This is not to suggest that practitioners were unaware of the material context and personal circumstances in which the law was broken (Asquith, 1983). Few practitioners, in my own experience as a practitioner and manager, were reduced to being mere actuaries of risk and offence gravity. This is not to say that such considerations did not enter the equation when SIR recommendations were being prepared.

It was, indeed, at the SIR stage that practitioners had the best opportunity to influence magistrates and judges. The Criminal Justice Act 1982 required courts to make greater use of SIRs in the sentencing process. One common complaint about the minimalist reports beginning to appear at around this time was that authors were decontextualising offending behaviour by failing to give fully rounded accounts of the young person’s social and personal background. There is legitimacy in this criticism. However, there were sound reasons for departing from the “personal history” genre of report writing. In my experience SIR authors first applied the principle of minimum sufficient intervention to their conclusions (thereby framing the desired sentencing outcome). This judgment would determine the extent of the personal background/social information contained in the main body of the report. Authors became adept at providing just enough background information on the young person in order to achieve the desired sentencing outcome. Accumulated experience showed that providing too much information (particularly when this involved a litany of personal and social problems) could work against the interests of the defendant and result in higher tariff sentences. So, for example, the child from a lone parent family on a social housing estate was at great risk of receiving a supervision order (with all the attendant risks of breach for failing to attend future appointments) for a straightforward criminal damage offence. If one mentioned all her/his problems (girls, incidentally, being particularly at risk in the welfare spotlight), magistrates would often be genuinely puzzled if the SIR author concluded that there was no need



for the court to provide help. Most practitioners believed that the principle of minimum sufficient intervention should be applied even to those with extreme welfare needs. This is because the criminal justice system can potentially pose enormous risks to children in need. In effect, a young person's problems can be multiplied by the system's propensity to amplify and stigmatise personal difficulties. Additionally, the sanctions for non-compliance or failure to respond to "treatment" can ultimately be draconian. As Drakeford observes: "Welfare cannot effectively be delivered through the medium of criminal justice sanctions." (Drakeford, 2001: 43).

It was in the light of this risk assessment ("what risk does the system I represent pose to this young person?") that alongside the principle of minimum sufficient intervention there developed the principle of "system integrity maintenance". In other words, it was the business of other welfare agencies (social services departments children's services, housing departments, the health service, education welfare, etc.) to provide the appropriate support. Thus, it became common practice amongst many youth justice practitioners to keep "high needs" young people as low down the sentencing tariff as possible whilst simultaneously referring them to other relevant agencies. In some cases – though this was probably a minority – voluntary work was undertaken with such young people outside the statutory framework of formal supervision.

The great success of the justice movement was that it achieved a dramatic reduction in the juvenile custodial population across the decade. Between 1981 and 1989 the number of juveniles imprisoned fell from 7 700 to 1 900 (Pitts, 2001: 179). This success was attributable to both changes in sentencing culture and the mass diversion of young people away from the courts to multi-agency diversion panels. This achievement can, I believe, be presented as a tangible triumph of not only "justice over punishment", but of "welfare over punishment" (for how else can the diversion from a potentially brutalising and highly criminogenic institution be described?). There was, however, a downside.

The period in question witnessed an increase in child poverty, the collapse of the youth labour market and the erosion of such traditional welfare supports as housing and income maintenance (Furlong and Cartmel, 1997). In social services departments, moreover, there was a trend away from supportive, preventive and therapeutic work with children and families (including work with older children and "adolescents") and a concentration on acute child protection work with pre-school infants. This resulted in many poor young people in the 1980s effectively losing their entitlement to social work and other relevant welfare services (Haines, 1997).

Against this background it is easy to see how a young person diverted from the criminal justice system or "down-tariffed" with a conditional discharge and sent on their way might feel neglected rather than helped. At an ideological level, moreover, the virtual disappearance of the "social" dimension from many SIRs (later described as PSRs – pre-sentence reports) helped those on the political right to decouple environmental issues from individual "offending behaviour" (Drakeford and Vanstone, 1996). Whilst refocusing on the individual offender may have helped to ensure the observance of "legal rights" and "due process", it took only a small step to the right to privilege the principle of individual criminal responsibility.



New Labour and the new youth justice

Traditionally, the English criminal justice system has – albeit grudgingly – accorded children a special and protected status. The system has taken account of such factors as age, maturity and social powerlessness. This was even reflected in Home Office advice during the 1990s, a decade that witnessed what Drakeford and Vanstone (2000) described as a “punitiveness auction” between the two main British political parties. At the beginning of the decade the Conservative government’s attitude towards the principle of *doli incapax* was described in the following terms: “The criminal law is based on the principle that people understand the difference between right and wrong. Very young children cannot easily tell this difference, and the law takes account of this. The age of criminal responsibility, below which no child can be prosecuted, is ten years; and between the ages of ten and thirteen a child may only be convicted of a criminal offence if the prosecution can show that he knew what he did was seriously wrong. The government does not intend to change these arrangements which make proper allowance for the fact that children’s understanding, knowledge and ability to reason are still developing.” (Home Office, 1990: paragraph 8.4).

Even in the middle of the decade a Conservative government gave the following advice to juvenile justice practitioners preparing court reports on young people who had offended: “When a pre-sentence report is being prepared on a child or young person, the report writer must take account of Section 44 of the Children and Young Person’s Act 1933 which requires the court to have regard for the welfare of the individual. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child ... also requires that in all actions concerning children ... in courts of law the best interests of the child shall be the primary consideration. The report writer should therefore take account of the age of the young offender, his or her family background and educational circumstances.” (Home Office, 1995: 2.35).

In opposition, the Labour Party foreshadowed a departure from these principles of child welfare in the criminal justice domain: “Ultimately, the welfare needs of the individual cannot outweigh the needs of the community to be protected from the adverse consequences of his or her offending behaviour.” (Labour Party Media Office, 1996: 9).

Although the election of a Labour government in 1997 has resulted in a number of child-friendly policies – most notably in the area of child poverty with such community development initiatives as Sure start – the status of children in the criminal justice system has actually been eroded by the Blair administration. Its attitude to “young offenders” and those who apparently administered the old youth justice system so incompetently was well encapsulated in the title of one of the first documents to emerge from the New Labour tenants at the Home Office. *No more excuses* (Home Office: 1997) pithily summed up its finger-wagging brand of “tough love” and social authoritarianism in this area of policy. The abolition of *doli incapax* was one striking example of New Labour’s approach to children who offend. The presumption that children aged between ten and thirteen years do not have a fully developed sense of moral agency and, as such, cannot understand the wider implications of their criminal actions was duly abandoned. This has effectively resulted in an untrammelled age of criminal responsibility that starts at the age of ten years. Gelsthorpe and Morris (1999) regard the abolition of this ancient principle of English law as being deeply symbolic. For them *doli incapax* “was a statement about the nature of childhood, the vulnerability of



children and the appropriateness of criminal justice sanctions for children.” (p.213).

This loss of protected status for children in the courts – along with other measures contained in the legislation (Bandalli, 2000; Haines, 2000; Monaghan, 2000) – represents a process that Goldson has described as the “responsibilisation of children” and the “adulterisation of childhood” (Goldson, 2001).

Prior to the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 young people who offended were dealt with by social workers located in specialist Social Services Juvenile Justice Teams. These social workers were guided by legislation that emphasised principles of child welfare. Thus, when a young person offended, the welfare of the child was the paramount consideration. The ethos of these statutory social services teams was overwhelmingly child-centred.

In 1998, however, the Crime and Disorder Act removed juvenile justice services from Social Services Departments and relocated them within newly created Youth Offending Teams (YOTs). YOTs – which are directly accountable to a national Youth Justice Board – are multidisciplinary agencies that draw their core personnel from those statutory services covering the core areas of education, health, social services, probation and the police. Although these different occupational groups operate on a seconded basis, it is important to make the point that they are accountable to the Youth Justice Board via local Youth Offending Team management structures. Local practice is also regulated through centrally imposed national standards (Youth Justice Board 2000; 2001). These multidisciplinary agencies are, therefore, the organisational sites within which the new juvenile justice practitioner culture are being fostered.

The main advantage of the creation of YOTs is essentially systemic. YOTs provide the opportunity to develop properly co-ordinated, joined-up services for young people who offend. The positive achievements of the new teams are well publicised (Youth Justice Board website: www.youth-justice-board.gov.uk). Nevertheless, there are potential disadvantages and real concerns about the new arrangements that tend to be overlooked by enthusiasts of the new order. Three areas merit careful consideration.

First, the establishment of multidisciplinary YOTs has created “partnerships of the powerful” (Drakeford and McCarthy, 2000); and where there is a concentration of power, there is obviously also a risk of that power being misused. Drakeford and McCarthy have made the important point that when the systems of welfare and justice were more clearly separated from one another, there was at least a greater possibility of the truanting child with a criminal record being treated by the school as – first and foremost – a school pupil. Likewise, if a young person with an alcohol or drug problem approached the health service or an independent sector substance misuse agency, s/he would be regarded primarily as a “patient” or a young person with healthcare needs. The new arrangements, however, run the risk of privileging the “offending behaviour” label above other diagnostic assessments. As Coppock (1996: 56) points out in another context: “the diagnostic label applied is contingent upon the first point of contact, identification and referral. Thus, the defining process is as much a cause of concern as the definitions themselves.”.

Thus, the truanting young person with health care needs will be regarded primarily as a “young offender”.





The second issue requiring careful consideration relates to role boundaries. Who does what? How do they do it? Are role boundaries becoming indistinct? This author has certainly observed the incremental process of “job creep” and “role blur” in the course of conducting ethnographic research in a YOT (Evans, forthcoming). In some Teams, moreover, police officers are writing pre-sentence reports on young people – a task previously undertaken only by social workers and probation officers. Nevertheless, even when occupational roles appear to be clearly demarcated, the fact remains that assorted professionals with very different backgrounds are sharing the same office space. In such circumstances the conditions are created where information is shared more easily with colleagues from other disciplines. Although there are evidently positive “spin-offs” from such close association, there are also potential dangers in overfamiliarity. Is information now being conveyed across professional boundaries in a way that would have been hitherto considered inappropriate? Different occupational groups interpret professional ethics of confidentiality and appropriate disclosure in different ways. Will the health worker share information about a young person’s drug using habits with the police officer that is sitting at the next desk? How will that police officer then respond to such intelligence? Such questions are not an argument against institutionalising multi-disciplinarity, but they do constitute an argument for developing clear codes of practice.

The third issue concerns the development of a new practitioner culture within the recently established YOTs. The nature of this emerging culture will clearly have a direct bearing on practice interventions and, therefore, resulting outcomes for young people. How, then, are these different occupational cultures and professional discourses interacting with one another? Which discourse appears to be in the ascendancy? Crucially, how is social work discourse faring in the presence of these other occupational cultures?

