Alienation and Control: A study of alienated labour in two Youth Offending Teams across England and Wales.

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Abstract

This thesis provides an empirical, qualitative, study of nuances of the labour process in the context of Youth Offending Teams (YOTs) and how detectable indications of alienation may be present in the perceptions of front-line practitioners. The study also focuses on government policy and the views of management and trade union officials to gain a broader understanding of factors that affect employment in this sub-sector of the public services. To provide a rich source of qualitative data, 33 interviews were conducted across two research sites, which fall under the operational remit of the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales (YJB).

Initially, the focus of the thesis is structured around political impositions and management regulation of the employment relationship in the wider public services with particular reference to its impact on the organisation of work and work degradation. This is set against previous theories and frameworks of alienation to form an analytical model, adapted from Blauner's (1964) research, accounting for criticisms of the study from a Marxist perspective. The thesis then provides a contextual grounding of the politicised nature of the youth justice sector and the related criminological debates which affect the perceptions of work and policy from front-line practitioners in YOTs.

Interview data is analysed against the theoretical model employed, signified by a broad analytical approach, which not only addresses the effects of a loss of practitioner control of the labour process in YOTs and the related indications of alienation, but also investigates their relevance to wider aspects of the political economy. Findings suggest that alienation is intensified in practitioners when they

experience a dislocation between their personal ideals and the prescriptive work

practices to which they abide, with their skills and knowledge of front-line practice

perceived as undervalued in state and management policy.

List of Abbreviations

CAHMS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
CYPN	Children and Young People Now
NAPO	National Association of Probation Officers
NHS	National Health Service
PSR	Pre-Sentence Report
UNISON	Public Service Union
YJB	Youth Justice Board for England and Wales
YOT	Youth Offending Team
YOTO	Youth Offending Team Officer

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Introduction

This thesis aims to provide a labour process analysis of front-line practice in Youth Offending Teams (YOTs) to analyse the manifestations of alienation within front-line practitioners and the factors which intensify feelings of alienation. The study covers two research sites of different geographical locations falling under the regulatory remit of the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales (YJB), the opinions and perceptions of practitioners being ascertained through the use of interviews in order to gain a detailed overview of the work performed and the effect it has on those employed to deliver it. The aims of the thesis were encouraged by the theoretical interests of the researcher amplified through past experience of working in the industry.

Past studies of alienated labour have been commonly associated with a social psychological framework (Seeman, 1975: 93), using subjective measures cast against a variety of "attitudes, values, sentiments or expectancies" (ibid: 93). Whilst this traditional framework is loosely employed, this thesis also adopts a broader range of analytical measures. Seeman (1975) responded to criticisms of his initial framework devised in 1959 by accepting the empirical challenges of researching the concept, but contested that:

> *"… dismissing the word in no way eliminates our dependence upon the root ideas concerning personal control and comprehensible social structures which the alienation tradition embodies" (ibid: 91).*

Seeman (1975) therefore argued that, despite difficulties in quantifying alienation or its effects on individuals, denying the importance of researching the concept potentially undermines the importance of an enduring strand of theory which seeks to reflect upon the objective social structures which diminish workers' control over the labour process (ibid: 91). This thesis by no means claims to overcome the full extent of the analytical constraints in researching alienation, but seeks to build upon past theoretical models and learn from the critiques of them to form a more robust analytical framework. Such an approach was taken by Blauner (1964), who adapted Seeman's (1959) model for the purposes of researching the concept in traditional factory settings and, in doing so Blauner (1964) provided a clear criterion for the purpose of analysis and provided the broad framework underpinning in this research. In order to contribute to knowledge in this field of the study, the researcher sought to adapt the model set-out by Blauner (1964) to account for wider structural control mechanisms of the political economy which lead to degradation of work and oppression of worker discretion. A failure to call into question such oppressive control mechanisms, inherent to the development of capitalism, was a chief component of Braverman's (1998: 20) critique of the research conducted by Blauner (1964).

The highlighted importance of a study into alienation in YOTs relates to the role they have in the welfare state, under what Gough (1979: 3-4) termed the provision of a social service imparting that service onto users on a statutory basis. Thus, by giving credence to the "professionally-determined standards" (Worrall *et al*, 2009: 127) of public service professionals, displays of job dissatisfaction due to work degradation and managerial control, potentially points towards compromising the quality of the service delivered with potential implications for wider social harmony.

For this reason, while accepting that objective conditions make alienation a constituent feature of capitalism and which led Braverman (1998) to define alienated labour as "labour power that is bought and sold" (Braverman, 1998: 62), factors which intensify its manifestation in YOTs can be argued to have broader social consequences than those detected in Blauner's (1964) factory-based research. These consequences potentially relate to a reduction in delivery standards of a welfare service imparted to vulnerable members of society, this is argued as practitioners, who have a first-hand experience of the problems which young people encounter, are stifled or alienated in controlling their labour process. Instead the workplace practices of YOTs are regulated by managerial policies reflecting government impositions, perceived as divergent to the needs of young people and showing less relevance to genuine criminological needs as they do to statistical manipulation for political agendas (Bateman, 2006: 67).

In terms of its academic value, the labour process analysis of YOTs adds to the criminological studies into youth justice practice since YOTs were created by using the framework of alienation to indicate the perceived pitfalls in service delivery from those engaged in front-line practice. This also contributes to the study of the labour process as applied to the public services by researching a relatively new sub-sector of employment, which was created under the New Labour government but derived from previous functions attached to social service teams (Goldson, 2000: 6) with the underlying premise of re-invigorating the study of alienation and applying it to a contemporary service-based employment context.

The distinctiveness of the research can be found in the analytical approach taken to examining alienation; this is done by using frameworks of analysis associated with traditional texts and accounting for the criticisms of them. Such frameworks of

alienation have been adapted based on relating them to Braverman's (1998) work on the labour process among that of other influential authors, including the formative texts of Marx, to inform a more objective and robust assessment of alienated labour based on labour process theory and the political economy of capitalist systems. Essentially, the research is set apart from previous studies in YOTs as it is driven by labour process theory. Commonly, academic texts relating to YOTs or the youth justice system have been grounded in criminological perspectives as to whether the criminogenic needs of young offenders are adequately represented in social crime policy, rather than being equated to ground level research studying the perspectives of front-line practitioners, trade union officials and management, which is the focus of this research.

Although ground level workplace research has been previously performed at YOTs, notably Field's (2007) study, this largely examined issues of professionalism. In this manner, Field (2007) approached his research by investigating the problems associated with the amalgamation of workers from varying occupational backgrounds into multi-agency YOTs and the attempted imposition of a common practice culture. His primary focus was documented workplace tensions that arise from the inclusion of professionals from differing backgrounds and the lack of harmony this can cause within a team ethic. Field's (2007) research was informed by arguments supposing that those of different professional backgrounds in YOTs have their own distinct values and work cultures as associated with their respective professions. From this assumption he sought to analyse workplace conflicts between social workers and police officers, who are considered to have contrasting welfarist and punitive ideals in terms of crime prevention. While Field (2007: 318) himself warned against over-

stereotyping in this manner, this thesis would further the argument that basing research on predisposed generalisations of work ethos and the ambiguity of practice culture may result in a narrow focus which omits common concerns about policy and management imposition that may be reflected in the views of all YOT practitioners regardless of background. In addition, Field's (2007) interviews being tapered to the perceptions of social workers and police officers fails to address the views of numerous other practitioners who are employed in YOTs and therefore constrains the research value for the labour movement by omitting collective worker views. By broadening the scope of the practitioners studied, this thesis does not have the primary concern of professional tensions within YOTs, but rather examines practitioner conflicts with management and state policy, framed in labour process theory and alienation. Thus, the thesis contends to provide a more rounded and relevant debate to add to political and workplace discourse surrounding YOTs by forming conclusions as to the implications of state policy and management regulation on YOT workers themselves, and the connotations this may have upon the service they impart.

1.2 Overview of Chapters

Chapter 2: The Role of the State

The first substantive chapter outlines the role of the state, both as an employer and policy-maker. Initial discussion will document the aftermath of World War II, an era which saw the creation of the welfare state. From a Marxist analytical framework it is argued that this era did not signify a radical shift to socialism and is wrongly considered as a timeframe which saw an end to capitalism and its replacement with a different or better society (Gough, 1979: 1). The thesis,

therefore, interprets the inception of the welfare state as a means of political expediency in what remained a capitalist democracy. The underlying theme of state activity at this time period was the promotion of free enterprise. However, following the war there was a noted change in the "perceptions and expectations" of people in Britain who were now leaning towards an expectation of a fairer, more equal society (Miliband, 1982: 34). Essentially, the intended role of the welfare state was a tactical, political decision to placate the masses (ibid: 34). The reason for analysing the welfare state from its inception is to highlight its roots in the capitalist system, therefore clarifying that the degradation of work in the welfare state and public services, which is discussed in this and following chapters, is a product of historical conditioning and the development of successive reforms rather than any radical changes that have affected public sector employment policy.

The chapter will then introduce more contemporary reforms set in motion following the eventual election of the Conservative government in 1979, which were implemented as a means to increase performance and efficiency of the public services, including the adoption of employee relations techniques commonplace to private enterprise (Pollitt, 1993: 11). Such reforms were considered to incorporate large-scale organisational restructuring and labour management techniques following the principles of scientific management (Ironside and Seifert, 2004: 58). Not only does this set-up succeeding discussions regarding the use of scientific management as a tactic designed to engender greater managerial control over the labour process (Braverman, 1998), it also comes to explain the context in which YOTs were formed during the development of these reforms through successive governments.

During the 1980s New Public Management came to prominence in the public services with mechanisms for a collective worker voice becoming weakened through the waning power of trade unions in public sector industrial relations (Foster and Scott, 1998: 137) and the heightened use of HR practices (Bach and Kessler, 2012: 12). By the late 1990s political power had shifted and ushered in the New Labour government which continued modernisation reforms in the public sector. New Labour's reforms were argued to be defined by performance management and a "target culture" (ibid: 49); other aspects of reforms at this time were a move towards partnerships, mergers and multi-agency workings (ibid: 168). It was this course of action which would see the creation of YOTs across England and Wales and their associated regulatory body, the Youth Justice Board (YJB), as a direct result of the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act (Crawford and Newburn, 2003: 12).

Consequently, the chapter traces the historical development of the welfare state from its inauguration to the policy advances which brought about the area of employment incumbent to this study. The chapter then returns to the theme of the state as an employer in a capitalist democracy to warn against what Coffey and Thornley (2009: 87) call "disjuncture theories". This emphasises the critical approach of this thesis, noting the factual risks attached to the notion that the public sector reforms of recent decades reflect a radical ideological dislocation in the role of the state as an employer. The state being seen as a good or 'model employer' prior to this point does not adequately account for longer range historical perspectives (Coffey and Thornley, 2014: 203), in which cyclical "pressures from below" hold the reasoning behind any periodic state concessions (Coffey and Thornley, 2009: 82).

The discussions of this chapter therefore provide context to the state as an employer and issues surrounding the public services and wider public sector to form a basis for the central theme of discussion in the following chapter. This concerns an in-depth analysis of the labour process, investigating the initial Marxian interpretations of it, which widely are attributed to traditional industrial capitalism, through to its application to service sector employment and, subsequently, the public services.

Chapter 3: The Labour Process

In this chapter the thesis investigates the labour process, firstly in broad terms citing Marxian texts and using Braverman's (1998) analysis to apply these underpinning principles to service sector working, before focussing discussion on the contemporary public services. In terms of manufacturing production, Marx clarified the terms use-value and exchange-value. The former being a commodity that fulfils a social want (Marx, 1960: 181), with exchange-value not revealing itself in social consumption but a measured value when exchanged with another commodity (Marx, 1976: 127). The reason for exploring these values theoretically is that they combine to form the price of a commodity in free-market trading and for the capitalist the ultimate goal is to sell commodities for a price. When a commodity is sold for a larger price than the cost of the labour purchased for its production it has a surplus-value (Marx and Engels, 1972: 39) and the labour expended is termed surplus labour (Gintis, 1987: 69).

For a capitalist, surplus-value has "all the charms of something created out of nothing" (Marx, 1976: 325), thus the capitalist will attempt to extract surplus labour from workers. Management techniques, such as Taylor's scientific management

came to be developed as a means to achieve this. Scientific management is a tactic used by management to establish control over the labour process through the use of divisions of labour. As, in a capitalist labour market, human labour is purchased for production purposes (Ironside and Seifert, 2000: 9), workplace divisions of labour through the allocation of simplified, routinized tasks are used by management in an attempt to maximise yields of production from the labour they purchase (Braverman, 1998: 179). Therefore, as a cornerstone of scientific management, the use of divisions of labour allows management to gain greater command of the actions of workers and constrain their creativity, a fundamental feature of human labour (ibid: 78). This allows management to regulate and monitor performance to a much more intensive degree, essentially to gain control of the labour process and elicit surplus labour.

The chapter will argue that the importance of scientific management can be seen in its resilience; as such techniques came to be implemented in service industries as capitalism advanced with attempts made to measure productivity even when nothing is visibly produced (ibid: 287-288). As New Public Management has been argued to be a form of neo-Taylorism (Pollitt, 1993: 168), a substantive link is formed to analyse how scientific management has impacted on the contemporary public services and those who work in them. This will pave the way for investigation into the theories of alienation and the ways in which nuances of the labour process, when applied to different work setting, intensify feeling of dissatisfaction and point towards the effects of alienation in workers, which will become the focus of the following chapter.

Chapter 4: Alienation

This chapter investigates alienation, which, as a concept, has been related to a wide variety of contexts, which makes literature in the field varied in scope (Baxter, 1982: 1-2). In order to provide a theoretical framework to ground analysis in the context of the labour process and account for external factors influencing the employment relationship in the industry of research, the chapter undertakes an in-depth yet focussed discussion. This study adapts Blauner's (1964) framework, itself freely adapted from an earlier model (Blauner, 1964: 16), and applies it to the work in the contemporary public services. As a result, the researcher is able to modify discussions to correspond to the industry specific context of the research and broaden the frame of analysis to overcome Braverman's (1998) criticisms of prior research strategies.

The chapter proceeds to note further critiques of Blauner's (1964) model, chiefly those from a Marxist perspective. These largely stem from Blauner (1964) contravening the notion that alienation is an irrefutable aspect of capitalism but instead a bureaucratically induced outcome of large-scale industrial society. This led to criticism for not challenging the very nature of capitalism in an analytical capacity (Schwalbe, 1986: 21). Braverman (1998) claimed that the lack of acknowledgment as to the indisputability of alienation in the capitalist mode of production led to him all but scratching the surface of alienation and what constitutes the ingredients of social and historical factors that make up worker attitudes. Discussion in this chapter therefore addresses the key modes of alienation as categorised by powerlessness, meaninglessness, normlessness and self-estrangement, to broadly follow Blauner's (1964) interpretation of alienation.

This includes how the framework has been moulded to suit the aims of the thesis, using a broader analytical model to investigate the larger political economy and its effects on the capitalist labour process, thus enabling a more robust Marxist frame of reference to be employed.

Chapter 5: Contextual Overview of the Youth Justice Sector

The thesis then moves on to provide a contextual overview of the sub-sector of the public services pertinent to the research, that of the youth justice sector. Noted as a highly politicised area of discourse, the youth justice sector has been through many changes in aims and structure since its inception. The youth justice system came to fruition in the early 19th Century and at this time legal and legislative definitions of the criminal child began to emanate from public policy (King 1998 cited in Shore, 1999: 148). This paved the way for the emergence of a system which acknowledged the issues of juvenile delinquency as distinct from those of adult crime. During this time, juvenile delinquency was considered as a means of expressing other social issues and discontent that, by their nature, had no direct relation to criminal acts (Hendrick, 2006: 5). Therefore, it was accepted that youth crime may be a product of social conditions rather than simple inherent malevolence. This led to the development of contradictory perceptions which determined the child offender as both a victim of social structures and a threat to society through their criminal actions (Hendrick, 2003 cited in ibid: 5).

The importance of acknowledging social structures as a cause of juvenile crime was seen in policy shifts to include early forms of welfare provisions to young offenders in conjunction with punitive measures. This formed an ideological debate as to the correct balance of punitive practice and welfarism which came to

dominate much of the discourse regarding the best ways to deal with youth crime. The shifting ideological outlooks of successive governments caused considerable fluctuations in policy and practice over much of the 19th and 20th centuries. As a result, it has been argued that youth crime practice has been subject to numerous conflicting legislative requirements which have contributed to an incoherent system riddled with incongruities (Garland, 2001: 103). Such inconsistencies have continued to blight practice, with welfarism and punitive measures having run simultaneously in the application practice throughout the history of the sector, often with greater vigour being afforded to punitive approaches over welfare considerations (Thorpe *et al,* 1980 cited in Muncie, 2009: 279).

Though slow on the uptake in comparison to other areas of the public sector, the effects of New Public Management began to take hold in the youth justice sector towards the latter 1980s (Raine and Willson, 1996: 20-21). Along with the issues affecting the wider public services, the initial application of New Public Management techniques was concerned with the centralisation of policy and heightened management regulation in the workplace (Pratt, 1989: 25). In addition, the overarching agenda of financial pragmatism was executed in the sector with a noted minimalist approach in youth crime policy based on controlling and restricting resource allocation (Burnett and Appleton, 2004: 35). As the larger movement towards a cost-efficient and "performance-conscious" public sector (Pollit, 1993: 112) infiltrated practice, as linked to Taylorism, the professional discretion afforded to practitioners diminished accordingly (Garland, 2001: 88).

Again, the Taylorist managerialism associated with the New Labour government gathered pace in the youth justice sector, reflecting the wider public services. The

"target culture" (Bach and Kessler, 2012: 49) of modernisation reforms was heavily enforced in the sub-sector, with target setting determined by government enforced national standards (Muncie, 2009: 256-257). This led to the increased introduction of performance management with standardised assessments and prescriptive work practice underpinned by cost-management techniques; a policy criticised for attempting to infer that precise economic measurements could be applied to complexities of youth justice practice (Garland, 2001: 188-189). However, perhaps the most radical overhaul of youth justice practice came from New Labour's move towards partnerships, mergers and a shift towards multi-agency workplaces (Bach and Kessler, 2012: 168). The 1998 Crime and Disorder Act led to sweeping changes in the youth justice sector; most significantly it directed the formation of YOTs and their standards regulator body, the YJB (Crawford and Newburn, 2003: 12). As a statutory requirement YOTs were set-up to include probation officers, police officers, local authority social workers, local health authority representatives and specialist education officers (ibid: 12), as a minimum template for their multi-agency practice.

YOTs have not been without their detractors, the notion of economic prudence attached to YOT practice along with the target culture and prescriptive Taylorist, approach, is argued to have resulted in decreasing amounts of time being spent in face-to-face contact with young people in need of support (Pitts, 2001: 7). As will be explained in greater detail as the thesis progresses, this will be a factor of analysis with regard to alienation in the context of normlessness, argued to be encouraged when a worker "feels no sense of belonging to and is unable to identify or uninterested in identifying with the organization and its goals" (Blauner, 1964: 24). The importance of this draws on literature based on past empirical

studies conducted in YOTs, Field (2007: 320) mapped the strong professional values of practitioners making up the multi-agency teams. Field's (2007) research was set against the notion of New Labour's attempt to instil a common practice culture (Muncie, 2005: 54) in YOTs, one of economic pragmatism, and the different ways that practitioners of distinct professional backgrounds and standards responded to a unified best practice in the workplace.

Whilst Field (2007) focussed on the interplay of conflict attitudes between different practitioners, emphasising those of social workers and police officers, this study differs in its approach. The noted professional standards will be set against organisational goals to detect identification, or lack of it, from practitioners to policy aims and management enforced practice rather than conflicts between practitioners of the distinct agencies. Additionally, unlike past empirical studies, this thesis takes a labour process analysis of YOT practice. In this regard, the strong professional values of those engaged in front-line practice (Field, 2007: 320) will be a recurring theme of discussion when set against the backdrop of theoretical definitions of industrial powerlessness and self-estrangement. This will account for modes of powerlessness in the form of the "separation from the ownership of the means of production and the finished product" (Blauner, 1964: 16), concerning the effects of standard work practices and the "inability to influence general management policies" (ibid. p16). Links will be drawn to self-estrangement in the context through the related notion "self-approved occupational identity" as work activity may not be "highly integrated into the totality of an individual's social commitments" (ibid: 26). These arguments will be examined comprehensively in Chapters 7 and 8, which will seek to analyse findings from field research.

Chapter 6: Methodology

The field research itself and the research methods chosen are discussed in Chapter 6, noting that access was granted to conduct field research in two separate YOTs. The chosen research method of semi-structured interviews is explained, along with the key reasons explaining why the researcher opted for this particular technique. In addition, reasoned arguments are given for discounting other techniques which were initially considered, covering ethnographic study and questionnaires. Ethnographic study, though providing a first-hand insight into the experiences and perceptions of those researched, would provide an extensive in-depth level of research data (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995: 1-2) overcoming Braverman's (1998) criticism of past research relying on superficial findings. However, as will be discussed further, time constraints rendered this method of research unrealistic (Hammersley, 2006: 5). For contrasting reasons questionnaires were also discounted, although large amounts of respondents could be accessed in a relatively short period of time, a deep insight of the individual people's perceptions as to the employment relationship could not be ascertained (Bell, 1995: 238). Hence, Braverman's (1998: 20) criticism that shallow findings would be a clear constraint in analytical terms when studying alienation can be applied to the use of questionnaire research.

Semi-structured interviews were therefore deemed to provide the best method for obtaining in-depth responses from participants, through open and follow-up questions, whilst providing a loose framework to keep discussions focused (Whipp, 1998: 54). Notwithstanding the efforts to combat them, the research conducted was still subject to certain constraints. These are acknowledged by the

researcher and explained in the latter part of Chapter 6 with the nature of constraints explicitly linked to the research aims and rationale. Following this, a description of each research site including their geographical situations, management structures and variations in workforce size and diversity findings will further contextualise the two research sites studied before findings are presented in succeeding chapters.

Chapter 7: Powerlessness

This chapter will be the first chapter to analyse the main findings from the two research sites under investigation with the research findings set against the four main thematic categories adapted from Blauner's (1964) analytical framework. As with Chapter 4, these main themes are categorised as powerlessness, meaninglessness, normlessness and self-estrangement. However, when appropriate these categories will contain sub-sections to contextualise discussion and form links to arguments presented in the literature review chapters. As the most prominent theme of alienation detectable in the interview data across both research sites, Chapter 7 will be dedicated to modes of industrial powerlessness. This includes Blauner's (1964: 16) four "social questions" regarding powerlessness, which are defined as "the separation from the ownership of the means of production and the finished product", "the inability to influence general managerial policies", "the lack of control over conditions of employment" and "the lack of control over the immediate work process" (ibid: 16).

The second of these social questions, "the inability to influence general managerial policies" (ibid: 16), bears a close relation to key strands of the literature review and will therefore be divided into three sub-sections. An eminent theme of public sector

reforms have surrounded the application of Taylorist management techniques (Pollitt, 1993: 168) argued to be management's solution to best control alienated labour (Braverman, 1998: 62), with an associated centralisation of state control (Worrall *et al,* 2009: 126). Therefore, "the inability to influence general managerial policies" (Blauner, 1964: 16) provides a frame of reference to identify practitioner responses to scientific management at the workplace and management's attempted control mechanisms over the labour process. To impart a wide-ranging analysis of this mode of powerlessness and its relation Taylorism in the context of YOTs, argued to have led to task routinisation, standardised assessments, prescriptive practice (Garland, 2001: 188-189) and, as with the wider public services, a "blame culture" (Martinez Lucio and Mackenzie, 1999: 166), three distinct sub-sections are presented. These will cover trade union influence in the research sites, management regulation and consultation, along with accountability and discretion. This enables wider factors affecting the employment relationship to enter discussion by drawing on interviews with trade unions officials and management in conjunction with perceptions provided by practitioners. As a result, work degradation can be examined from a wide framework which Braverman (1998) argued as crucial to enable a comprehensive analysis into the indicators of alienation in a given workplace.