It would be premature to comment authoritatively on the above questions. Nevertheless, on the basis of my own research I have observed three clear trends beginning to exert an influence on professional practice. Firstly, YOTs are being evaluated on the basis of their ability to meet centrally imposed national standards (Youth Justice Board 2000; 2001). As the standards are essentially quantitative and procedural in character (x number of days in which to serve a Court Order; the number of appointments to be met each week, etc.) there is a creeping routinisation of practice. Secondly, partly in order to meet the contact demands of the new national standards and partly to make full use of the range of expertise represented in YOTs, there is a trend towards a case management model of practice. Although there are undoubtedly advantages to this approach, there is a danger of the “case manager” failing to develop a personal professional relationship with the “whole” young person – a relationship I found to be important to the young people I interviewed. One student on a social work practice placement described it in the following terms: “The danger of the mix was in specialism. I think with a young person it’s quite difficult to work with different segments of the young person. You know, I’m not going to look at your drug use, as if it’s in a little box. And I’ve got a drug worker in the team now, so I as a worker don’t touch drugs. And now I’m going to have a mental health practitioner in the team, that’s going to be a separate side of it. So now we’re really dissecting our young clients into, if you like, artificial dissections simply because of the structure of the team.” (Evans, forthcoming).



The third trend relates to the vigorous promotion of an “evidence-based” culture of practice. Whilst in itself this is a commendable development, in practice huge assumptions are made about the nature of “evidence”. Pitts (2001) has also noted the way in which an authorised canon of rehabilitative practice (usually cognitive behavioural in character) reduces youth justice interventions to a narrow “conservative political correctness” (p. 12). Meanwhile, “‘product support’ is provided via a steady flow of ‘evidence-based’ data about ‘what works’” (pp. 8-9).

The uncritical fashion in which such “evidence” is constructed, communicated and – in some cases – received by consumer-practitioners is deeply worrying. One of the consequences of the actuarial mentality has been a “narrowing of the aetiological focus” (Pitts, 2001: 9). Serious discussions about crime causation have been replaced in many quarters by bullet-pointed “risk factors” (Farrington, 1996; Utting and Vennard, 2000). Whilst the “risk factor” paradigm has the advantage of being “easy to understand and to communicate, and it is easily accepted by policy makers and the general public” (Farrington, 2000: 17), it is not clear whether risk factors are “causes” or “effects”. The relationship between the individual biographies of offenders, family characteristics, neighbourhood profiles and socio-economic stress remains unexplained. This leads to what Currie (1985) has called the “fallacy of autonomy” whereby individuals are presented as decontextualised clusters of “risk factors”.

In UK policy formation circles, moreover, there has been a tendency to foreground parenting, schooling, cognitive deficits and peer group factors. The impact of neighbourhood poverty, for example, receives considerably less emphasis. The social de-contextualisation of crime runs the obvious risk of pathologising individuals in relation to their “deviant” families and friends. Holdaway et al. (2001) appear to draw their ideas about “evidence-based” practice from this tradition of research. Leaving aside the important debates about what actually constitutes valid “evidence”; there is an uncritical acceptance of the aims of the Youth Justice Board in their evaluation of YOTs. My own research found that most practitioners – though not hostile to cognitive behaviourism, for example – sometimes promoted agendas other than those set by the Youth Justice Board. This was not – as it has sometimes been characterised – Luddism. Rather there was deep concern about the individual needs of often very damaged and vulnerable young people. Thus, rather than intervention being tram-lined into “evidence-based” packages, practitioners drew upon their professional experience in more reflexive ways. Victim awareness and cognitive behaviourism were, perhaps, suspended or deferred until the right foster placement was found or mental health service accessed. The importance of building up a meaningful working relationship with the “whole” young person also underpinned much of the work. On the whole I did not find practitioners hostile to the idea of “evidence-based” practice, per se. They did, however, want their experience recognised and, as such, wished to retain a significant degree of professional discretion. They were largely resistant to attempts to create a compliant and homogenised practitioner culture.

Young people, violence and the youth justice system

The first point to make in any discussion of violence is that in Britain, at least, the legal construction of the word is defined very narrowly indeed. On the whole it is confined to individualised acts against the person. As Levi and Maguire (2002) observe, violence “appears to be a self-evident category, but there are





disputes about whether or how far to include, for example, corporate negligence, or 'non-physical' violence such as threats and 'harassment'." (p. 795).

Racial harassment can disfigure the emotional lives of minority ethnic communities and influence such daily decisions as to what route to take to work or school. Corporate crime, meanwhile, may lack a tangible sense of *mens rea* or intentionality, but acts of negligence in the interests of profit maximisation can – in some cases – cost the lives of hundreds, even thousands of people. This thought helps give us a sense of perspective when we consider the “problem” of youth crime.

As has been previously mentioned, “youth” and “crime” have become virtually synonymous terms. Consequently, very often the problems experienced by young people are merely appended to an agenda dominated by concerns about public order and safety. On one level this is inevitable. In poor neighbourhoods in particular young people’s social exclusion is highly visible on the streets. Inevitably, they are associated with crime, minor misdemeanours and low level “public nuisance” (more commonly and evocatively referred to as “disorder”). Given that only one in ten offences recorded by the police results in a caution or conviction, we cannot know with exact precision the profile of those who commit crimes in our communities (Maguire, 2002). On the basis of adjudicated offenders we do know, however, that around 80% are male and 41% are below the age of 21 (Maguire, 2002: 362). Moreover, at least a quarter of crime is committed by young people aged 10 to 17 years (Newburn, 2002: 540). It is important to make the point, though, that most youth crime is confined to less serious offences. Over the last decade property offences (theft, handling stolen goods, burglary, etc.) have outnumbered crimes of violence. Those offences of violence that are committed also tend not to be serious. Brown’s (1998) observation a few years ago remains valid today. “Mid-life is portrayed as a time of maximum respectability, maximum productivity: the age of the solid, respectable, law-abiding citizen. Crime is therefore portrayed as a problem for those in mid-life, rather than the middle-aged being portrayed as a problem for society. Rarely do we imagine middle-aged people as corporate or white-collar criminals, embezzlers, or orchestrators of sleaze in politics. The fact that most serious crimes of theft and violence are perpetrated by this age group ... is concealed by our cultural notions of respectable middle age and our concomitant fear and suspicion of the young” (p. 3).

Self-report studies reveal that the actual level of offending amongst young people is considerably higher than that recorded in official statistics. It should be noted, though, that such surveys usually focus on “at risk” or “delinquent” populations. Consequently the real extent and pattern of offending among older people is less clear. Nevertheless, the Home Office’s Youth Lifestyles Survey (Flood-Page et al., 2000) – a sample of 5 000 young people aged 12 to 30 years – makes interesting reading. Some of the key findings are summarised below:

- youth crime is widespread, with 57% of young men and 37% of young women admitting to the commission of at least one offence at some point in their lives;
- almost a fifth of those sampled admitted to one or more offences in the last twelve months. Men (26%) were more likely to admit to offending than women (11%). Those in the 14 to 21 age group were the most likely to be offenders;



- most youth crime does not result in young people being dealt with by the youth justice system. Only 4% of young men and 1% of young women reported that they had been cautioned or taken to court;
- the average age of offending was 13.5 for boys and 14 for girls;
- most admitted to only one offence in the past year, but 10% of offenders were responsible for nearly half of all crime;
- offending amongst boys aged between 14 and 17 years increased by 14% between 1992-93 and 1998-99, but fell during the same period for 18- to 25-year-olds by 6%;
- types of offending varied with age: fighting and criminal damage predominating among 12- and 13-year-olds but declining in later teenage years;
- amongst 12- to 17-year-old boys factors associated with persistent offending included drug taking, educational disaffection, and the influence of family and friends. Persistent offending was five times more common amongst those taking drugs compared to those who abstained;
- drug use amongst 18 to 30-year-old men was also the factor most predictive of persistent offending.

However, in my view academic research should inspect much more closely the contexts within which young people tend to commit offences – especially that minority involved in violent incidents. Rather than pathologising them on an individual basis or narrowing the aetiological focus and reducing them to de-contextualised clusters of “risk factors”, we need to understand the different settings within which violence is likely to occur. Whilst work undertaken on the influences of peer groups and gang cultures is important, it is equally essential that we analyse those contexts that have been constructed and dominated by adults. Our focus should not only be on young people themselves, but also on ourselves as adults. What do we do to young people? Do our detailed “risk assessments” include a serious assessment of the risks that we pose to young people?

Young people are also, of course, victims of crime. They are actually more vulnerable to all forms of violent crime (apart from spouse abuse) (Tuck, 1989; Mattinson, 2001). According to the British Crime Surveys, for example, 19% of males aged 20 to 24 were assaulted at least once over a twelve-month period. This could in part be related to a lifestyle associated with alcohol consumption in large groups in public places (Levi and Maguire, 2002: 808). The fourth sweep of the BCS, however, focused on young people aged 12 to 15. Although the data are by now rather old, it is interesting to note that in this age group: one third reported being assaulted; a quarter had been victims of theft; and one in twenty had been robbed (Aye Maung, 1995). The latter offence category has risen more recently, partly because of the proliferation of mobile phones amongst teenagers – a fashionable accessory and “soft target” (Home Office website: accessed October 2002).

As has been mentioned previously, the range of settings in which young people are victimised should also be borne in mind. Places in which adults owe young people a duty of care are often the sites where they are actually most vulnerable. CCTV cameras cannot protect young people from domestic violence within the family. Such violence is, moreover, more commonly analysed in the social work discourse of “child abuse” rather than in criminological terms (Rees and Stein, 1999).



Likewise, schools – which are charged with the responsibility of acting in *loco parentis* – are often places of danger and fear. A Youth Justice Board-commissioned survey (Youth Justice Board, 2002) found that 35% of children had been assaulted and 45% threatened with violence whilst on school premises.

As has already been mentioned, the public care system has been exposed as a site of danger for young people: a series of scandals in the 1980s and 1990s exposed cases of physical, sexual and institutional abuse (Utting, 1997; Waterhouse, 2000; Butler and Drakeford, forthcoming) taking place in the public care system. Given that those with a background in public care are over-represented in the criminal justice system (some 23% of adult prisoners and 38% of young prisoners have been in state care: Utting, 1997), young offenders’ emotional vulnerability and experience of victimisation should not be overlooked. Indeed, the high proportion of young “offenders” with a background in public care (plus those defined as being “Children in need” under the terms of the Children Act 1989) has important implications for those practitioners delivering cognitive behavioural programmes. A mainstream anger management programme, for example, may not be suitable for a young person who has experienced violence and/or sexual abuse.