Chapter 8: Meaninglessness, Normlessness and Self-estrangement

Chapter 8 will subsequently complete the theoretical framework of alienation, in terms of analysing research findings, by investigating the themes of meaninglessness, normlessness and self-estrangement. Robust definitions of these themes of alienation are given in Chapter 4 and form the theoretical strands

against which this substantive findings chapter will be set. Normlessness provides the broadest discussion in the chapter and will also be broken down into sub-sections for analytical purposes. This leads to a cross-examination of the personal aims of practitioners and the reasons which led them to become involved in their line of work compared with the aims of the organisation in a practical sense, often perceived by practitioners as not adhering to the rhetorical aims set out in YJB documentation.

Chapter 9: Conclusion

The final chapter of the thesis, the conclusion, draws together the theoretical discussions and results of the findings, explaining common themes from interview data and their relevance to the labour process and indications of alienation. In line with the analytical approach taken throughout the thesis, the responses from interviewees are set alongside larger political economic factors for a broader range of analysis to gauge the historical and societal significance of responses rather than simply their attitude to workplace matters. However, the researcher acknowledges constraints in a temporal sense; these reflect the experiences and length of service from many respondents who understandably spoke of incumbent concerns and those which have affected them in their working lives. Despite this, many themes emerged compatible with the broad analytical model of the thesis, notably as the passion that respondents frequently displayed was often represented in a considerable knowledge of their industry and strong opinions on how their work should be performed.

The theme of control ran through the various strands of alienation in the theoretical model employed by the thesis, in terms of influencing practice and the work

prescribed causing dislocation between the values of practitioners and the aims of organisation, the "blame culture" (Martinez Lucio and Mackenzie, 1999: 166) attributed to performance management techniques being concluded as a tactic for centralised control of the labour process. A common criticism in place was that practitioners felt the personal skills they possess as the main tools of their craft to be under-represented in the labour they performed, with discretion constrained through standardised practices and the use of statistical measurements in a service where good performance is intangible and difficult to quantify. In essence, the loss of the control of how practitioners would want to do the job compared with the structures in place which dictate work functions, and the loss of what they consider their own unique capabilities and how these should be used in providing a valuable service, intensifies and stimulates feelings of alienation.

The thesis will now open with debates regarding state sector employment along with the government's role as a legislator and policy-maker which, from a Marxist analytical framework, will be argued to be an organ of the state to uphold capitalist interests and maintain power in the hands of the ruling class (Miliband, 1982: 28).

Chapter 2

The Role of the State

2.1 Introduction

This chapter adopts a Marxist perspective to analyse the role of the state, both as an employer and policy-maker, which sets the tone for the critical approach taken throughout the thesis. The underpinning arguments will largely be framed around the traditional texts of Miliband and Gough, the reasoning for this approach is found in the critical Marxist analytical framework used by these authors in their analysis of the state; a feature in which contemporary literature on industrial relations can be argued to have neglected. Although more recent literature may be widespread, the arguments presented in these texts hold particular resonance to the theory and analytical framework which this thesis seeks to adopt. A key aspects of this is Miliband's (1982) notion that the British political system is exposed as being inherently undemocratic as it is based within a distinctly capitalist system in which the class struggle is played out as a struggle relating to the political arena with rhetoric filtered down from the ruling class used as means to control working class pressures. Additionally, Gough (1979) notes the incongruities and complexities in the arrangement of social policy set against economic aims based on capitalist imperatives, essentially in terms of the fragile relationship between state expenditure on welfare provisions and the compulsions of a capitalist economy. These themes will not only reverberate through the narrative of this chapter but also echo through ensuing chapters as the theoretical model of alienation developed in this thesis looks to account for wider perspectives

of political economy than those before it and to challenge the very nature of capitalism.

Initially, the chapter will investigate the state's role in promoting economic structures to meet the needs of private investors. It will be argued that the welfare state from its inception was formed in the context of a capitalist democracy, therefore not attributed to any radical change in the UK's political or economic outlook. The notion of political powers controlling and limiting the degree of democratic representation offered to a nation will form the basis of the early part of discussions, essentially with the state historically supporting the capitalist class over the working class, even at times when political spin suggests the contrary. This perspective informs the argument that the welfare state was born out of political appeasement due to pressures exerted from the UK population following the end of World War II, thereby allowing the state to placate the electorate while preserving the functions of private enterprise. As a result, the state, as a political force, seeks to maintain power imbalances, argued as pivotal to the class struggle, through its own brand of controlled democracy. This enables consideration as to the historical conditions of the welfare state and the associated public services, and the manner by which succeeding governments have reformed state sector employment as a progression of capitalist democracy.

The chapter then moves onto the analysis of reforms which are argued to have shaped the contemporary public services and represent a neoliberal agenda, promoting an efficient and cost-effective public sector with a growing emphasis on scientific management practices and centralised government control. This forms a basis for discussion in Chapter 3 which investigates the labour process and

evaluates the significant role that scientific management has played in the development of capitalist modes of production. To maintain the critical approach taken throughout this chapter, a longer range perspective critiquing the popular conceptualisation of the state as a traditionally 'model employer' is utilised. This emphasises the argument that state influence of the labour process through contemporary public service reforms, leading to work degradation, is rooted in historical developments as opposed to any profound dislocation in political ideology.

2.2 Capitalist Democracy and the Welfare State

The notion of political powers controlling and limiting the degree of democratic representation offered to a nation was considered in great depth by Miliband (1982), where he suggests: "All representation is to some extent misrepresentation" (ibid: 36). Miliband's (1982) work, 'Capitalist Democracy in Britain', describes how democracy, in the context of a capitalist system, provides a measured and deliberate tool to maintain power in the hands of the ruling class, despite political spin implying it had been passed to the people (ibid: 28). This proposes that the state cannot be conceptualised as a neutral actor while it is open to political persuasion. Consequently, it does not represent the common interests of its citizens but provides a means of social control for ruling classes as people from this social grouping are considered most likely to occupy positions of political influence (Arthur, 1974: 10).

When using the work of Miliband (1982) as a framework depicting capitalist democracy as a tool for maintaining and perpetuating class disparity, it is paramount to gain a robust understanding of the makeup of the social classes.

Marx interpreted class, in an industrial setting, in terms of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. Here, the former, representing the ruling class, owned the means of production whilst the latter represented the working class whose labour was used to increase the capital of the bourgeoisie. Marx and Engels described how these workers must sell their labour power to the bourgeoisie, and in doing so becoming a commodity, and "like every other article of commerce... are consequently exposed to all the vicissitudes of competition, to all the fluctuations of the market" (Marx and Engels, 2010: 33). The significance of this, as described in the factory setting, was that these divisions of labour between the bourgeoisie and proletariat lead to those owning the means of production exploiting the workers whose labour is used (ibid: 35).

As reflected in the abundance of service sector employment in the modern UK economy, Marx's conception of the working class, rooted in the factory system, has been modified through the work of certain authors to acknowledge the changing forms of employment in more recent times (Braverman, 1998; Miliband, 1982). As pointed out by Miliband (1982), the quantity of people now performing 'non-manual' labour makes the traditional Marxian description too restrictive to provide an adequate definition of the modern working class. Instead, Miliband (1982) focussed on what Marx described as the "collective worker" of capitalist society, whereby many people undertaking clerical, distributive and service work can be described as "undoubtedly 'working class'" (Miliband, 1982: 9). Miliband's (1982) association of such workers with the notion of the working class exists on the basis of them acting as subordinates in the labour process while remaining separate from the product of their labour. This argument was supported by Braverman (1998: 248), who notes the worker does not offer their labour "directly

to the user of its effects, but instead sells it to a capitalist, who re-sells it on the commodity market" (ibid: 248). This will be discussed in greater length in the following chapter, but for the context of the impending discussion will provide a broad definition of the working class.

Many public sector organisations in Braverman's (1998) above mentioned analysis of the service sector, rather than making profit through transactions in the commodity market are directly funded by the state. To understand this sector in greater depth it is useful to refer to certain key time-periods which have been described as helping to shape the public services in Britain; one such time-period being the aftermath of World War II (Miliband, 1982: 34). During the war, a major change was argued to have occurred in the "perceptions and expectations" of people in Britain, this change became a crucial factor in the election of the 1945 Labour Government (ibid. p34). The war itself was popularised as a victory over fascism, however, as stated by Miliband:

> *"Many people more than hitherto had come to see that Britain remained an exceedingly class-ridden, unequal, and hierarchical society: all this was now to be changed" (ibid. p34).*

The significance of this, according to Miliband (1982), is the importance the 1945 Labour Government gave to curbing these calls for grand social change and "to keep in check the activists, zealots, and 'extremists' who nurtured them" (ibid: 34). Labour's approach to this was aided in its success by the outright support of the "permanently 'moderate' majority of the Parliamentary Labour Party" (ibid: 34). This was coupled with a documented shift in the Conservative Party towards the notion of the 'Middle Way' in light of their 1945 electoral defeat. As a result, the

political powers became committed to degrees of social intervention with an underlying theme promoting free enterprise (ibid: 34). It should be emphasised, however, that this did not signify a fundamental change in Conservative thought; rather Miliband (1982) viewed this shift as an appreciation of the ruling class' perspective that, in order to maintain their inherent advantages, minimal concession needed to be made. It was for this reason that the greatest shift in political direction was seen to have occurred in the Labour Party resulting in its control over the political left which would remain greatly effective up until the late 1970s (ibid: 35).

It was during this time that efforts were made, through strategic government control, to sustain and improve the nation's social services while preserving "the tactical function of private enterprise" (ibid: 35). This resulted in a growth in the welfare sector of the public services and, according to Gough (1979), this was the era that spawned the concept of the welfare state. As Gough (1979) pointed out, much of the literature previously analysing the welfare state provided an erroneous interpretation of its framework whereby, as a model, it was often seen as an attempt to mark "the end of capitalism and its replacement with a different and better society" (Gough, 1979: 1). This was in reference to a growing theme of political economists in portraying the welfare state as a shift away from the *laissez-faire,* market-driven, policies of the nineteenth century towards a more "interventionist welfare state" (ibid: 2-3). Gough, however, in-line with Miliband's (1982) argument, discounts this train of thought. Instead, he adopts an essentially different outlook by describing the welfare state as "a constituent feature of modern *capitalist* societies" (ibid: 3). This perspective goes on to inform the

underlying theory behind his 1979 text 'The Political Economy of the Welfare State'.

By way of defining the role of the welfare state in capitalist systems, Gough (1979) presented two distinct state activities which he saw as fundamental to its existence. These activities were identified as the "provision of social services" and the "regulation of private activities" (ibid: 3-4). The first of these state activities, providing social services, relates to the services often seen as commonplace in society such as healthcare and education. Additionally, these can be services or monies given to people in certain circumstances, such as social work or grants and benefits. Importantly, Gough (1979) also notes that these services may be statutory, therefore imparted upon on the service user against their preference. Whilst Gough (1979) cites the probation and prison services as examples of this, it can be proposed that such an aspect of the welfare state can also be applied to certain YOT provisions, particularly when considering the application of punitive sanctions to offenders.

The second aspect of the welfare state, defined by Gough (1979: 4) as the "regulation of private activities", referred to those activities which directly affect the immediate living conditions of individuals and groups of people within the population. This role of the welfare state, similar to providing social services, was again clarified as altering people's lives as opposed to necessarily improving them. In reference to this, Gough (1979) stated "the effect can be both quantitative and qualitative, and for 'better' or 'worse' according to some measure of human need" (ibid: 4). The activities in question cover social legislation such as "the Factory Acts to modern customer protection", requirements for children to receive

compulsory education and laws governing planning and building regulations (ibid: 4).

Despite such potential misgivings with the welfare state modelled by the 1945 Labour government, Labour's traditional left conceded that Britain's 'first past the post' voting system distorted public voting patterns to the extent that a government driven by socialist ideals was all but unattainable (Miliband, 1982: 36). Miliband (1982) therefore argued that, mindful of the "undemocratic features" inherent to the 'first past the post' system, activists on Labour's political left accepted that a more moderate Labour government, regardless of its "performance in socialist terms", was better than any realistic alternative (ibid: 37). Due to the enticement of the 'first past the post' system to the Conservative party as it provided the "prospect of undiluted Conservative majority rule", coupled with the "moderation" of the Labour party, the acceptance of the system seemed largely assured. Thus the left activists within the Labour party became increasingly marginalised. However, in line with a resurgence of the political left, this tool of democratic control became less watertight in the 1970s (ibid: 38).

According to Miliband (1982), this resurgence came to a head following the 1974 elections, whereby a "minority Labour government acting as if it had a majority", undertook a "passage of 'controversial' legislation", effectively preparing ground for a successive election (ibid: 38). The impact of the political left's revival may have appeared fleeting owing to the election of Thatcher's Conservative government in 1979, a perspective that will be discussed in greater detail. Yet, nevertheless it was seen as a renewed force to challenge previously steadfast structures which

had effectively curtailed their voice, as highlighted by the possibilities of hung parliaments and minority Labour governments of "uncertain disposition" (ibid. p38).

The underlying theme of Miliband's (1982) analysis of capitalist democracy is to call into question the political structures which provide the means for various societal groups to influence policy and articulate their fears and beliefs. In this respect, he highlighted the problematic nature of true democratic representation within a capitalist democracy. These constraints are agued to be due to certain conditions in the political environment, notably regarding "political competition, and the capacity of the working class to exercise different forms of pressure" (ibid: 38). From a government's perspective Miliband (1982) suggested that:

> *"the crucial problem for people in charge of affairs is to be able to get on with the business in hand, without undue interference from below, yet at the same time to provide sufficient opportunities for political participation to place the legitimacy of the system beyond serious question" (ibid: 38).*

Miliband's (1982) statement shows the difficulties of true democratic governance in capitalist-led states and, as previously mentioned, the Marxist perspective suggests claims that the state represents the common interests of its citizens are false. This sentiment is premised by the notion that the state should not be supposed as a neutral actor as certain social groups have more powers of political persuasion than others (Arthur, 1974: 10). Miliband (1982: 38) argues that the parliamentary system both supports public participation and aids its exclusion. This is due to 'parliamentarism' providing a "buffer between government and people" (ibid: 38). As a result, people are allowed the right to "elect their representative and to engage in many forms of political activity" (ibid: 38), however

they then submit the burden of opposing or maintaining the affairs of the incumbent government to their elected representatives.

Of course the methods of public influence in state activities are not limited to isolated votes during political elections, as suggested by Miliband's (1982) reference to people's right to "engage in many forms of political activity" (ibid: 38). The role of industrial relations in the political economy is pertinent to this, with trade unions traditionally providing a voice in defence of the working class (Miliband, 1977: 91). In the post-war period trade unions underwent a passage of sustained growth, such a rise in collective solidarity was seen to increase the economic defence and political strength of the working class (Gough, 1973: 73). Indeed, in the immediate aftermath of the war British trade unions occupied a strong position in state affairs, partly as the state considered union cooperation vital to the success of wartime efforts (Panitch cited in ibid: 70). In addition, the state, acknowledging the growing expectations for living standards of the working class, adopted Keynesian techniques to aid economic growth. This period signified a "more interventionist state structure" and laid grounds for an unparalleled boom covering the following two decades (ibid: 70). These resulting historical factors saw the labour movement gaining considerable impetus throughout the 1950s and 1960s (ibid: 71). As such the class pressures associated with a solidified working class, coupled with the centralisation of state activities in a global post-war capitalist climate, helped generate the modern welfare state "synonymous with the era of advanced capitalism" (ibid: 74).

The welfare state and its subsequent expansion naturally led to a growth in public spending (ibid: 75). How such state intervention operates in a capitalist system,

promoting free-markets, remains a point of administrative tension which still dominates political discussion and media debate. Indeed this tension has been magnified since the planning of the welfare state in its embryonic form, notably as social expenditure is seen to have increased over time (ibid: 84). Gough (1973) cited four reasons for this augmented spending, namely: "rising relative costs… population changes; new and improved services; growing social needs" (ibid: 84).

The first of these, rising relative costs, relates to social services being predominantly labour intensive in their nature (ibid: 85). As such technological innovation could not be used to further productivity in the welfare services and counteract the relatively high labour costs in developed countries, which historically has been evident in manufacturing sectors since the onset of the factory system, synonymous with the industrial revolution (Hobsbawm, 1968: 25-26). The factory system itself has since become the standard-bearer for capitalist modes of production, symbolising a system whereby the owner of an organisation relinquishes control to managers who then regulate the work of subordinates in the production process (Braverman, 1998: 207). Management regulation and divisions of labour in contemporary times have become a point of contention in the public services, with critics arguing that capitalist modes of job regulation are designed to deliver low-cost services rather than effective services (Pollit, 1993: 112).

In addition to the labour intensiveness of public services, they have historically been seen as strongly unionised. Such a strong trade union input, along with past examples of militancy and the increasing need for services, has traditionally been an important factor in promoting relatively strong pay structures for those employed within the welfare state (Gough, 1979: 86). It is important to note that

labour costs in all industries have a tendency to rise as a result of economic factors such as inflation. However, the dependency on human labour and the impact of trade unions in the welfare services has meant that, when compared to average figures, "a higher level of spending is required year by year just to maintain standards" (ibid: 85).

The post-war population growth was a notable factor in the mushrooming costs attached to the welfare state, not only did the population grow but also demographics of the population changed. Significantly, this led to an increase in the elderly population, which added to pressures on the NHS, and to a rise in the number of juveniles under the working age and, consequently, the dependant population in the UK increased (ibid: 86). This can be argued as an important factor in the overall cost of the welfare state which correspondingly has had a significant impact on public spending.

The third factor, new and improved services, can be related directly to growing social needs. However, when taken in isolation, the impact of new legislation figures highly as not only do new legislative demands often result in a re-structuring of existing services but also they also account for the development of entirely new welfare services (ibid. p91). Examples of this in the field of youth justice include the 1969 Children and Young Persons Act, which represented an ideological and professional consensus of opinion between the Labour party and those occupying prominent positions in British social work (Bottoms, 2002: 217).

The fourth aspect of Gough's (1979) explanation for rising costs in the welfare state, that of growing social needs, is said to raise "extremely difficult, but interesting, conceptual questions" (Gough, 1979: 91). Despite this, he

acknowledges that augmentations of certain costs are easily explained by changes in social need. For example, rising unemployment benefits can be linked very simply to any increases in unemployment that occur during that time. The difficulties come to light when considering the relentless advance of capitalism (ibid: 92). The impact of this is argued to be highly visible and, subsequently, crucial functions of the welfare state act as the "compensation of victims for the *diswelfares* they suffer as a result of 'economic progress'" (Titmuss, 1968 cited in Gough, 1979: 92). To elaborate on this, Gough (1979: 92) cites "numerous social problems" as a result of capitalist, economic advancement and points to the "middle-aged redundant" and the "victims of urban redevelopment" as examples of the negative impacts of 'economic progress' (ibid: 92). Technological development has long been associated with redundancies in order to reduce labour costs and formed part of Gough's (1979) argument. In labour intensive industries where workers are less replaceable with mechanical substitutes, such as those employed in the welfare services, technological advancements have still had considerable implications on the labour process. However, this has mostly been in terms of using technology for communication purposes and, importantly, for work regulation.

Gough (1979) also made the argument that the redevelopment of cities had brought about problems and created social need. This was considered a result of the lack of central planning by local and national government allowing the "anonymous workings of the property market" to dictate urban development, with little state intervention to "modify, regulate or even to encourage these powerful forces" (ibid: 92). In turn, as communities grow in population, new services are required to meet the needs of all demographics, from elderly care to childcare

facilities for working parents. Increasingly, therefore, if the state assumes responsibility to meet the augmented social demands, the cost of welfare provisions will rise accordingly (ibid: 92). Of course, the application of new welfare services along with the associated costs will be subject to scrutiny. Gough (1979) considers it essential to distinguish between the outputs of public services and the "final need-satisfaction" enjoyed by their clients (ibid: 92). As will be discussed further at a later point, this aspect regarding the delivery of welfare services has caused controversy, since the application of managerialist principles, largely associated with the 1980s onwards (Pollitt, 1993: 3), critics suggest there was a shift to financial discipline as the main performance indicator (ibid: 112). Performance indicators such as financial efficiency are problematic as they chiefly address outputs in terms of cost, yet efficiency itself cannot easily be linked to performance. This is due to the ambiguity of performance measures in the service sector and, as Braverman (1998: 287-288) explains, this is accounted for by the inherent lack of tangible goods produced.

Gough's (1979) argument, suggesting that the outcomes of services and the "need-satisfaction" of consumers should be measured separately, draws upon theoretical distinctions to establish a relevant framework. The three key features of this framework are depicted as "Production", "Consumption" and "Need-satisfaction" (ibid: 93). Production in this instance refers to the input of labour and goods; consumption denotes the output of services, as in services consumed; whereas need-satisfaction, as previously described, equates to the extent consumer needs are satisfied. This framework does address financial efficiency as the bridge between input of labour and goods to the output of services can often be characterised by high levels of waste. Citing the 1970s, Gough (1979) suggests

the reorganisation of services is widely believed to be the cause of such waste, noting the argument that high levels of bureaucracy and unnecessary clerical work may have contributed to monetary wastage. Thus increases in spending may not represent any real growth in the level of services provided. Despite this, Gough's (1979) underlying argument portrays the "changing population structure and the emergence of new needs" as the fundamental reasoning for the post-war growth of the welfare sector (ibid: 94).

Such is the dominance of capitalism, expounded by all the major economies of Western Europe and North America revealing a capitalist character (Hyman, 1975: 18-19) coupled with its relentless advance within those nations (Gough, 1979: 92) and the new social needs subsequently created (ibid: 94), causes potential shortfalls in welfare spending to be a critical issue. The importance of this is highlighted by Miliband (1977) who maintains that the level of public services offered by the state "largely defines the conditions of life for the overwhelming majority of the population of advance capitalist countries, who depend upon these services" (Miliband, 1977: 97). As a result, welfare provisions can be argued as a vital component of social relations in capitalist countries. However, despite their importance and in light of the issues raised regarding the growing needs of society and the subsequent demand for increased provisions, not only do sufficient finances need to be raised to fund their delivery but also administrative structures are required to ensure services are provided on a satisfactory level. In terms of raising finances Gough (1979) describes three methods available to governments, these being taxation, borrowing and charging for state services (Gough, 1979: 95). The political implications of public sector spending will be discussed shortly, but

beforehand the role of local and central governments will be examined to determine the operational structures used in the delivery of welfare services.

In the UK, local governments have largely assumed the role of service providers and, therefore, take responsibility for welfare spending (ibid: 96). Based on Miliband's (1982: 35) assertion that the welfare state provides a tactical means of ensuring the ruling classes maintain dominance through conciliatory gestures to placate the working class, local governments can be argued to be an important feature of advanced capitalist economies. This is supported by Gough (1979) through the statement "Local government is clearly a part of the state apparatus in capitalist societies (Gough, 1979: 96). However, this notion is tempered by the acceptance that "it matters a great deal for political, economic and social reasons" (ibid: 96-97). As an important player in the provision of social services, local governments have traditionally relied on funding streams supplied at a central government level. In doing this the state has assumed a centralised control of welfare provisions despite their delivery being made at a more regional level, and the creation of hierarchical planning systems has left managerial control firmly at state level (Glennerster, 1975: 153).