In my own research on the public care system, moreover, I was genuinely shocked by the large number of young people who arrived in court because of incidents that occurred in residential units managed by social services departments. I found that the hothouse dynamics of many residential units had led many young people being charged with such offences as criminal damage, threatening behaviour and assault. I also found cases where young people were reacting or responding to the misuse of adult power “on the streets”. Many complained about the way in which they were addressed (commonly with a lack of respect). Others highlighted the manner in which they were “moved on” by the police in public places.

Less well publicised – but nevertheless extensively documented – is the culture of assault, bullying and intimidation that exists in many custodial institutions for young people (Ramsbotham, 2001; Goldson, 2002). During 2000/1 the Prison Service recorded an average assault rate of 43%. One privately-run institution (Ashfield, Bristol) recorded an assault rate of 74% (Howard League website: accessed October 2002). In some cases this has clearly contributed to self-harm and suicides in juvenile prisons. Between April 2000 and November 2001 there were 554 cases of self-harm and four suicides in the under-18 population being held in custody (Howard League website: accessed October 2002). Since 1997 there have been over ninety suicides by those aged under 21 years (Howard League website: accessed October 2002). The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (2002) is therefore understandably concerned about the high numbers of young people in our custodial institutions. Between October 2000 and March 2002 a total of 10 650 young people aged under 18 experienced custody. The figures on any given day hover around 3 000 in respect of those aged under 18 years and 11 000 for those aged under 21. It should be noted that there is particular concern for girls because they are denied access to separate juvenile provision. Consequently, they are compelled to mix with adult female prisoners. Currently there is a ratio of one custodial sentence to every three community-based sentences in respect of “young offenders”. At the present time there are also around 500 children remanded in custody awaiting trial. One survey of 4 000 young people awaiting trial presented the following key findings:

- 340 were experiencing mental health problems;
- 318 had attempted suicide or self-harm;



- 252 were the victims of bullying;
- twenty-seven cases involved child protection issues (Children's Society website: accessed October 2002).

It is important to acknowledge that there are critics of Britain's custodial arrangements within the heart of the British establishment. The former Chief Inspector of Prison, General Sir David Ramsbotham, published a series of damning reports in which he expressed concern about the safety of young prisoners. He also wondered "whether child protection procedures should not apply in a situation where institutional arrangements are themselves intrinsically abusive." (Ramsbotham, 2001b: 57).

One of the institutional practices causing acute concern is the routine use of solitary confinement. Between April 2000 and January 2002, 3 776 children were held in segregation cells, of whom 976 were held for more than seven days (Howard League website: accessed October 2002). In any other context such practices would be against the law. The UK Government argues, however, that children in prison are not protected by the Children Act 1989. Sir David Ramsbotham and the Howard League have challenged this position. The outcome of a judicial review is awaited with interest. (See postscript at the end of the paper).

Despite the fact that young people are more likely to be victims than perpetrators of violence, the youth justice system concentrates its resources and attention on young people as "offenders". This is not to suggest that welfare needs are ignored. Indeed under the present arrangements, when welfare needs are found to be coterminous with criminogenic risk factors there is very often active engagement with children's needs. As has already been suggested, however, there are intrinsic difficulties associated with the criminalisation of social policy.

It goes beyond the scope of this paper to present a detailed and critical account of New Labour's youth justice policy. In my view, suffice it to say, I consider it profoundly confusing in philosophical and practice terms. Neither the public pronouncements of ministers nor the accumulated detail of the legislation amount to a coherent approach to youth crime. Restorative justice initiatives, for example, are tacked on to the existing formal criminal justice system in an extremely unconvincing way. What is potentially an exciting and innovative philosophy seems to have more to do with responsabilising offenders than meeting the needs of victims. Reparation and victim awareness – by implication, time consuming activities – are reduced to formulaic gestures by the pressure of unrealistic time limits set in those tablets of stone otherwise known as national standards.

Despite being officially committed to "evidence-based" practice and the "What works" research agenda, New Labour's year zero approach to policy formation means that it has dismissed the 1970s experience of early intervention and net-widening. The principal aim of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 is to prevent offending or, as government ministers like to say, to "nip it in the bud". This desirable aim, however, is serviced by early and intensive statutory intervention by youth offending teams. The government's net-widening strategy, meanwhile, is pursued by a de facto expansion of the criminal code to include minor misdemeanours, incivilities and public nuisances. Anti-social behaviour orders were introduced to tackle "low level disorder" and "anti-social behaviour". The latter was defined in broad terms to include any "matter that caused or was likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress to one or more persons not of the same household" (cited in Newburn, 2002: 563). Crucially, only a civil standard of proof



is required to make such an order. The breach of these orders, however, incurs criminal sanctions. Child welfare orders and local child curfew schemes further extend the net of social control.

Defenders of New Labour's Third Way project point to the positive commitment to social inclusion – and they are right to do so. That said, the paradoxes of policy formulation and presentation smack of the practice of *realpolitik* at best and, at worst, of intellectual confusion. A “no excuses” rhetoric is used to responsabilise and demonise young people and their parents (through parenting orders, for example), whilst at the same time some in the government acknowledge many of the genuine social problems experienced by children in poor families; the virtues of variety are celebrated in the creation of multidisciplinary teams as cultural homogenisation is being engineered on the ground; and the latest version of “constructive custody” (detention and training orders) is promoted by the Youth Justice Board until it becomes so popular with sentencers that the capacity to deliver education and training within the reformed institutions is severely reduced. None of this is, perhaps, particularly surprising. Politicians are seldom motivated solely by philosophical ideas. They will react to the representations of competing interest groups, the exigencies imposed by the size of the budget, results from the latest focus groups and – of course – the tyranny of “events”. The search for policy coherence is probably futile. An analysis of any given policy initiative, statute or government press release reveals, at best, a snapshot of the balance of arguments at a specific point in history. Moreover, youth justice policy has always been characterised by a sense of hybridity (Muncie and Hughes, 2002). Taken as a whole, therefore, New Labour's criminal justice policy is essentially eclectic. It contains welfarist, rehabilitative and socially inclusive elements as well as a punitive and stigmatising dimension. Such incoherence does, however, offer practitioners and managers some leeway in constructing principles of consistent professional practice.

Conclusion

What conclusions and lessons, then, can be drawn from the youth justice experience in England and Wales? Ideally, the starting point should be international conventions. Article 1 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child states that “a child means every human being below the age of 18 years unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier.” (United Nations, 1989).

The age of criminal responsibility should be raised accordingly and the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice (the Beijing Rules, 1985) adopted. The essentially political case for constructing those under 18 years of age as children can also, of course, be enhanced by considerations based on personal human development grounds as well as wider structural and social relations. Drakeford articulates this enhanced position in the context of advancing a children first (and, by implication, offender second) criminal justice philosophy.

“In comparison with adults, children do not possess a similar degree of independent agency. Their characters are not fully formed and neither ... are their capacities to frame fully informed moral judgments. They remain dependent upon adults for almost all the key necessities of life. The law itself determines that they are unable to take their own decisions in a whole series of areas which are available to adults.” (Drakeford, 2001: 43).



At the heart of the above-quoted definitions resides the issue of power. Barred from participation in the democratic process, children are effectively disvoiced by the political system. Adults are therefore left with the responsibility of representing their interests. The degree of influence children and young people can exert over those key decisions that affect their lives will largely depend upon how well adults consult and listen to them. Ultimately, though, the meaningful arenas within which young people have the opportunity to define their own interests are extremely limited (Democracy for Young People, 2001). Logically, therefore, there can be no meaningful sense of responsibility without some measure of meaningful power.

A children first philosophy entails diverting as many young people from the criminal justice system as possible. For those young people whose offences cannot be ignored – because of their persistence or seriousness – a tariff of graduated community-based sentences should be available. Such sentences, however, should maintain strong community links. As far as possible health and welfare needs should be met by mainstream, universal health and welfare services. The principle of normalisation should underpin work with young “offenders”. The aims of effective individual personal rehabilitation and community reintegration are best served by this principle.

Of course Britain is not an ideal place in which to promote such policies and practices. Popular culture is still deeply imbued by a strong belief in punishment – and for most people punishment means prison. Foucault’s (1991) observation that in the case of custody “failure never matters” certainly remains relevant to contemporary British attitudes towards crime. The statistic that 80% of young offenders are reconvicted for another offence within two years of release from a custodial sentence has done little to dislodge established beliefs about the efficacy of prison. Moreover, on average it costs approximately £20 000 per annum to keep a young person in custody. There is also, though, a depressing lack of understanding about the problems experienced by young people. This has recently been typified in the debate about young “drug addicts”. Some regard this as a “self-inflicted” problem that should not command the precious resources of the National Health Service. Perversely it is becoming easier to argue in favour of drug rehabilitation for young people when it is integrated into criminal justice packages of supervision and surveillance. What many of us would regard as an essentially public health issue is now at the heart of the crime reduction/management and community safety agenda. The criminalisation of social policy makes many practitioners uncomfortable. However, if the Youth Justice Board and Probation Service can attract money to meet at least some of the health and welfare needs of socially excluded and sick young people, then maintaining a position of ideological purity may be unhelpful to this vulnerable group. Political pragmatism does not necessarily involve jettisoning all our principles. However, the application of those principles in such an unpromising policy environment requires considerable thought, care and skill if young people’s well-being and liberty are not to be endangered. We must be very sure that the help we offer young people does not ultimately cause them even greater harm.

Postscript

On 29 November 2002 the High Court judged that the Children Act 1989 should apply to children held in prison custody. Mr Justice Munby said that the Howard League had: “performed a most useful service in bringing to the public attention



matters which, on the face of it, ought to shock the conscience of every citizen.” (The Howard League website: accessed on 1 December 2002).

This landmark decision means that the welfare of those aged under 18 years will be of “paramount concern” to those charged with a duty of care. Social services departments will now have responsibilities regarding the assessment of young people’s welfare needs and where, applicable, child protection.

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-----> **Young people narrating violence in reformatory schools:
Some preliminary remarks**

Päivi Honkatukia and Tarja Pösö

Our paper is based on our ongoing research project in which we study the narration of violence by young people in residential care in Finland. Besides the two of us, this project involves also a third researcher, Leo Nyqvist. We have carried out fifteen interviews in groups of one to four youngsters, aged mainly 14 to 17 years. Altogether we interviewed 38 young people in two different residential institutions we call reformatory schools. The format of group interviews was chosen instead of individual interviews because our intention was to learn about the cultural meanings given to violence by youngsters living in a residential setting instead of their personal experiences. Group interviews, especially focus group interviews, have been conducted successfully when studying the meanings of violence among adults (Piispa and Ronkainen, 2002) and adolescents' understandings of social expectations, norms and pressures on their behaviour (see for example Honkatukia, 1999; Suurpää, 2002b) to get a picture, meaningful for those particular groups.