Gough (1979) continues to argue that the centralisation of the welfare state is not solely a means to control spending in an expanding welfare service, but also "reflects the political requirement for a 'class-conscious political directorate'" (ibid: 100). This represents the state balancing the long-term interests of capitalism in the welfare field within the context of growing social needs. For this to be explored further, a fundamental notion needs to be examined, namely the extent to which the welfare sector can enhance or hinder capitalism in terms of economic

performance. From the 1940s, the Keynesian model lay at the heart of government's strategy for capital accumulation (ibid: 103), in this model state spending is used as a means to boost demand for goods and services in the private sector (Burchill, 2008: 18). Gough (1979) analyses the economic impact of the Keynesian model by comparatively analysing the effects of raising 'aggregate demand' through increased employment induced by state spending, counter-balanced by increased taxation which may lower the spending power of those affected (Gough, 1979: 103), however also introducing the concepts of "marketed" and "non-marketed" sectors (ibid: 106). These concepts will be considered more thoroughly in this chapter as they draw upon key distinctions in the characteristics of the different welfare services, which can then be directly related to the specific research area of this thesis.

A simple distinction is made, by way of definition, between marketed and non-marketed sectors of the public services, with the marketed sector demarking "economic activities which produce goods or services for sale". The non-marketed sector, therefore, "produces goods and services which are not sold" (ibid: 106). However, Gough (1979) explains that this distinction can be blurred by certain nationalised industries such as the Post Office or housing, which are marketed by their natures and would remain so unless extensive state subsidies are required to cover their losses (ibid: 106). As will be covered in the following chapter, these concepts can be closely related to Marx's use of the terms productive and unproductive labour. Productive labour, from a Marxist perspective, refers to the production of goods that generate surplus-value for a capitalist, unproductive labour produces services which are defined by their intangibility and not subsequently sold on the commodity market. The application of unproductive

labour was far less significant in quantity during initial Marxian analyses (Braverman, 1998: 288-289). However, in the modern context, economic restructuring has resulted in an "accelerated shift from a manufacturing to a serviced-based economy" (Wilton, 2013: 14). This, when coupled with the post-war growth of the welfare sector (Gough, 1979: 74), has resulted in 'unproductive labour' formulating a sizable part of UK's economy and forms a considerable part of the non-market sector of state employment.

The abundance of unproductive labour in the UK, despite its association with the non-marketed sector, has had a noted impact on the success of marketed goods. This is due to the wages of unproductive labourers largely dictating their spending power on marketed products and, as a result, the financial remuneration afforded to them clearly affects the marketed sector and the wider community (Gough, 1979: 107). This shows complexities in the relationship between non-marketed labour and capitalist interests. Certain economists have argued that the growth of non-marketed labour, which may represent non-capitalist sectors, has "simultaneously reduced the share of marketed output and increased the claims on it" (ibid: 107). The welfare state, though providing important social functions, is depicted as a tax burden on the marketed sector, thus hindering the rate of accumulation. Gough (1979) criticises this view as it overlooks distinctions between capital and labour. His argument, which was put forward in response to the work of Bacon and Eltis, refutes claims that state welfare spending simply generates a tax constraint on the marketed sector resulting in the decline of UK manufacturing. Gough (1979) claims such arguments overlook a key dynamic, as they "ignore the 'return flow' of state benefits and services back into the capitalist or marketed sector" (ibid: 108).

Essentially, Gough's (1979) objection to Bacon and Eltis' overriding notion of too few producers existing in the UK, as a result of the welfare state (ibid: 106), is found in his analysis of the 'social wage'. This is described as "the flow of welfare benefits in cash and in kind back to the employed and non-employed population" (ibid: 108). The 'social wage' has often been used as a comparator in relation to the money spent on wage-labour, therefore providing a measurement alluding to the economic value of the welfare state. In calculating this, estimations are made as to how the original incomes of people, both employed and unemployed, are "modified by the actions of the welfare state" (ibid: 108). Gough (1979) raised the importance in realising the static nature of these calculations, as they merely observe who pays taxes and who receives benefits, with no inquiry into the long-term implications. While accounting for the fact that taxes and social security benefits are taken away from personal incomes, Gough (1979) also points out that social-security benefits are subsequently paid back to certain households. This, overall, creates a net gain for the spending power of the populous. Such an argument takes a class-based approach to the economic value of welfare state as it is chiefly concerned with the redistribution of national household wealth. However, this does highlight Gough's (1979) point that "there is some validity in the notion of the social wage augmenting the private wage" (ibid: 110). In bringing debate to the industry of research, youth justice delivery, it must be acknowledged that this aspect of state services is based purely on consumption, and in this respect is similar to policing. Hence there is no net-flow returning to the private wage (ibid: 110).

The importance of this, in terms of the economic viability of welfare services, can be justified as the cost of maintaining social harmony, to which Gough (1979)

likens to the act of social working and probation (Gough, 1979: 121). In line with arguments that the welfare state is a tool of capitalism, maintaining power disparities between social classes (Gough, 1979: 3; Miliband, 1982: 28), Gough (1979: 121) explains that welfare services can be quantified, in some part, in terms of the relationship between "social investment, social consumption and social expense" (ibid: 121). Although services can contribute to all three classifications, it should be considered that social expense is the most salient descriptor which can be attached to the service studied in this thesis. Similar to the probation service, youth justice provisions provided by YOTs are tasked with maintaining social harmony and, by this definition, it does not enter into the production of future labour power, or the means of production, but simply as a "social expense borne by capital or labour" (ibid: 122). From the perspective of a capitalist economic framework, this labour time is wasted and the larger the social labour time expended the larger the waste (ibid: 122). This brings to light the modes by which the state regulates this expense, bearing in mind that the public sector is inevitably influenced and guided by political objectives and ideals (Storey, 1992: 55).

2.3 Modernisation and the Contemporary Public Sector

In recent decades the UK public services are argued to have undergone reforms in terms of restructuring and the nature of management. According to Pollitt (1993: 11), the managerialism of the 1980s and 1990s was directed by a "specific set of models of efficient organisational functioning and of techniques through which such smooth functioning may be realized" (ibid: 11) and the transfer of managerialism from private sector corporations to public sector welfare services represents the introduction of an extraneous ideological matter into a sector

previously characterised by different traditions of thought (ibid: 11). Notwithstanding this, Coffey and Thornley (2009: 87) point towards "disjuncture theories" in overplaying the role played by Thatcher's 1979 government in changing the nature of state sector services to avoid a romanticised viewpoint of the state as an employer prior to this point (ibid: 87). While this contention is supported by the above documentation of welfare state and public services as a tool for capitalist democracy (Gough, 1979; Miliband, 1982), which will be returned to later in the chapter, arguments surrounding the organisation and development of contemporary public services will now be discussed.

By way of reducing the waste from Gough's (1979) notion of social labour time, one obvious method is to decrease the quantity of such labour performed. Post-1979 it has been highlighted that there was a move to privatise national utilities and reduce the strain on public spending (Massey and Pyper, 2005: 83), thus undermining the notion that the state should directly provide the majority of public services (Pollitt, 1993: 37). In addition, there was a noted shrinking of state sector employment in general terms, however the extent this affected youth justice provision, previously attached to Social Services which remained publically owned during this timeframe, is questionable, particularly given that the largest proportion of job cuts in the civil service was achieved within the following decade (ibid: 37). In light of this, focus will continue on the organisation of work, particularly with the management-led approach that has come to denote the concept of New Public Management (Corby and White, 2005: 9). As New Public Management reforms under the Conservative party were said to incorporate a "neo-liberal ideological dimension" (Bach and Kessler, 2012: 25), they were argued to be based on market principles to attain "value-for-money" through mechanisms of financial

constraints and managerial control (Garland, 2001: 88). The successive Conservative governments heavily promoted these reforms under the rhetoric of improving the 'quality' of the public services (Kirkpatrick and Martinez Lucio, 1995: 1), however, Kirkpatrick and Martinez Lucio (1995) point towards this rhetoric as problematic, associating the use of the term 'quality' with increased managerial control over the labour process (ibid: 8).

Pollitt (1993) explained that New Public Management propelled an ideal that a strong management ethos lies at the heart of effective employment regulation, both in the state and private sector, an ideal strongly upheld by key stakeholders within Thatcher's Conservative government (Pollitt, 1993: 3). A chief criticism Pollitt (1993) levelled at a reliance on this form of managerialism is the ease in which politicians wield the concept without adequate regard for the solutions to fundamental problems based upon a debatable and "seldom-tested assumption that better management will prove an effective solvent for a wide range of social and economic ills" (ibid: 1).

Pollitt and Bouckaert (2011: 161) argued that as a result of the increased political pressures imposed on management in the public services, the 'frontier' between management and politics became blurred (Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2011: 161). This represents how, through public sector employment regulation, workers and managers involved in the public services are routinely involved in political processes despite their perceived neutrality in terms of party politics. It is argued that managers, tasked with the deployment of resources to achieve the targets and goals set by the state, are actively engaged in decision-making processes for

the purposes of achieving wider political agendas with workers obliged to act accordingly (ibid: 162).

Although the first political trends towards a managerial state were noted prior to this point suggesting early shifts away from the traditional Keynesian Welfare State (Clarke and Newman, 1997: 9), it was the post-1979 period that saw the most profound swing in labour management ideology towards tight financial controls to regulate the public services (ibid: 16). There was a growing political attack by the 'New Right' of Thatcherism targeting state welfare as an agent of national decline, highlighted by Hall (1979) some months before Thatcher's Conservative government took office as he noted a "populist doctrine" of Thatcherism propagating the image of the "welfare 'scavenger'" as a "well designed folk devil" (Hall, 1979: 17). This furthered an already contentious assumption that welfare provisions were no more than an economic drain with an arguably callous insinuation that they resulted in a 'dependency culture' (Clarke and Newman, 1997: 15), in what Clarke and Newman (1997: 15) termed a "process of state-driven of demoralisation" of welfare recipients following Thatcher's election. During this time many welfare professionals were still a product of 1960s and 1970s 'liberalism' and were therefore seen to challenge the notion that members of society should take sole responsibility for their own plight with a lessened need for state welfare, and this created conflictual relations between state policy and the values of some welfare professionals (ibid: 15). In addition to this conflict between state policy and the values of some welfare professionals, the shift to 'New Right' economic policies is argued to have had direct social implications. This refers to spiralling inequalities within civil society, which became so profound during the 1980s that inequality was even alleged to

be a "deliberate strategy" of the Conservative government (Johnson, 1990 cited in ibid: 18).

The changes that New Public Management created in an organisational capacity can be argued as largely structural. These include a growth in market-driven employment relations and modes of contracting and an apparent decentralisation of welfare provisions (ibid: 19-20). However, as will be covered further in Chapter 3, the notion of decentralisation may be more evident in rhetoric than manifested in practice; this relates the discretionary powers of managers being constrained by tight budgets leading to "problems of rationing and choice in service delivery" (ibid: 21). As a result across the public services, welfare delivery became synonymous with values and best practices which emphasised efficiency and value for money (Butcher, 1995 cited in ibid: 22). This had implications for state employment which came to be regarded as "tightly focussed, financially disciplined" (Pollitt, 1993: 112) with an accentuation of performance management systems (Lapsley, 2008: 84). Although these descriptors initially suggest a coherent and unified approach to employment regulation with complimentary themes offering a recurrent narrative, it is important to consider tensions that exist beneath this shroud of rhetoric. For example, Pollitt (1993: 112) argues that many significant issues relating to the performance in the public services "have been regularly ignored or underplayed", these issues, which are said to have been overlooked, are the scope for "democratic participation" in public service operations and an omission of the "motivations of the staff who run them" (ibid: 113).

The application of New Public Management practices was not unique to British governance but can be seen as a global phenomenon (Christensen and Laegreid,

2007: 1). However, Gruening (2001) contends that its "first practitioners emerged in the United Kingdom under Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and in the municipal governments in the U.S." (Gruening, 2001: 3) which highlights the profound impact it had on public sector industrial relations in the UK from the outset of the reforms. As the initial reforms are associated with the 1980s and early 1990s, it poses the question as to whether such reforms have continued into the present day context and the resulting consequences of any changes which have occurred. Certain authors have previously argued the influence of New Public Management as "dying on its feet" (Dunleavy *et al*, 2006 cited in Dunleavy and Margets, 2010: 2), a notion objected to by Pollitt (2007) who claims that reforms implemented during the New Public Management heyday have been absorbed into normal work patterns and remain ingrained (Pollitt, 2007: 113). In this sense, although there have been modifications, New Public Management signified such strong changes to earlier public administrations it formed the foundation to propel reforms from succeeding governments that resonate in modern labour management policy throughout the public services (Christensen and Laegreid, 2007: 2).

The New Labour governments of 1994 onwards were seen to largely accept the neo-liberal values and assumptions of New Public Management as advocated by previous Conservative governments, although they were implemented in a more "consensual" and involved manner (Bach and Kessler, 2012: 26), leading to a further intensification of work in public sector employment and a continued diminishment of employee voice with trade unions increasingly weakened in public sector industrial relations (Foster and Scott, 1998: 137).

The overall implications, in terms of work processes, led to what Pollitt (1993: 168) described as a "neo-Taylorist version of managerialism" (ibid: 168), which was driven by financial discipline and performance consciousness giving rise to the incorporation of individualised HR practices in public sector employment relations, particularly in terms of performance management (Bach and Kessler, 2012: 12). One such effect of this, as argued by Garland (2001: 188-189), is to have been reflected in the incursion of economic lexicon into public sector service workplaces leading to traditional concerns being usurped by talk of "technologies of audit, fiscal control, measured performance, and cost-benefit evaluation" (ibid: 188-189). In what could be seen as a variation of scientific management, New Labour's main interjection in the restructuring or modernisation of the public services was a stated importance of performance management and a declared intolerance of public sector underperformance (Bach and Kessler, 2012: 48).

Widely seen as a defining feature of New Labour's modernisation agenda, the use of performance management and a "target culture" (ibid: 49) signalled a lust for controlling employee behaviour to ensure their actions met users and government expectations (Gash *et al.* 2008 cited in ibid: 49). According to Bach and Kessler (2012) this had three significant effects, firstly leading to "an element of de-skilling, with the target and audit regime establishing more routine work practices" (ibid: 165) which Pitts (2002: 422) likens to prescribed work functions that have undercut professional autonomy. Secondly, Bach and Kessler (2012: 165) argue there was an associated proliferation of paperwork and bureaucracy in the working lives of public service workers, citing nurses and social workers being "pulled away from the provision of front-line care to maintain and service performance management systems" (ibid: 165). The third impact of performance measurement regimes was

to place pressure on practitioners in the employment relationship as "performance measures and targets were clearly designed to strengthen employee accountability" with employees seeing performance targets as "a convenient stick with which to beat them" (ibid: 166).

The result of the modernisation agenda is considered to have left employees facing a process of work intensification, increased severity of management regulation and a lowering of staff morale (Massey and Pyper, 2005: 59), an area which will be considered further. In addition, the extent to which managerialism has improved service delivery has also been called into question. Worrall *et al* (2009) denote the use of rhetoric and reality as a legitimising process of state elites for maintaining both the reality of their dominance and mirage of democratic accountability (Worrall *et al*, 2009: 123), supporting earlier arguments portraying the welfare state as tool of capitalist democracy (Miliband, 1982: 28). The notion of a "target culture" (Bach and Kessler, 2012: 49) was referred to by Worrall *et al* (2009) to underline a point that performance indicators in the public services are devised by Government Ministers to impose a system of external regulation onto a service and subsequently, managers of the public service then become obsessed with these government-imposed performance targets (Worrall *et al*, 2009: 123). The result of this, which they highlighted in the NHS, led to major lapses as health service managers were fixated on hitting targets and so pushed aside other priorities. They also drew upon rhetoric associated with modernised performance-focussed public services as giving the "illusion of local solutions" (ibid: 123). This will be covered in greater depth in relation to youth justice during forthcoming chapters with particular emphasis on the concept of misrecognition, whereby centralised governmental control coupled with the marketization of the public

services has led to councils bidding for funding streams with attached performance criterion. This criteria often bares no semblance to the reality of problems faced in a given locale, thus the state is seen to create problems which they claim their policies will fix (Morrison, 2003: 140).

In returning to the discussion of employee relations in the public sector, concerns of lowering staff morale were stated; Bach and Kessler (2012: 166) point to a twofold manifestation of the impact of policy and practice onto staff morale. These relate to the re-structuring of the public services by the New Labour government in which policy was seen by workers as contradictory, in effect combining elements of work degradation and enrichment. The process of enrichment was symbolised by remodelling the workforce, graduate status and the supposed protection of job titles, and improved earning opportunities; however they were set against measures which risked the degradation of work (ibid: 166). As discussed previously, enshrined professional discretions or traditional occupation jurisdictions were challenged, flexible working arrangements were sought and precarious and temporary forms of employment increased. Consequently, an identity crisis was said to have arisen across the main public service provisions (ibid: 166), with Lymbery (2001: 378) arguing that, from the context of social workers, there was a shift of power from practitioners to the managerial elite, forcing them to "accommodate to the demands of increasingly managerialized organizations" (ibid: 378). Thomas and Davies (2005: 690) call this the "privileging of compliance" which has disempowered social workers and undermined creative thinking in the job due to time pressures and management regulation discouraging it (ibid: 690), with staff morale then becoming observably low and circumstantial evidence

suggesting stress and fatigue through increased absence rates (Lymbery, 2001: 378).

In a similar sense, regarding potential stress and low morale, the role of support staff was a consideration, traditionally considered peripheral to service delivery the roles became broader and these staff became crucial to direct service provisions. While this widened scope to extend their roles, providing in-role career development and the acquisition of professional accreditations, the issue of fair reward surfaced. The basis of this issue revolved around the nature of the tasks to which the roles of support staff were extended being disproportional to their financial remuneration (Bach and Kessler, 2012: 167). This threw up themes of exploitation, supported by Thornley (2000) in her analysis of the nursing auxiliary and healthcare assistants in the NHS, in which she concluded "managers… 'undercut' existing registered staff with their 'cheaper' non-registered nursing team colleagues" (Thornley, 2000: 457). As a theme of public service discourse, the role of support staff will provide a further basis for research in relation to YOTs to account for the nature of their roles in practice and relative pay levels set against the framework of alienation which will be discussed in succeeding chapters.

A further point of discussion regarding the application of New Public Management comes from Thomas and Davies (2005: 689) who noted sector-specific differences in its implementation. Bach and Kessler (2012) present material that reveals marked similarities in workforce reform across sub-sectors of the public services to which one may have predicted would lead to a universal influence on work experience, however residual differences were observed. In the historical context, local government sub-sectors were those more likely to "resist or depart from

government employee relations policy" whereas the civil service, being directly employed by central government, would be compliant (Bach and Kessler, 2012: 167). Despite this, one argument suggests that a certain local government sub-sector experienced the most sweeping changes in employee relations under New Labour, not necessarily out of choice but due to key aspects of centrally driven New Labour initiatives falling on this sub-sector to a disproportionate extent. This gives reference to schemes designed to reconfigure government departments through mergers and joined-up partnership practices with the 2003 Every Child Matters initiative affecting profound changes in public service employee relations. For the most part this affected education and young people's services and, according to Bach and Kessler (2012), brought about:

> *"the breaking down of service silos; with the consequent emphasis on multi-disciplinary team working; the need for distinctive, generic workforce capabilities stimulating a new workforce training and development agenda; a re-modelling of the workforce and the establishment of new boundary spanning roles" (ibid: 168).*

The Every Child Matters initiative was partly developed as an impulse from the 'Victoria Climbié case' (Williams, 2004: 415), but it also reflected New Labour's desire to re-organise the public service by way of partnership trust and new operational systems, which fed through to affect the employment relationship (Bach and Kessler, 2012: 168). This highlights the role that high public and media profiles can take in instigating and influencing policy for young people's service, a feature which will be argued to have significantly swayed the youth justice sector over its history (Muncie and Goldson, 2006: 36). In addition, the notion of multi-

disciplinary team working has a distinct application as YOTs were based on the notion of multi-agency work and were created by later New Labour reforms from the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act (Goldson, 2000: 6). The notion of the media and public as drivers of public sector reforms was prominent under New Labour with their reflexivity highlighted based on shifts in perceived electoral needs. These are largely associated with the aforementioned performance management agenda leading to the publication of performance tables, and also the arrival of "standards regulator bodies" (Bach and Kessler, 2012: 169). This has underlined the deskilling of public service professionals with routine tasks and standardised procedures that formed a system simply to be abided by, with a ground-level emphasis on practitioners exonerating themselves if something does go wrong by observing statutory targets rather than an "actual concern over the service provided", further stifling autonomy and discretion (Thomas and Davies, 2005: 969).

2.4 The 'Model Employer' Debate

As previously discussed, it is important to consider what Coffey and Thornley (2009) termed "disjuncture theories" (Coffey and Thornley, 2009: 87) when considering state employment. This represents an argument that many writers have a shared tendency to erroneously decree the election of the 1979 Thatcher government as a watershed moment, mistakenly reflecting this as a discontinuity from the state as a previously virtuous employer which was subjected to an ideological overhaul (ibid: 86-87). Citing the influential work of Fredman and Morris (1989), they challenged the notion that the 1979 election caused a radical

transformation in Government attitude, resulting in a new and greater emphasis on market forces and individual performance (ibid: 87).

Coffey and Thornley (2009) base a key aspect of their discussion on a longer-term historical analysis, which they refer to as the "cyclically variable usage and meanings attached to terms like 'model employer' and 'fairness' and 'comparability'" which has changed the development of the concept as a result of connected instability and institutional arrangements (ibid: 82) and, in doing so, they give reference to "pressures from below" (ibid: 82). Having started the chapter with a Marxist frame of analysis on the public services and welfare state, it was discussed how any incumbent government, as an employer, forms part of a toolkit of the State to promote the interests of the wider capitalist society (Miliband, 1982: 28). The perspective, therefore, supports the arguments of Coffey and Thornley (2009: 82), who note there has been a long-standing cross-examination of the notion of the state being a 'model employer' and the self-endorsement of the various governments which have propelled the idea. The succeeding part of this section will give discussion to the "pressures from below" (ibid: 82) in the historical sense to develop the debate more thoroughly.

Coffey and Thornley (2009) started their historical analysis of "pressures from below" by considering the pre-World War I period. They explain how, as far back as 1897, Webb and Webb had purported a government partiality to lowering the expense of production and highlighted an early reference to model employer challenging the rhetoric of the day for not matching the reality of state employment with the following citation:

"It is in vain that Ministry after Ministry avows its intention of abandoning competition wages, and of making the Government a 'model employer'… a trade union secretary will often declare that the Government, instead of being the best, is one of the very worst employers with whom he has to deal" (Webb and Webb, 1897: 555 cited in ibid: 93).

The trade union contestation which they highlight is supported by Miliband (1977) in his analysis of what he terms the "bourgeoisie democratic state" in a large-scale historical framework. He goes on to note that the "repressive aspect of a bourgeoisie democratic state is very quickly deployed" and that even in times of relative social peace, they always make it their "first task to destroy the defence organizations of the working class – trade unions, parties, associations and so on" (Miliband, 1977: 91). Other commentators further support the argument of a theoretical disjuncture in the concept of a model employer; Allen (1960) pronounces how the State proved unwilling to support trade union growth within the public services at their embryonic stage. During this timescale of social unrest, yet one with an unorganised labour force exposed to poor terms and regulatory conditions, trade unions and workers had little choice but to engage in industrial militancy to force the hand of the government. This was the point when the state conciliated against oppressive regulatory employment practices in accordance with the notion that the improved conditions were more in-line with the appeasement of the masses rather than hankering towards the ideals of a model employer, thus "state concessions were forced" (Coffey and Thornley, 2009: 94).