In our presentation we will bring out some reflections arising from the research process in its current phase during which we are about to start the analysis of the interviews. We will also raise some more general questions which deal with conducting research on a sensitive topic in a residential setting. We will concentrate on an aspect we will analyse further in the future, namely how gender was visible in the interaction and discussions in the interviews. First, however, we will clarify why we have set out for this kind of enterprise in the first place.

Why study young residents' understandings of violence?

Youth violence is a classical issue for social concerns as well as any youth behaviour which does not meet the adult norms of appropriate behaviour. It cannot however be ignored only as a social construction of adult concerns, despite its variation according to social norms and values, historically, culturally and locally, as it has a certain destructive character for both young people and others. In Finland, we are living in an era when serious violent youth crimes have been under continuous media scrutiny, in other words, public adult concerns are topical. The concern is encouraged by the changes documented in the crime statistics showing a moderate increase in violent crimes committed by youngsters, especially aggravated crimes (Kivivuori, 2002a; Lehti, 2002).

This trend has been theorised in Finland from the point of view of polarisation: the social, economic and cultural differentiation processes in society exclude a small group of youth from tough norm-breaking behaviour and cultures, whereas the majority of youth is more norm-conscious than before (Kuure, 2001; Kivivuori, 2002a). The differences found in the child population generally support this theory (Järventie and Sauli, 2001).

Different social and health agencies as well as many informal actors, work with the youngsters described as the polarised group. In our study, we are looking at one state-run agency – reformatory schools – which have traditionally been seen as the last resort for young people not coping within their own communities by



committing minor crimes, misbehaving, running away, etc. These reformatory schools emphasise the elements of reform, which are hoped to take place during and after the placement, education and training.

We did not intend, however, to go to those institutions to meet the most excluded or polarised young people in the country. The routes to residential care in child protection, which regulates the institutions under study, are based on such complicated local selection processes that they cannot unify the youngsters as individuals. Therefore, we wanted to see the young persons in residential care as active actors who produce meanings instead of looking at them as just representatives of a certain category or targets of certain measures. We wanted to learn from them: how they define the issue of violence, what kind of meaning it carries for them and how familiar that issue is culturally for them. These young people have also had an experience of life in an institutional context, some of them frequently in their life history, which has not been greatly studied.

By doing so, we wish to contribute to the recent debate on youth violence which tends to take the concept of violence and young people in trouble for granted. Youth violence is defined in terms of certain violent acts, aggressive personalities or behaviour which is seen as inconceivable and uncontrollable by adults. It is regarded as a serious social problem, but young people themselves are often treated as a “separate, powerless and dependent group, who due to their age and physical immaturity, are deemed incapable of independent rational judgment of action” (Anderson et al., 1994: 31). The young people in residential care are seen to belong to a risk group of future violent adults.

Our attempt to give voice to young people in reformatory schools was encouraged by some recent criminological and social scientific discussions (see for example Muncie, 1999). Traditionally criminologists interested in youth crime have often sought to find causal explanations for young people’s violent behaviour. Concepts like “violence”, “crime” or “youth” have been defined by researchers as if they were universally shared. Youth violence has been studied quantitatively by asking a sample of adolescents to answer certain structured questions on their experiences as victims of perpetrators of crime. Since the questions have often been based on adult understandings, the results of these studies can also differ substantially from the ways young people see these issues (see for example Anderson et al., 1994: 7).

In order to learn about the meaning young people in residential care give to violence we wanted to position them as “legitimate citizens” who tell us about issues relevant to their everyday lives. We expected to find various and contradictory accounts of violence in the group interviews we performed in two different residential institutions. We wanted to question the self-evident knowledge on violence by bringing out uncertainties and negotiation between the different understandings and contingent nature of violence talk (Muncie, 1999: 152, 155).

Still, it has to be pointed out that this kind of research is unable to catch the “authentic voice” of the young people we interviewed. This point brings us into confrontation with some debates on social constructionism and post-modernism in social theory and methodology. Our interviewees discussed their lived reality with the aid of certain culturally shared ideas on violence. At the same time, their accounts of violence in the group interviews are situated knowledge (Haraway, 1991) which are at least partly determined by certain institutional, physical and



interactional contexts. Furthermore, we as researchers have a lot of power in interpreting and presenting these accounts.

In other words, our approach is eclectic. We try to take a road between a realist (that is, reproduction view of interview data) and an idealist-constructivist view much in the same way as Barry Glassner and Julia Loughlin (1987) so powerfully describe their approach when studying drugs in the adolescent world. This means that when trying to analyse and communicate the young residents' accounts of violence we intend to be aware of the contexts in which the knowledge is produced and also that the knowledge is not isolated even though the institution might be. To be more exact and to rely on Glassner and Loughlin (1987: 34-35) once again, our approach is to treat the adolescents' reports as situated elements in social worlds.

Group interviews in a residential setting

When interviewing and interpreting the knowledge produced in the interviews, we felt it was important to be aware of the actual context of the study. Our interviewees' narration on violence is shaped by their strong social position as students in a reformatory school. This institution which shares many features with the so-called total institutions described by Erving Goffman (1961), forms a social, hierarchical and discursive order in their lives which restricts and controls their actions in their everyday lives.

In addition to the institutional context, we try our best to be sensitive to the interaction which occurred in each interview session and to the situated knowledge created in them. We want to analyse how we as researchers positioned ourselves in different interviews, and how we were positioned by the young people we interviewed? How did these issues affect the picture we got of our interviewees' understandings of violence? (See also Huttunen, 2002: 23-25, 36; Glassner and Loughlin, 1987: 34-35).

We had two interviewers in each interview session. In all groups for girls only there were two female interviewers (Päivi and Tarja), but in all boys groups one male (Leo) and one female interviewer (Tarja) were present. The first interviewer was the person in charge of presenting the issues, asking and taking care of the speech opportunities in the interview whereas the role of the other one was mainly to ask for clarification. The main interviewer (Päivi or Leo) was not well known to the young residents but the "background interviewer" (Tarja) had worked in the institutions as an ethnographer for some time before the group interviews. It was emphasised that the previous knowledge, including individual interviews, was confidential and was not to be introduced in the group interviews. We all stayed in the institution after the group interviews to make it easy for the youngsters to come back and talk about their thoughts after the group interviews.

Violence narratives in the interviews

The interviews are a rich material of meanings of violence. Violence was discussed in various (spatial) contexts, like street, school, institution they lived in, family, media, etc. Violence was referred to as a personal experience as well as a more general theme. The interviewees took different positions in their stories on violence: they talked about themselves as observers of violence, perpetrators, commentators or victims of it.



In the beginning of each interview we asked a question on what they thought violence was. Violence was usually seen first and foremost as physical violence, even though in some interviews it was discussed whether it could also be “mental”. After that we usually proceeded to discuss various contexts in which violence might occur: what kind of violence is that? In some contexts, like in the peer group, violence was sometimes referred to as merely a joke which can, however, sometimes go too far (for example interview 8, see also Lahelma, 2002; Burman et al. 2001).⁴⁶ We also talked about violence in the media and what possible solutions the interviewees would offer to tackling the problem of violence, etc.

A feature shared by almost all interviews was resentment towards the institution where the interviewees lived (see also Goffman, 1961: 20). Examples of malpractice and the lack of the personnel’s trust and respect for young people were given, and the controlling conduct of the staff was referred to as “violence”, “oppression” or “submission”. Many saw that they had been robbed of their human dignity and individuality in the institution. Hence, violence used by young people themselves against the personnel was sometimes seen as a legitimate way to challenge their authority.

Boy 1: They’ve (the staff) taken their life away from other people. Lots of people are missing a part of their life when they end up here, a fucking big piece. And then everyone says that we should still have our childhood. In this kind of place? Huh.

Girl 1: Yeah.

Boy 1: Is this some kind of childhood? Like you just get the idea that life’s just one piece of shite, in a fucking institution, like nothing...

Girl: I know a lot here, a lot of my mates who have tried to kill themselves and all. They ended up this kind of torture centre...

(Interview 4)

Gender was often brought out in a rather stereotypical way: in terms of violence among young people boys were the actors of violence whereas girls were regarded as either victims of it or their violent conduct was seen as marginal and not as legitimate as compared to boys. The ways in which the interviewees described gender differences were reminiscent of the results of a psychological research project on gendered patterns of aggressiveness among 11- to 12-year-old children (see Lagerspetz et al., 1988): girls were seen to be violent mainly verbally or indirectly, by gossiping behind somebody’s back whereas the “real violence” was often seen to occur almost solely between males. Also girls’ ways to use physical violence were seen as different from those of boys.

Girl 1: Well, the blokes punch more, and kick, and other things, do like a bit worse things. The lasses pull hair and claw your mug.

Boy 1: Claw, and scratch and bite.

Girl 1: Yeah, that’s it. Not me. I reckon there are quite big differences [between boys and girls].

(Interview 6)

⁴⁶ In her ethnographic study in the Finnish upper level of elementary schools Elina Lahelma (2002: 302) noticed that, in terms of gendered conflicts, there existed a continuum between play-acting and harassing behaviour. Also Burman et al. (2001: 452) found out in their study on Scottish adolescent girls’ relationships towards violence that sometimes “play fighting” could escalate into serious kicking or punching.



A closer analysis of the narration reveals fractures in this kind of gendered narrative of violence. In addition, many interviewees related various examples of how some boys had beaten their girlfriends or how their own (step)fathers had been violent towards their mothers. This was challenged, but sometimes also neutralised by referring to jealousy, for example.

Mixed groups

Anderson et al. (1994: 4) decided to interview Scottish young people on their experiences of crime and victimisation only in single sex groups because they found out in their pilot study that boys dominated the discussion in mixed groups.⁴⁷ We had somewhat different experiences with our mixed group interviews which we conducted in the first phase of our study (interviews 1 to 6). The participants for those interviews were selected by the staff, so that it affected the normal routines of the institution as little as possible. The interviews were mainly conducted in the area of the official school. The constellation was usually two boys and one girl. The interaction varied between different interviews but there seemed to exist only two positions for girls: either they were silent observers and said very little or they dominated the discussion with harsh comments. There seemed to be more variation in boys' positions, and the boys could also change their position during the interview: they could dominate the discussion at one point, move around the room at the next moment, be openly indifferent or resist more silently.⁴⁸ Perhaps this gendered-division of roles in the interviews reflects the narrow range of possible positions for girls in male-dominated institutions such as reformatory schools.

It was first striking to us how mundane phenomenon violence was seen to be, especially in the mixed groups. This was so, even though we had learned beforehand that the interviewees had had a lot of experience of violence – both as victims and perpetrators (see also Kivivuori, 2002b; Anderson et al., 1994). The accounts of violence were told usually without specific bursts of emotion. On the contrary, violence was often referred to as a natural and normal part of life, not something abnormal or rare (see also Grönfors, 2002: 200-01).