The next "pressure from below" in a cyclical sense documented by Coffey and Thornley (2009: 82) surrounded the timescale of The Great War. Whilst many

political economists and proponents of the model employer concept such as Farnham and Pimlott (1995) revere this period as the number one contender for 'model employer', again doubts arise. In support of the assumption, the formation of the Whitley system as the chief regulator used for pay determination was formed, however the immediate period before the war provides a contextual relevance as it was characterised by industrial conflict (ibid: 95). During these times the standard of working class life was abject; despite relatively low unemployment, pay and conditions were low and inflation high and, importantly, trade unions were in position of increased power following the war due to an influx of female workers and ex-service men returning to work in a "state of high expectancy" and a willingness to unionise (Allen, 1960, p73 cited in ibid: 96). This rapid rise in trade union membership effectively paved the way for the Whitley committee.

Coffey and Thornley (2009) detail how very little further advancements were made on behalf of the working population in the ensuing years and, indeed, the government sought to roll back on concessions they had previously granted. Barring the Trade Union Congress reforms in the 1930s it is noted how, at best, negligible progress was made on the behalf of state sector employees until World War II. Despite this, it is concluded that "Whitley did seem to have particular, somewhat longer-term significance for direct state employees; but it was the unions themselves who pressed for reform and local and central government were resistant" (ibid. p96).

The final consideration of Coffey and Thornley's (2009) analytical framework is World War II, which gave rise to considerable changes in the UK industrial

relations climate. Having already examined the political economy of the welfare state, we have laid the groundwork for some of the themes that created the pressures from below in this timescale. As stated, the notion of the welfare state signifying a change away from a capitalist system and towards a better political ideology is erroneous (Gough, 1979: 1) and this is also reflected in the industrial relations developments of this period. Coffey and Thornley (2009) argue how pay restraint was at the heart of the government's agenda as an employer in the post-war era, a fact that became apparent in its dealings with a growing public sector. In a similar fashion to Miliband (1982: 34) arguing that the welfare state proved to be a political tactic to placate a population of high social expectancy; Allen (1960) suggests that a growing public sector was popular and was populated with workers of a high expectancy of the new system, thus any notable improvements in state employment could be put down to political expediency.

This formed a political climate of a densely populated, highly unionised and expectant public sector workforce, with most public sector trade unions affiliated to the to the labour party and TUC, thereby allowing for a relatively large degree of lobbying power. As a result a commitment to national bargaining was continued, however the results of this proved disappointing and signified many problems with pay settlement. According to Allen (1960) "the Government's opinion, required a policy of wage restraint, the Government applied the policy directly onto its own employees" (Allen, 1960: 113), this policy of pay restraint was implemented as an exemplar for private industry, those occupying the least power in the labour markets relative to the time. A facto which directly undermines the underlying basis of the model employer construct (Coffey and Thornley, 2009: 100).

The above debate shows a concerted and historically documented effort from the government, as a pawn of the capitalist state, to regularly implement policy designed to restrain the scope for wage earners to improve their terms and conditions, with actions directly favouring employers (Miliband, 1969: 81). This suggests that although there have been periods of obvious improvement and downturns in the conditions that state employees have been exposed to over history, these require analysis of the dynamics of the interaction from the state to its workers, for example collective bargaining "was achieved rather than granted and the outcomes from it were equally time and pressure dependent" (Coffey and Thornley, 2009: 101). As a result, it can be argued that, post 1979, the more contemporary relations of successive governments showed a continuation rather than a deviation of the role of the state as employer, and signify the development of an ongoing capitalist democracy reflecting the conditions of the political economy at the time, rather than a radical dislocation from a previously good system. The importance of this to the thesis will become apparent in the following chapter, which highlights that alienation should be examined not only in the terms of the responses of workers to the work they perform but also the historical conditioning that progressed the capitalist labour, therefore calling into question the very nature of a capitalist democracy.

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter has provided an overview of the nature of the welfare state and the state as an employer. Initial consideration was afforded to the role of the government as an organ for capitalist interests within the context of a capitalist democracy, as a calculated machine to maintain power in the hands of the ruling

classes (Miliband, 1982: 28). In light of this, it was described how, from a Marxist analytical framework, the welfare state was not born out of a political want for socialism and the end of capitalism, but as a conciliatory gesture to placate the political agitators from a growing reformist and left-wing outlook of a large section of the population following the end of World War II (ibid: 34). The welfare state took on considerable importance in the ensuing years due to the changing demographics of the population and the growing social needs of civil society as the capitalist economy advanced; as a result state spending was required to increase (Gough, 1979: 75). In the application of welfare state activities it was considered that local governments form part of the apparatus of those holding central governmental power, yet owing to local governments relying heavily on state funding, the overall control of the associated public services remains with central government (ibid: 100).

Gough (1979) sort to categorise the wider public services in two distinct types, marketed and non-marketed services, with the former producing "economic activities which produce goods or services for sale" and the latter producing "goods and services which are not sold" (ibid: 106). As the industry to which this thesis relates, the youth justice sector, is similar to that of probation and falls under the category of a non-marketed service, greater consideration will be afforded to it in terms of unproductive labour from a Marxist perspective in the following chapter (Braverman, 1998: 288-289). While considering the youth justice sector or probation as a "provision of social services" applying a service onto users, though in this case a statutory service and not necessarily one which is desired, (Gough, 1979: 3-4) and part of the marketed sector of the public services, there is no net-flow return from public expense to the private wage. Instead such a service is

justified by maintaining social harmony (ibid: 121), an implement of capitalist democracy to maintain social control. In a strict capitalist economic perspective these services are a tax burden on the economy through wasted labour and capital (ibid: 122).

Following this, attention turned to the contemporary public sector and themes of its modernisation. Much academic discourse has focussed on the reforms and modernisation of the public services post 1979, certain academics maintain this period to signify a drive for the reduction of state spending through the nationalisation of public utilities and a shrinking of public services (Massey and Pyper, 2005: 83), a move to undermine traditional thought that the state should provide the bulk of the public services (Pollitt, 1993: 37). According to Bach and Kessler (2012) the associated New Public Management reforms of Thatcher's Conservative party denoted a neo-liberal shift in ideology (Bach and Kessler, 2012: 25) and Martin (2002) argues that such was the rapidity of change in government initiatives, workers became overwhelmed (Martin, 2002: 305).

The modernisation agenda of the New Labour government has been suggested as tantamount to providing a variant of scientific management and a move towards increased performance management in the public sector (Bach and Kessler, 2012: 48). This saw an intensification of work, increased levels of management regulation and low staff morale (Massey and Pyper, 2005: 59) with overall de-skilling of work process signified by a standardisation of work and prescriptive unified practice (Bach and Kessler, 2012: 165). Worrall *et al* (2009) argue that the prevalence of managerialism in the public sector, implemented through the development of performance management, depicts a shorthand of ideas and

techniques to form the practices of managing all resources more efficiently. As a result, "workers within the public sector are experiencing greater exploitation and more intense alienation" (Worrall *et al,* 2009: 118), an argument which will be explored in greater depth in succeeding chapters.

It was also considered how a wider historical context should be applied to public sector reforms, notably in terms of the model employer debate (Coffey and Thornley, 2009). Here "pressures from below" were documented to guard against "disjuncture theories" (ibid: 87) which has led to popularised narratives suggesting that public sector reforms of recent decades signify a radical shift in state sector employment, portraying the state in an idealised context of a previously good employer. This section provided evidence that, even at times considered a benchmark for state employment, governments adopted a pragmatic approach to pay and conditions of employment for public sector employees, with conciliations being pressure dependant. Indeed, whenever it was possible, governments were shown to be at best sparing with their generosity, thus undermining the notion of a model employer (ibid: 87-101). The debate was concluded with reflection that contemporary reforms may not have been a departure from the ideologies of previous governments, pre-Thatcher, but representative of the economic and social environments of the time.

As a final consideration for the chapter, it should be noted that at the time of research the public services were under high-profile austerity measures from the Coalition government (The Telegraph, 2014). The effect of this has seen widespread job cuts in the public sector and restrictions in public spending, with the youth justice sector considered badly affected (CYPN, 2011). This factor will

be covered in more detail in coming chapters, particularly in analysis of the interview data acquired during research in which austerity proved to be a prevalent concern of practitioners and managers interviewed across both research sites. Attention will now focus on the labour process, both in the broader theoretical sense and then focussed on the context of the public services, which will lead into discussion on how alienation forms perceptible indicators in the labour process in the ensuing chapter.

Chapter 3

The Labour Process

3.1 Introduction

The thesis will now provide a theoretical overview of the capitalist labour process, along with its documented effects on employment and social structures, before attention shifts to the labour process in contemporary public services. This will allow debate to cover the historical arguments taking insight from Marxian texts, which surrounded the organisation of labour and its commodification in capitalist modes of production when applied to traditional manufacturing industries. While it is these arguments relating to use-value and exchange-value that form the objective conditions which alienate workers through the capitalist pursuit of surplus-value, it will be argued how the advancement of capitalism has led to these same conditions being applied to service-sector workers. Having established these theoretical links, the chapter will apply them to a labour process analysis of the contemporary public services. This allows the notion of alienation to be introduced from the initial reference point, in objective terms being all labour which is bought and sold, thus providing a basis for further discussion in the subsequent chapter regarding past literature on the theory of alienation in order to form a theoretical model for the thesis.

Initially, thought will be given to the nature of the capitalist labour process and the formation of divisions of labour both in the context of the workplace (Marx, 1976: 132) and wider society (Smith, 1930: 17). Divisions of labour in the employment context will be argued as a process of dividing workers as per individual task of production, the overall goal of the capitalist in doing so being to establish control of

the production process (Braverman, 1998: 32-33). As will be explained, social divisions of labour refer to the categorisation of labour by craft as opposed to the sub-division of tasks within the crafts (ibid: 49-52), and the development of capitalism over time has added great complexity to these social divisions resulting in considerable social consequences.

Marx's theories of surplus-value are analysed in detail both in terms of the commodities produced through labour processes and the notion of human labour power becoming treated as a commodity of capitalist production (Braverman, 1998: 248). This will take into account the concepts of productive and unproductive labour with manufacturing work being traditionally associated with productive labour and service sector work being considered unproductive (Smith, 1930: 314), which will resonate with Gough's notion of marketed and non-market sectors, particularly those producing services rather than goods, as seen in state employment (Gough, 1979: 107). It will, however, be explained that the definition of productive and unproductive labour has come to be considered problematic and the changing nature of capitalist firms has blurred the distinctions between them.

Indeed such is the ambiguity of difference, in terms of labour process behaviour, that many modern political economists have rendered the distinctions defunct. This is chiefly due to service sector and manufacturing work generally following the same line of labour-exchanges which capitalist systems prescribe and, similar to manufacturing labour producing commodities, the very essence of labour performed by a service sector worker is seen as a commodity (Braverman, 1998: 252). Additionally, influenced by changing economic environments, service sector work has grown to dominate large areas of employment and in many of these

cases productivity is now measured even when none visibly exists (ibid: 287-288). As described in the previous chapter, this holds significance in the public services particularly given New Labour's modernisation reforms and the associated use of performance management (Bach and Kessler, 2012: 49).

Capitalist structures, both in the social and workplace contexts, will be examined with reference to the "universal market" and "monopoly capitalism" (Braverman, 1998: 175). These represent the changing face of capitalism where employment and society is becoming increasingly dominated by large-scale corporate firms. Such is the extent of this domination that social planning in urban hubs is largely controlled to the whims of these organisations (ibid: 186). In consequence, a clear deficit of refinement is evident in social coordination as notions of equality hold little leverage with corporate-driven ideals. This results in the state attempting to plug the voids of inadequacy which have come to blight many urban communities (ibid: 187), which will link to themes of deprivation which are argued to create social unrest as a factor causing crime and youth crime.

The chapter will begin debates by analysing the importance of understanding use-value and exchange-value in the production of goods and the importance that these theoretical concepts have become in explaining the capitalist labour process, thus providing a basis for discussion regarding the implications they have in terms of the degradation of work in modern service-based industry.