Boy 1: You can meet violence everywhere and experience it everywhere. It can be, like, anywhere.

Girl 1: Whenever.

Interviewer 1: How has it been in your lives?

Girl 1: Well...

Interviewer 1: What have you seen or experienced yourself? You may tell...

Interviewer 2: For example here at school.

Girl 1: I have seen like just masses of violence.

Boy 1: It's here I've seen it.

(Interview 6)

47. Another reason was that in their pilot study some of the youngest participants (11 years old) found individual interviews too intimidating.

48. For example during one interview one of the boys drew a picture of a cannabis plant on his arm with a ballpoint pen.



Very few admitted that the risk of being a victim of violence was something they took into account in their everyday lives except that they could have had a knife with them while they were out with their friends. They claimed not to be afraid of violence because they could trust their friends or because, according to them, it was impossible to know beforehand where violence might occur. This was so even though some of the boys said that they had been harassed by some groups, like nazis or skin heads because of their ethnic origin or because they belonged to youth groups that had antagonistic relations to these groups.

For boys in particular it was natural to see violence as an instrumental means to achieve certain aims, for example honour, fairness (against adults), fun. The use of violence only as an expression of negative emotions was regarded a sign of being “mad”. When violence was portrayed as instrumental use of force, the consequences of violence or empathy towards the potential victims were seldom discussed. This was visible, for example, in the strong normative accounts of adult violence towards children: that should never be accepted or practised. Those accounts were mainly about parents being violent towards their children which was one of the issues the youngsters wanted to speak about at a personal level. They maintained that the children should be free from adult violence under any condition. Their view on children’s violence towards the parents was different: violence could be seen as a tool for powerless children to gain some kind of fairness in the adult/parental world as can be seen in the interview with two boys and a girl:

Boy 1: Well, it was my ex-stepdad who whipped my mother for so long that it finished when I hit my ex-stepdad with a chair.

Girl: Well done!

Boy 2: I reckon that was right, hitting with the chair, that is.

Interviewer 2: Does it mean that violence can be a tool to achieve something good?

Girl: That’s right.

Boy 1: Who says that violence doesn’t solve anything, in that case it did. So it depends, like, in which situation you use violence, how it solves it.

(Interview 4)

Fear of violence was mentioned mostly by girls who sometimes talked about their experiences at home where they had witnessed how their mother had been beaten by her partner (who had sometimes been the girls’ father or stepfather). It is, however, interesting that gendered topics like sexual violence were discussed very little in these first interviews. It seems to be a topic that young people may feel most safe to discuss in single sex groups.

There was a lot of restlessness in the mixed groups which can be interpreted as a sign of lack of confidence and security in the groups. Further, the interviews were taken to be part of a process which intensified the tensions and bad relations between youngsters and adults in the institution.

Single-sex groups

In the second reformatory school we attended the interviewees could choose the other participants in the interview. The members of staff just gave us permission to conduct the interviews during certain times and at certain venues but we



ourselves asked the young people whether they wanted to take part and with whom they wanted to talk about violence. The groups turned out to be single-sex groups. Some even wanted to talk about these issues alone with two researchers. We conducted the interviews in young people's own rooms or in the guest room for visitors.

These interviews were much more peaceful compared to the first six ones. It was felt that it had been important for many participants that they were given the opportunity to talk about these issues. Some even said this aloud and thanked us for the opportunity to talk. Besides being peaceful, the interviews were rich and intensive. We did not notice signs of the need to talk about issues raised in the interviews afterwards as was the case in the first institution we visited. We think that, at least in part, this is due to the fact that the groups were "natural groups", not created artificially only for our research. Also in other studies it has been pointed out that the relationship between the participants in group interviews is particularly important when sensitive and emotionally charged topics are discussed (see for example Suurpää, 2002a: 33-34; see also Lahelma, 2002: 297).

Also, we as researchers raised more themes in the latter interviews compared to the first ones even though we used the same outline in both the institutions. We discussed sexual violence and harassment a lot, and some interviewees wanted to talk about their intimate experiences as victims of these kinds of acts. Girls also described their everyday survival strategies and their ways to deal with their feelings of anger in the institution.

The girls in the single-sex groups admitted that they are sometimes afraid of violence or it was somehow taken into account, whereas in the mixed group interviews this kind of talk was rare. Further, the girls discussed, expressed different opinions and negotiated with each other the meanings of partnership violence as based on their own and other people's experiences, like in the following extract:

Interviewer: So what do you think of that [the boyfriend hitting]?

Girl 1: It comes like from deep down. I wouldn't like to be hit daily, for the sake of something silly.

Girl 2: But there is, like, one, it's not only up to the man, there are two partners in a fight.

Girl 1: That might be so, but I can't find any fault in myself if my bloke comes back from the shop and I've left a mug of cocoa on the table and if I'm hit because of that, and I'm just clearing it away, so I think it is wrong. It's not my fault. I was in the wrong place at the wrong time. So, I must have been the only person he could've burst all his anger and anxieties and everything on to.

Girl 2: That's right, like the guys who always unwind at the girlfriends.

Girl 1: That's right, even when they wouldn't mean or want to.

(Interview 8)

Also other gendered topics like sexual harassment, a girl's sexual reputation and consequences of being a victim of violence were discussed in the girls' groups. Dilemmas and experiences of being a so-called tough girl or being a girl from a



reformatory school were raised in some interviews, as can be seen in the following extract:

Interviewer 1: So, do you really think that you're tough girls?

Girl 1: Like because we're in a reformatory school and so?

Interviewer 1: Well, yes, how...

Girl 2: No but like we're just children belonging to the state. We're not tough girls, but because we're in reformatory schools, we're like got the reputation of tough girls.

Interviewer 2: So, the reputation comes from...

Girl 2: Like we got the reputation into the bargain.

(Interview 10)

Also the boys raised gendered topics like the question of military service as boys' expression of opinion towards violence, etc. We believe that the high prevalence of gendered talk in the single-sex interviews indicates young people's confidence in the interview situation.

The dilemma of misuse and giving voice

Laura Huttunen, a Finnish sociologist, has problematised the question of representing violence in her study on immigrant autobiographies (Huttunen, 2002). She argues that the act of telling of one's experiences of violence often means an attempt to share the pain of this experience as well as an attempt to break the silence. Therefore, talking about violence can serve as a therapeutic process for the author. She also claims that the accounts of violence can be interpreted as political acts. That is because the power that has caused these experiences gets criticised and the reader is invited to share this critique. Writing about these experiences can be painful to the authors themselves, but it is also difficult to a researcher who analyses such stories. Is it possible to understand the experiences if one has not experienced them herself? How to analyse and communicate these experiences without causing further pain? (Huttunen, 2002: 139-141, 151, 169-173)

Huttunen's notions are valid for our study as well, as they might be for any study on violence. Violence needs words to be told so that it can be discussed outside the actual act of violence (see Hearn, 1998) but the words also reconstruct violence as a phenomenon. When trying to catch something of the young residents' understanding of violence, the researchers become involved in verbalising and defining what violence is. This kind of power is especially strong when we are talking about a vulnerable group like young people in residential care. This poses a fundamental question to us whether this kind of research is needed and if so, who is benefiting from it.

The practical and ethical implications of social research have been widely discussed in the social sciences. Our question is not a new one. We do, however, wonder whether this kind of a study is misusing the young residents or giving them voice. Most likely, a lot depends on our way of narrating the violence description we became aware of in the institution. Even so, we cannot regulate how our narrating will be read by the audience. In the end, we might be introducing another violent act towards the young people in the reformatory schools.



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-----> **The attitudes of adolescents to the issue of gender-based violence**

Jivka Marinova

Research within a programme for teaching conscious non-violent behaviour among teenagers

The context

The origin of violence against women and girls is often to be found in their families where they first “learn” that “women are second to men”. For a considerable length of time many women have been working towards countering the trends of subordination and for the eradication of gender-based violence, but they cannot do it alone. Men’s support is essential: efforts to combat men’s violence are unlikely to succeed without their own active participation. Men have to believe in their responsibility and power to stop the violence, because it is real. A man’s investment in his role in the family and in emotional relationships may substantially reduce the chance of violence and this role must be learned from an early age.

Violence against women in Bulgaria remains a private problem in terms of its comprehension and discussion, as well as in terms of the opportunities for (legal) action against it. Some organisations exist, dealing with victims of violence (women and children generally) trying to help them to overcome the trauma of violence. However, there was neither a programme nor an organisation targeting men who eventually would like to overcome their own violent behaviour. In order to make a change a programme has been drafted to reach firstly teenage boys and young men in a period in which they first begin to be interested in emotional and family relationships between women and men and are very fragile when confronting the issue of violence. The initial survey within this programme was intended to study the opinion and attitudes of teenagers – students in high schools – towards violence and their will to eradicate it, and further to select groups for a pilot education course. The second phase was to run an education programme for cultivating conscious non-violent behaviour among teenagers. Part of the third phase consisted of studying the changes in attitudes of boys participating in the pilot initiative.

A major goal of the education programme was to examine the effect of education during adolescence, which is aimed at cultivating a conscious rejection of all forms of violence and more specifically violence against women.

The study

Methodology

The attitudes of adolescents were studied by means of a questionnaire containing thirty-two questions grouped in four groups: 1. General questions (five); 2. Violence in intimate life (seven); 3. The role of stereotypes (seventeen); 4. Assessment of the interest in the programme (three).

The questionnaire was drawn up based on the subject matter covered by the curricular course, aiming, on one hand, to assess the attitude and the affinity of the students for this type of education and to test their opinion on some of the major issues. On the other hand, it was meant to identify the respondents’ degree of competence, or rather their lack of competence in certain areas not covered by





the standard secondary curricular courses and programmes. The analysis also paid attention to the variety and the comprehensiveness of the answers, which gave an idea as to the attitudes and the culture of the adolescents, whereas a quantity assessment was drawn only for the yes/no questions and where the answers yield clear-cut categorisations.

The questions were formulated so as to allow for the expression of the personal opinion of the respondent without furnishing them with a set of answers to choose between. Only very few of the questions required unambiguous answers such as “yes” or “no”.

The survey was targeted at the 13- to 18-year-old student age group with diverse professional orientations⁵⁰ and comprised 990 respondents: 729 from Sofia and 261 from Pernik – a smaller town near the capital. There was a gender balance among the respondents who filled out the questionnaire. For analysing the results, a comparison was made between the answers of the boys and the girls on the one hand, and, on the other, the differences in attitude were traced according to the age of the respondents. The questionnaire was anonymous.

Outcome of the survey

General questions

The respondents were asked to define the violence, following which the answers can be grouped according to several categories: aggression, physical and psychological harassment, battering, compensation for an inferiority complex, abuse of the weaker, forcible obedience, coercion, brutality, exercising control, terror, war. Quite frequently, definitions referred to “encroachment upon personality”, “human rights violations”, “enforcement of another person’s will”. Both the boys’ and the girls’ opinions tended to coincide to a great extent, with girls leaning more in the direction of “complex compensation” and with the boys showing a tendency towards “imposing one’s own opinion by force”. None of the definitions listed above was given by girls or boys only. As a whole, distinguishing between physical and psychological violence is typical for the older groups of students. Less than 1% of the 13- to 14-year-olds can distinguish between physical and psychological violence, whereas with the 16- to 17-year-olds, this aspect of the definition is referred to in more than half of the answers. Gender based differences in the definition of violence were not identified.

The question concerning gender-based violence was definitely found difficult by all students – both the definition and the reasons for such violence: except in self-defence, they allow for violence against people who jeopardise the security of others, as a reaction against other violence, when a person has to be punished either as a means of revenge or for teaching (him/her) a lesson (!), for instilling fear and discipline and imposing order. One of the answers even reads: “in order to earn their respect men need to exercise violence”. Although the incidence of such answers is comparatively low against the backdrop of the general rejection of violence, they deserve to be treated with greater attention as they very precisely reflect the existing stereotypes, which

50. School of Humanities and Arts, School of Finance and Economics and a Language School. In addition to the School of Humanities and Arts in Pernik, the survey also covered the 13 to 14-year age group in one primary school in the same town.



shape violence committers at an early age, with the idea that the identification of the sources and motivation of violence may become the basis for its reduction and elimination.

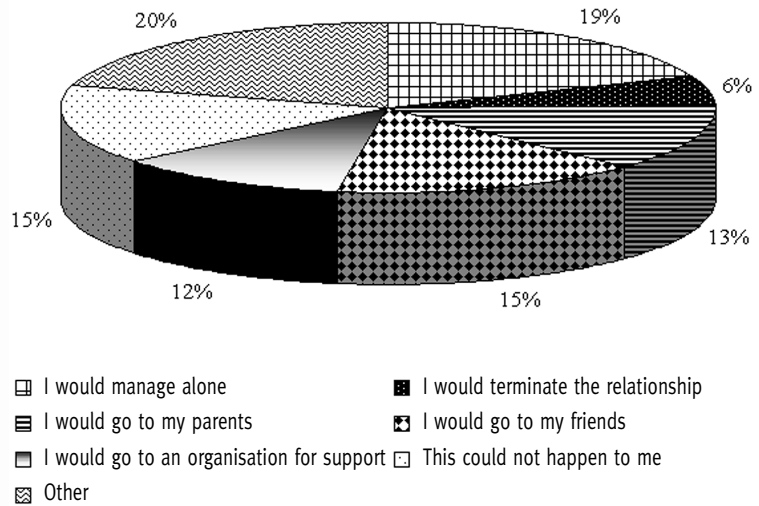
The girls from the same age group have listed almost the same arguments in support of violence, although emphasising violence as a preventive measure: for preventing greater violence and for punishing violence. It is worth noting that boys tend more often to give the answer: “It is inevitable”, without pointing to any reasons. Girls treat violence more passively and more independently; they both deny it and show an ability to accept its existence. The major conclusion is that teenagers do not deny violence as a mode of communication. They tend to justify it as a reaction to other actions and therefore it is too easy to justify gender-based violence as well.

The question of alternatives to violence turned out to be confusing for most of the respondents. Most of them were obviously unaware of the meaning of the word “alternative” as something serving as a counterpoint of a particular event or as a substitute for it. Most of the answers were far fetched and unclear, whereas a part of the respondents reply directly that violence has no alternative. This can explain their view that violence is inevitable and, to a certain degree, can shed light on their “fatalistic” understanding of the phenomenon. At this point, another major difference between the answers of younger and older students can be observed. A significant part of the 13- and 14-year-olds think that violence has no alternative. The latter think that “in certain situations violence is the only way out”. With older students, the picture is a bit different. Regardless of the fact that they also have problems with the word “alternative”, there are some very clear and well-supported answers proposing alternatives such as: “conversation”, a “diplomatic conversation”, “convincing”, “regard and respect”, “tolerance”, “civilised communication”, “compromise”. There are also answers as to directing the aggression into an area which does not result in violence, such as extreme sports. There is one very disturbing answer to the question, which is given by a girl claiming that the alternative to violence is “murder or suicide” as it would be “better for one to be dead rather than to have to bear violence”. This is a singular incident, but it shows that the issue must be discussed so as to find alternatives to violence, which really are comprehensible for adolescents. And this is the major question: the need for talking and discussing these issues since a very early age in order to prevent the incidence of violence. The adolescents need space to discuss, but they need to be safe as well in order to do it openly.

To the question of whether violence is necessary or not, the majority of the answers are “no”. In the group of the 13-year-olds more than four-fifths are definitively in favour of the “no” answer. A small part, however, think that violence is admissible in self-defence. The 14-year-olds demonstrate the same tendency. The answers of the older students are not that definitive, based probably on self-experience or lessons learned. They enumerate a number of circumstances, where violence would be at least inevitable, if not necessary. Here, a division can be marked between boys and girls. Girls stand more firmly against violence, whereas boys tend to point to a greater number of reasons and circumstances in which they would justify it. Here again the need appears to be able to propose alternative non-violent reactions to the aggression as opposed to the justification of violence.



**If there were violence in your intimate relationship who would you address?
(boys' answers)**



Violence in intimate relationships

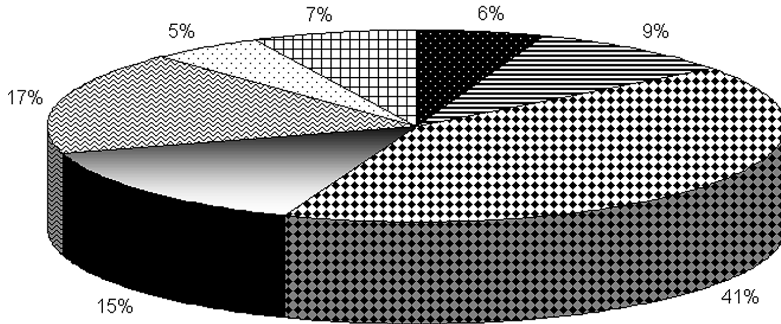
This part of the questionnaire was aimed at determining the attitude and the sensitivity of adolescents to a more specific type of violence: violence in intimate relations. This is an area which is not clear and familiar to all. The answers of the students are mostly based on their intuition, observations of other people's experience (within the family circle or others), movies, readings, etc. rather than on personal experience. Where there is personal experience, the answers are clear and definite. On this issue dramatic differences can be seen between the views of the two sexes, whereas age is obviously not a decisive factor for shaping the adolescent's attitude to this grievous problem.

When asked to define whom they would address if there was violence in their intimate relation, there is a significant difference in the answers of the boys and the girls. While 41% of the girls would ask a parent or another relative for help, only 13% of the boys would tend to do the same. Both sexes tend to trust their friends to an equal degree: 15%. It is worth noting the stronger self-confidence of the boys: 19% of them think that nothing like this could happen to them. Only 6% of the girls tend to think that way.

Equal shares of both sexes think that they can manage the situation on their own. A much greater share of girls rather than boys would address a specialised organisation for help: agencies supporting victims of violence, psychological counselling, school psychologist, hot lines, etc. There are only singular exceptions that would address the police and only one girl would look for legal support. Of the girls 9% would terminate their relationship immediately and the same applies for 6% of the boys. Girls tend to trust their relatives to a greater degree whereas the self-confidence of the boys makes them more predisposed to look for an independent solution to the problem. This trend reinforces the influence of the stereotype.



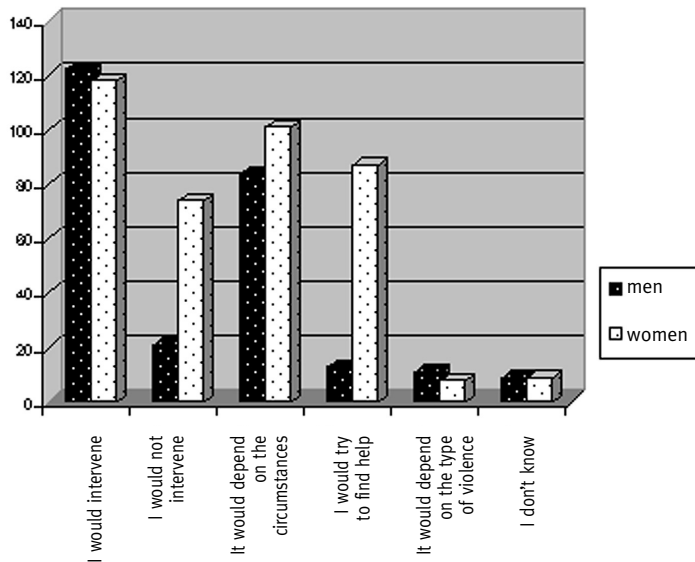
**If there were violence in your intimate relationship who would you address?
(girls' answers)**



- I would manage alone
- I would go to my parents
- I would go to an organisation for support
- I would terminate the relationship
- I would go to my friends
- This could not happen to me
- Other

This is also confirmed by the answer to the question about their reaction to the violent relationship of friends (should they intervene or not). Whereas most of the boys would go directly for “dealing” with the violence committer, the girls would prefer a more diplomatic approach: talking, giving advice, understanding and eliminating the reasons. It is important, however, that only a very small percentage of the adolescents think that they should not intervene and that this problem concerns the couple alone.

What would you do if you witnessed violence?

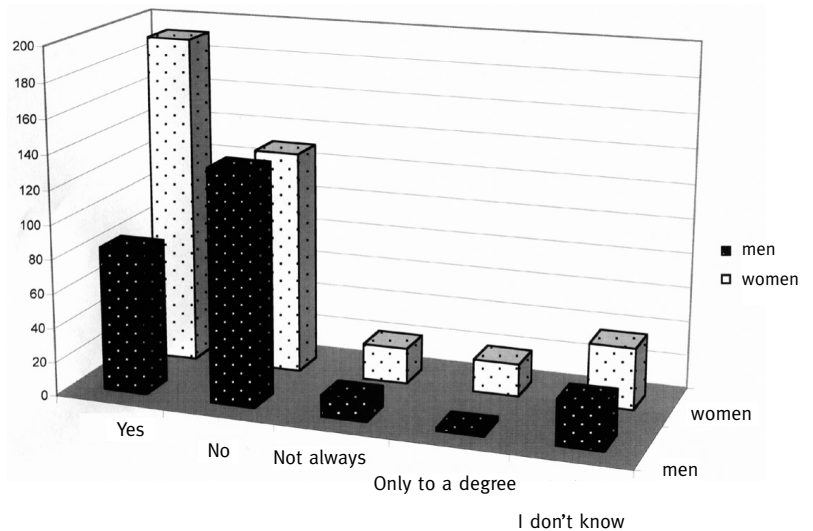


Institutional violence

The majority of the respondents are convinced that they have to intervene in whatever manner in order to terminate the violence. This shows an impressive sensitivity to the issue of violence in intimate life, which is a source of hope that young people's awareness today will generate less tolerance for violence tomorrow.

Regarding the admissibility threshold to violence against both themselves and others, the views of both sexes tend to coincide. Where possible, no one would admit violence to himself or herself. However, by the few answers showing greater tolerance towards violence, the reasons of the two sexes tend to be very diverse: while girls would admit violence, when it came from a person they love immensely, boys would tolerate violence only from their equals.

Do you think that violence in intimate life is related to violence in society?



The respondents were asked to consider the influence of their daily environment to the outburst of violence in their intimate life: to what degree does the tension generated outside their home and captured by the media affect their family life.

Obviously, girls are more inclined to identify the reasons for violence in intimate life with the widespread incidence of violence in the society around us. The number of the girls supporting this view is almost three times as great as that of the boys who share it. Almost an equal number among the two sexes do not link the use of violence at home and outside it. Adolescents definitely perceive the media, and especially television, as vehicles for the formation of tolerance to violence. The films depicting the use of brutal physical power as heroism contribute to the establishment of deformed ideals. This also applies to most of the newspapers and magazines, where no publication is made of the personal standpoint of the writers, but facts are rather reported without any digest.

The role of stereotypes

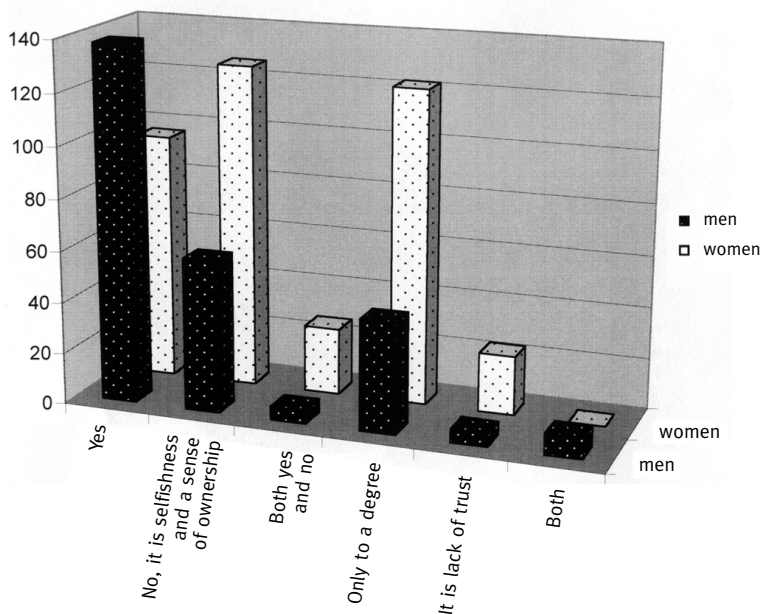
This part of the questionnaire contains the most numerous sets of questions: 17. The aim of the questions is to identify the students' attitude to the stereotypes established by society, which are relevant to male/female relations and determine



the admissibility of certain behaviour, and also the degree to which they could generate violence in intimate life. The stereotypes (especially those relevant to physical characteristics) were referred to only by a small part of the respondents, and mainly boys. Both sexes note that the existing physical stereotypes are very far from reality and would, in most cases, effect low self-esteem and complex formation with both the girls (the model of a blond, slender lady of the “Barbie” type) and the boys (tall, muscular and ... rich). It is worth mentioning the opinion of a great share of the girls aged 17 to 18, who enumerate their own preferences for their desired partner, allocating priority for their sense of humour and their ability to be an interesting companion. These qualities supersede physical merits and material status.

The question of jealousy as an expression of love and affection inspired quite a number of debates outside the scope of this survey. While a greater part of the boys (more than half) tend to admit that jealousy is an indication of love, only a very small percentage of the girls (less than one-fifth) would agree with this interpretation. For one-third of the girls jealousy is a manifestation of selfishness and a sense of ownership. However, about one-third of the girls believe that jealousy can, to an extent, be deemed to be an indication of love which, if surpassing the limits of mutual trust, can turn into a serious problem, often leading to violence. Providing this type of answer to the above questions, the students actually reach the conclusion of one of the major reasons for the occurrence of violence in intimate life: jealousy and the aggressive behavioural patterns linked to it: the limitation of the freedom of the “beloved” person, following them, denying them funds, the instillment of a sense of guilt, etc. Regardless that the above answers were given mainly by girls, boys also demonstrate a sensitivity to the link between jealousy and violence.

Do you agree that jealousy is an indication of love and affection?



Institutional violence

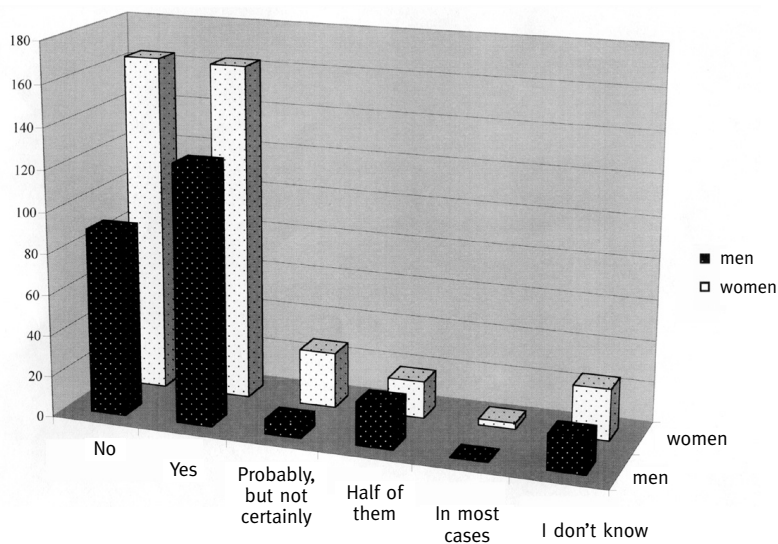
A question arousing a split in the views was that about whether the “no” of a girl means an actual refusal or is just a pretence covering her unvoiced consent. The answers show great variety and can definitely be categorised by sex.

Almost an equal (small) number of girls and boys think that the taking of a “no” for a “no” depends on the tone and the behaviour. Also, an equal number of both sexes admit that in most cases “no” can be taken for a “yes”. There is a considerable difference in the answer “A ‘no’ means ‘no’”. The girls who claim that “no” means “no” are over twice as many as the boys. However, the boys, who share this view, are much more than the boys providing a different answer. This is an encouraging discovery about the consciousness of the boys at that age, which shows that both sexes would rather tend to respect the rejection of “the other”.

The questionnaire contains a question aimed at researching the boys’ awareness of becoming victims of violence themselves. In this case the term “violence within intimate relations” does not necessarily mean sexual violence. Most of the boys have understood it in the narrow sense and answered that boys could very rarely become victims of violence. At the same time, almost all of the girls believe that boys are not violence-protected only for the reason of being boys. They could also become victims of aggression in an intimate relationship, although this might not necessarily be sexual aggression. They could become victims of fights and of self-authoritative settlement of matters by other boys, and, in some cases, they could become victims of sexual abuse by both boys and girls.

The questionnaire continues with questions concerning the myths existing in society as regards the perpetrators of violence. One of these myths is that rape is an act of strangers, who tend to wait for their innocent victims in dark streets and alleys. Unfortunately, this image is very different from reality, but the answers of both boys and girls show that they also believed it at the time of the survey.

Do you believe that most rapes are committed by strangers?



Learning from violence



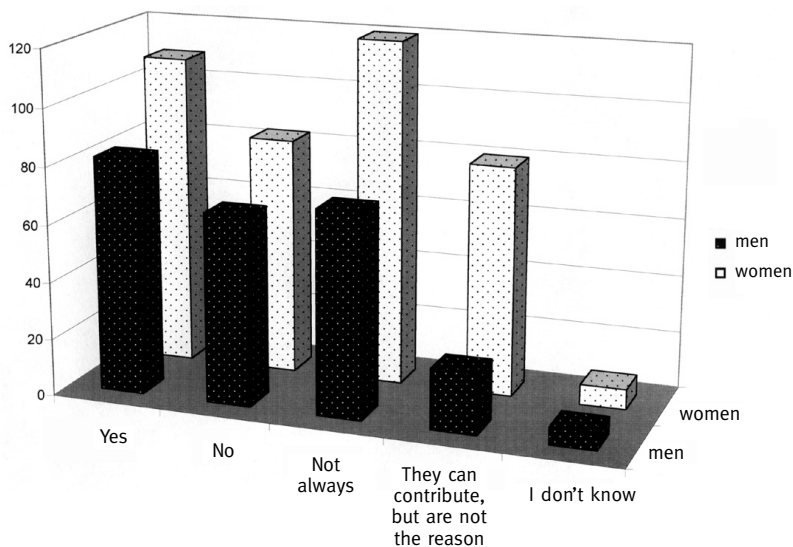
Girls tend to be split in half: one half believes that somebody familiar commits a rape, whereas the other half does not believe it. A very small part (about 5%) tend to hesitate and cannot answer the question. Such answers are quite logical bearing in mind the age of the respondents. However, it is worth noting that most of the boys do not believe that rape is the act of strangers. This is a more credible assessment, which is probably due to the boys being less predisposed to comply with existing mythology. On the other hand, girls are often brought up to fear darkness and violence for the purpose “of protecting” them, which is an additional prerequisite for their certainty that violence occurs mostly “outside”. The boys, however, who tend to become used to violence from a very early age (between peers, between older and younger ones) do not perceive “the street” as something so frightening. A small part of the respondents provide some explanatory answers in support of their view. These answers qualify violence by acquaintances as a very serious problem.

At the end of this part the students were asked if they see a link between the use of alcohol and drugs and violent behaviour against women. For some of the students the use of alcohol and drugs could only aggravate some behavioural tendencies, but not generate them. Mostly the girls, rather than the boys, support this opinion.

However, it is again the girls, who claim that it is definitely alcohol and drugs that are one of the reasons for violence against women. This can be explained by the fact that they have probably witnessed similar scenes or by the established belief that alcohol and drugs increase irritability and aggressiveness.

Boys are more predisposed to justify violence by the use of alcohol. This is a convenient position, which seems to be aimed at excusing violence with the influence of external factors.

Do you think that alcohol and drugs are a reason for violence against women?



Institutional violence



Conclusions

- When defining violence there is no gender-based difference among teenagers.
- Teenagers do not deny violence as mode of communication. They tend to justify it as a reaction to the other.
- When talking about the alternatives to violence there is a substantial gender and age difference, especially when the alternatives are based on self-experience.
- The alternatives are found intuitively.
- The need appears to propose comprehensive alternative non-violent reactions to aggression as opposed to the justification of violence.
- In the field of violence in intimate relations girls tend to trust their relatives to a greater degree whereas the self-confidence of the boys makes them more predisposed to look for an independent solution to the problem.
- Teenagers tend to justify violence in intimate relations with emotions and external factors. They are more or less conformist.
- Teenagers are subordinate to the stereotypes established in society, but this is a group which could be influenced positively through appropriate education.
- Non-violence has to be taught from an early age and teenagers need to have more space to discuss the issues of violence.

What happened afterwards

During the pilot stage, the classes were provided for three months. Eight groups were involved a total of 200 students. A key role can be attributed to the exchange of experience between teachers and researchers, to the regular discussions, where new ideas were suggested and teaching methods were discussed.

The pilot stage ended in June 2001. All the participants were asked to make an assessment as well as to answer some questions from the initial questionnaire again. The analysis of the responses showed a substantial change in the opinions both of boys and girls: the general trend being the boys showing less tolerance to violence, the girls – more self-confidence. The results of the assessment led to a second stage of the education programme, in which 300 students (twelve groups) took part. This time there were three new entirely male groups from a technical school. All the students from the second stage participated in the White Ribbon Campaign 2001.

Some opinions of the participants in the second stage of the education programme

I can see the members of the group change their behaviour and their attitude to violence, but I think the group needs additional members. There must be more and more groups like ours, and more and more people should be fighting violence. These groups need to gather at common meetings where the various problems relevant to violence can be discussed by a larger number of people.



My general impressions of these meetings are very good, as problems pertaining to actual life are being discussed. This is one of the places where I can express my feelings and standpoint on a certain issue without feeling embarrassed.

An 18-year-old boy.

I like the classes as we discuss real life situations there, we analyse them and I personally draw some unvoiced conclusions myself. Violence exists in me only as a self-preservation instinct. I want to know what generates it (violence) and to try to neutralise it in my own environment.

I want to learn to wage a psychological war with violence committers. In these classes I am trying to learn how to overcome the power of violence committers without violence. I am sure that if I manage to learn it the other boys attending our meetings will also learn it and I pray that they try it in a situation similar to mine, provided they know what they're doing.

A 17-year-old boy.

Within the period, September 2001 to March 2001, three groups of students were formed in the Transport Engineering Secondary Technical School in Sofia (from the ninth, tenth and eleventh grades, respectively) to work on the BGRF programme for cultivating a conscious non-violent behaviour. The participants joined the programme on a voluntary basis, and participation was based solely on their interest in the problems generated by violence. The conclusions, which can be drawn from this activity, are quite different, but the most important one is that young people start to regard from a more analytical and self-critical perspective themselves, their behaviour and the actions of people around them, within their micro- and macro-environment.

As a teacher of philosophy, I think that the programme opens feasible prospects for assisting the schoolwork in the ethics and law classes. In this respect, the teacher guidebook entitled How to handle violence? Is charged with enormous potential. The interpretations of the issues are typical for their professional handling, accessibility and topicality, and they stimulate student participation and help their ethical and intellectual growth.

I will not comment on the educative effect of our work under the programme. It is beyond doubt. To me the most important aspect is that the boys involved in the programme are seriously considering their behaviour and are trying, step by step, to change themselves in the direction of tolerance towards the other.

I suggest that the programme's capacities and resources should be taken into account and, through the Teachers of Philosophy College and at their discretion, to be applied in the school process, both on the first and the second level.

Galina Ivanova, teacher of philosophy, participant in the second stage of the programme.



Post-face: Summary of the concluding discussion

The presentation and discussion of the way, the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) deals with racism and discrimination showed, in an exemplary manner, how societal developments concerning these items can be followed within member states and be brought to public attention. Taking a wider look at the Council of Europe, it is important to take note of committees in the respective areas of education, gender, equality, youth and criminal justice and to make active use of them by addressing research findings on young people and violence across the Council of Europe, as is being suggested by the idea of an “integrated project”.

More particularly, ECRI should also take on the questions regulated to the trafficking of human beings; primarily young women. Furthermore, ECRI may want to look into the concept of “multiple discrimination” and make this an operational category in their proceedings; legal research presented during the meeting showed that this is quite a relevant and workable means of conceptualising discrimination.

Generally speaking and in line with the “mainstreaming youth” strategy of the Directorate of Youth and Sport, the youth dimension should be given higher attention, both in research terms and in terms of policy advice in the following areas: racism and discrimination, gender-based violence, domestic and parental violence, homophobia, gangs and hooliganism, bullying and mobbing (violence in schools), violence in institutions, violence of the economic and political systems. The management of the integrated project could play an important role in directing and advising this process.

Violence is not an abstract phenomenon that may be defined in an isolated manner. Violence is contextual and depends on settings and situations. It also needs to be related to the life course of young people, their trajectories and social relations. Violence has to be decoded and understood, which is a difficult process because young people can be both victims and perpetrators, and occasionally are both at once.

The highly competitive system of global capitalism is at the origin of many developments relating to violence. This ranges from the rich northern hemisphere, living at the cost of the south, from brusque movements of capital creating unemployment and misery in one place and initiating employment and new social infrastructures in another, from whole areas of the world with no chance to overcome their misery and others living in incredible luxury. It also marks the value systems





of employee cultures in a violent manner. Once again, this does not remain without effect on young people and the behavioural modes they follow – the film *Fight Club* being a good illustration of this.

From such an observation it seems impossible to arrive at a reality of “global citizenship” – the differences between the various “worlds” are simply too big. However, this is exactly what is at stake: to develop the kind of educational strategies that will make the contents and methods of intercultural learning a part of the general curriculum in order to prepare for global citizenship. This cannot be achieved by schools alone, they are presently over-burdened by having to act as the last remaining, more or less functioning, actor of socialisation. What is needed is a new learning relationship between school, non-formal learning actors and the community in co-operation with the media. A prerequisite for the new co-operation is to overcome the ongoing devaluation of the teaching profession and its feminisation; which is both a problem for the learning community and for women teachers, who often function on part-time schemes and are employed as cheap labour. Improved teacher training is needed, more in-service training schemes and an educational reform which benefits from the experimental character and the social learning programmes of non-formal education, which is learner-centred and based on participation and the ever changing roles between givers and takers in the learning process – educators and educated. Without these changes in the learning climate, the item of violence in educational institutions cannot be tackled efficiently – democracy can only be learned in a democratic school, responsibility in a participative environment and contextual violence in relation to changing contexts.

Criminal justice systems differ a lot throughout member countries of the Council of Europe. Some transition countries have only now adapted to the specific situation of children and young people; in some of the “old” democracies, contrary to expectation, not even the standards of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child are fully respected. Concerning young people, criminal justice systems need to agree on standards of minimum sufficient intervention and clearly be directed towards diverting young people from being caught in the criminal justice system at all. This also means that the system has to be different from the health and welfare system, which should remain a provision apart.

Concrete measures could entail:

- the creation of child and young people ombudsmen;
- close co-operation between justice and local communities;
- effective prevention systems;
- training of police and prison staff;
- training of “youth judges”;
- restorative justice policies.

Much of the present public debate on violence is the production of media and political circles. Absolute figures on violent crime are going down; much of what is reported as youth violence does not figure as heavy offence, victimisation has decreased. Instead, fear of violence has increased. Reasons may be found in the role of the media, presenting the public with a high-tech overkill of ongoing violence and aggression in the world and violence based – sometimes extremely aggressive – video games. Another reason is the anonymous violence, much related to isolation and solitude in larger urban settings (for example the



Washington sniper); this functions like a magnifying glass for the perception of violence. Alternatively, active policies to revitalise neighbourhoods and proximity and a certain permanence and reliability of human relations need to be put in place.

The “official” political discourse differs too highly from the lived-experience of the lives of the youth and of people in general. *Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité* – what has become of this magic triangle of Republican values? The key democratic value of solidarity (*fraternité*) has been almost ridiculed in the 1990s and sold on the altar of excessive individualism. This process has happened in very different ways in both the transition countries and the “old” democracies and it has created an enormous vacuum both in the functioning and in the respect for democratic institutions and responsible social action. The ongoing modernisation process, which should be based on the active participation of young people, becomes side-tracked into a process producing “ego-tacticians” instead of giving room for young people to show their potential as a resource as well in individual terms in terms of active democratic citizenship and as the producers of solidarity. Much of what can be seen as youth related violence today has to do with the lack of trust in the “good state” and “good governance”, together with an absence of values, positive role models (model adults, model peers) and family structures falling apart without being replaced by a modern understanding of the family which would include neighbours, friends and the extended family and be less “father centred” than the image of the traditional family. Then, only too often, gangs, groups of hooligans and violent communities take the place of the absent actors of socialisation; a process which needs to be reversed to combat violence.

Researching violence with young people is a demanding process, often requiring a very elaborate methodological approach. In certain field studies, this approach has to go together with clearly defined ethical standards. Not all that is said in interviews can be reported, not all that is said can be evaluated. If care and responsibility govern the research, the reward will often be a very rich and unexpected insight into the nature of violence and the relation to young people. Research may, in this way, open an avenue towards prevention.

Much of what youth research into violence shows is the very important role of prejudice and stereotypes. This can take the form of the racialisation of subjects and images and of the direct connection made between racialised young people and criminalisation. Examples concerning Asian communities and the icon of the black violent young man were used to demonstrate this connection, made systematically in the media. Beyond the media, the criminalisation of immigration promoted by European states may lead to a justification of violence against them. Remedies for such propaganda can be found in creating safe, open spaces to discuss the experiences of prejudice and stereotypes as well as co-operation with the media. When these public images appear, moral panics produced and folk devils identified, it is important to remain able to argue, correct false information and spread alternative and appropriate information.

The researchers’ seminar made a number of more permanent reference points within their discussion on the youth dimension of violence:

- the demographic development leading to the decreasing number of children and young people in European societies;
- the complex values and beliefs of multicultural and multi-religious societies which make it difficult for some to have a proper understanding of legal and



constitutional norms coming from a homogenous past with a single religious value system;

- the reduced spaces for the participation of young people;
- the mixture of fear and envy with regard to young people as expressed in “adult” society;
- the relatively unimportant role of youth policy in governance.

All participants in the seminar expressed an interest to remain associated to the integrated project on violence in everyday life and to the activities of the Directorate of Youth and Sport of the Council of Europe.

Peter Lauritzen
Head of Department for Education,
Training, Research and Information
Directorate of Youth and Sport of the Council of Europe.



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