3.2 Use-value and Exchange-value

In terms of traditional manufacturing industries Marx (1976) described, in the first volume of Capital, how it becomes evident that commodities produced by human labour have two distinct values, those of use-value and exchange-value (Marx,

1976: 125-127). The notion of use-value is most simply defined in the third volume of Capital, where Marx states "to say that a commodity has use-value is merely to say it satisfies some social want" (Marx, 1960: 181). Exchange-value, however, reveals itself not in terms of social consumption, as with use-value, but as a quantitative measurement of value when exchanged with another commodity. In this respect exchange-values are only distinguishable by amount, as represented by the example: "One hundred pounds worth of lead or iron is of as great a value as one hundred pounds worth of silver and gold" (Barbon, 1696 cited in Marx, 1976: 128).

The implications of the respective values, when applied to capitalist systems, are reflected in their market-price. It should however be remembered that, as exchange-value is concerned wholly with quantity above quality, for this value to remain constant so too would the labour-time expended to produce it. An intimation suggested by Marx (1976: 130) when stating: "As exchange-values, all commodities are merely definite quantities of congealed labour-time" (ibid: 130). In light of this, it is argued that a commodity's exchange-value is proportional to the coalescence of labour-time expended. For example, a commodity which requires the outflow of a prolonged labour-time is likely to be of high exchange-value. However, there are numerous factors which can affect labour-time and increase productivity, thus exchange-values are known to fluctuate (ibid: 131-132).

For the above reason the make-up of a commodity is seen as the substantial value of labour which produced it and despite this another form of value has already been mentioned, that of use-value. This draws on a slightly more abstract principle which affects the value of a commodity on the basis of social use; Marx also

clarified that: "A thing can be useful, and a product of human labour, without being a commodity" (ibid: 131). This reflects the value of raw materials which could be transformed into commodities during a labour-process, yet for these materials to meet the definition of a commodity, the entity of the substance produced by labour must be of use to others and not solely display a use-value to the producer. In this sense the product of labour is not exclusively concerned with the consumption of those other than the producer, although it would not be defined as a commodity unless it displays a use-value to another person to whom it could be transferred "through the medium of exchange" (Engels cited in ibid: 131).

When commodities of production enter modern free-market trading the use-value and exchange-value seemingly metamorphose into price, this depicts the core aim of capitalist production. The price of a commodity simply reflects its monetary value in exchange relations rather than expressing the use-value and exchange-value of a commodity, the price is a proportional representation of market value at a given time. According to Marx, money in this sense becomes an equivalent, fashioned out of the historical use of gold which, as a commodity in its own right, functioned as an equivalent in trading circles. As gold began to serve as the universally recognised equivalent value across a vast spectrum of trading fields, gold itself became the "money commodity" (ibid: 163). Once this money commodity has been established, its transformation into money form was a successive development as a projection of equivalent value, henceforth price became the "simplest expression of the relative value of a single commodity" (ibid: 163). Having explored how a manufacturing commodity's use-value and exchange-value is transposed into a monetary representation within the context of

capitalist production, the product of labour in service sector industries can subsequently be analysed.

Although manufacturing and agricultural production assumed great emphasis in the work of Marx, the notion of a commodity produced by service sector labour processes was not overlooked. As Braverman (1998) cites, Marx explained a "service" to represent "nothing more than the useful effect of a use-value, be it of a commodity, or be it of labour" (Marx cited in ibid: 248). This leads on to the question of how the usefulness of a worker's produce can be qualified given the absence of a commodity in the material form (ibid: 248). This question was posed in relation to service occupations and retail trades in the generalist sense and provides a useful starting framework from which further investigative analysis of particular occupations can commence.

Before discussions relating to the service sector take place, it is valuable to have a greater understanding of work structures in capitalist systems and what is known as the "universal market". This essentially describes how the market place has come to dominate all aspects of society (ibid: 188). In order to fully explain this concept, Braverman (1998) cites Lenin's use of the term "monopoly capital" (ibid: 175), such phraseology elucidates the changing face of capitalism. Capitalism has always been argued to be a competitive system with one capitalist seeking competitive advantage over the next in order to sustain market success. The notion of capitalist competition has not changed in essence, however the model in which competing firms operate has changed in nature. This refers to the traditional capitalist system, prior to the late 19th Century, whereby the owners of capital

represented a large number of similar sized organisations, which were often run by families or partnership ventures (ibid: 175).

Braverman (1998) suggests, production was "distributed amongst a reasonably large number of capitalist firms". However, since the emergence of monopoly capitalism this model has vastly changed in outlook (ibid: 175). This refers to centralisation of capital through large-scale firms or collective organisations. Additionally, resulting from the occurrence of global colonisation in the late 19th Century whereby developing nations sought to increase their imperial might internationally, the large organisations which dominated capitalist structures also began to populate the globe. Essentially, capitalist modes of production began to dominate all aspects of civil life and spread rapidly across international colonies. As a result, the influence of globally recognised, large-scale capitalist firms vastly increased in stature and this came to be the defining feature of monopoly capitalism (ibid: 175).

The significance of monopoly capitalism was magnified by coinciding developments in capitalist production processes, such as technological developments and Taylorist techniques of scientific management (ibid: 175), resulting in the creation of a global capitalist system. Effectively, the divisions of labour as critiqued by Marx, both in the context of workplace and social divisions of labour (Marx, 1976: 132) had spread to the international scale. The noted growth in technology is also an important historical feature of modern capitalism, primarily in conjunction with notionally scientific approaches to management. The overriding effect of these amalgamated features was manifested in management attempts to dissipate worker control of the labour process and further its own

power of orchestration during production. Essentially, as a means of giving managers greater control of the labour process (Braverman, 1998: 118).

The increased use of technology in the labour process has been a powerful benefactor in supporting divisions of labour. As explained by Marx, the purpose of machinery in the production process is not to lighten the workload of employees but instead to increase production. Indeed, Marx goes on to declare "The machine is a means for producing surplus-value" (Marx, 1976: 492). The notion of surplus-value references human labour's inherent ability to generate more value than it consumes, a feature to which Marx and Engels also alluded in the Manifesto of the Communist Party by stating: "In proportion, therefore, as the repulsiveness of the work increases, the wage decreases" (Marx and Engels, 1972: 39). This statement concerns the production of commodities through the labour process. Should production increase, so too would the value of total produce. However, the remuneration subsequently offered to a worker would be proportionally lower than the converted monetary gain of the capitalist. As an established feature of capitalist systems, surplus-value effectively forms a basis for exploitation of workers through the labour process (ibid: 40).

The issue of exploited labour has many implications in terms of basic human rights, primarily as it is a source of slave-labour (Marx, 1976: 325). Marx explained how exploitation of workers could be seen through a process termed "surplus labour" (ibid: 518). Despite being intrinsically linked to surplus-value, the concept of surplus labour remains distinct. This refers to the labour-power expended by a worker which in turn creates surplus-value and to describe this Marx divided the labour process into two parts. The first of these was described as "necessary

labour", in which the worker labour-time produces the equivalent to the value of that labour. The second stage, surplus labour, refers to the worker labour-time spent in the production of surplus-value. Marx described how surplus labour-time is a process which creates no value for the worker but does create surplus-value, "which, for the capitalist, has all the charms of something created out of nothing" (ibid: 325).

The concept of surplus labour is argued not to be an invention of capitalism, as it is an inherent facet of human labour-power; however, it is considered a fundamental feature of capitalist production systems. Surplus is described in simple terms by Gintis (1987) as "when the capitalist is able to extract more labour from the worker than that embodied in the value of labour power (the wage)" (Gintis, 1987: 69). For example, if a capitalist is to maintain a profitable enterprise, the surplus labour of workers is an essential requisite for this goal to be realised. This scenario exists as workers must not only produce enough to maintain their own survival, they must also provide sufficient additional labour-power to sustain the needs of a capitalist. In the context of a workplace this feature of the labour process is of historical significance, this was explained by Marx through the following statement:

> *"in the history of capitalist production, the establishment of a norm for the working day presents itself as a struggle over the limits of that day, a struggle between collective capital, i.e. the class of capitalists, and collective labour, i.e. the working class" (Marx, 1976: 344).*

Additionally, Marx continues to point out that:

"where use-value rather than exchange-value of the product predominates, surplus labour will be restricted by a more or less confined set of needs, and that no boundless thirst for surplus labour will arise from the character of production itself" (ibid: 345).

Marx explains that surplus labour only becomes problematic, in the sense of overwork, when the main aim of production is the accumulation of a commodity's exchange-value for the acquirement of its "independent monetary shape" (ibid: 345). Having previously alluded to the impact of managerialism in the public sector, this component of Marxian theory is grounded in an important aspect of debate. This is chiefly due to managerialism having the tendency to uphold economic prudence as the means to regulate the labour process (Garland, 2001: 188) rather than seeking a monetary value for the accumulation of capital, meeting government-imposed performance targets becomes the assigned value (Worrall *et al*, 2009: 123). The chapter will now address the notion of the capitalist labour process in service-based occupations before focussing discussion on its impact on public services.

3.3 Capitalist Modes of Production and Service Occupations

We can now return to the question posed in an earlier passage regarding how to qualify the useful effects of labour where a service is provided and no material product is manufactured. Firstly, it is important to consider the nature of labour processes in capitalist systems. In the context of a traditional production plant, workers provide their labour as a service to the capitalist and, as a result of these services tangible commodities are produced (Braverman, 1998: 248). As we have already used Marx's definition of a service as "the useful effect of a use-value, be

it of a commodity, or be it of labour" (Marx cited in ibid: 248), it can then be argued that a physical product in the form of a commodity becomes the corporeal representation of the useful effects of labour, as in the service provided by workers to capitalists.

However, in the absence of such tangible produce, Braverman (1998) suggests "the useful effects of labour themselves become the commodity" (ibid: 248), therefore the useful effects of labour are found in the form of the service that is made available to a user. The characteristic property of the labour-exchange which occurs when these services are delivered to users demarcates the nature of production in the service sector and can potentially render it as capitalist. This is explained by Braverman (1998) in the following quote:

> *"When a worker does not offer this labour directly to the user of its effects, but instead sells it to a capitalist, who re-sells it to the commodity market, we then have the capitalist form of production in the field of services" (ibid: 248).*

The above quote, describing how capitalist production modes exist in the service sector, provides a sound theoretical framework when relating issues of surplus-value to the labour process in the context of the service sector. Notwithstanding this, it is important to note the work of the prominent 18th Century economist Adam Smith who wrote at length about the distinction between what he termed "productive and unproductive labourers" (Smith, 1930: 314). This distinction sought to elicit a separation between service workers, deemed unproductive, and those employed in a manufacturing capacity. Smith based his distinction on the claim that unproductive labourers, as "the servants of the public", provide no

surplus to a nation's overall wealth. Productive labourers, in contrast, were argued to contribute to national wealth and, in part, support the maintenance of society (ibid: 314). This notion of national wealth will be discussed in greater detail as part of Marx's critique of "social wealth", which notes how divisions of labour group specialist workers into a "single mechanism" and causes constraints to the creative expression of talent through management regulation (Marx, 1976: 486). Essentially, the specialism of a worker is assigned to match the instruments or designated tasks of production rather than needs or qualities of that worker (ibid: 486).

As capitalism has progressed, particularly during monopoly capitalism, the distinctions between productive and unproductive labour have verged towards the obsolete (Braverman, 1998: 252). This argument stems from modern corporations not seeming overly concerned by the forms of labour they employ, but the value of what they produce; people's labour commodities are therefore purchased as per the needs of production. As a result, Braverman (1998) suggests that "all forms of labour are employed without distinction" and "in the final result as recorded in balance sheets the forms of labour disappear entirely in the forms of value" (ibid: 252). This suggests that modern organisations purchase the labour-power of workers primarily for the enlargement of value and the varying forms of labour are all required to contribute to this goal. Accordingly, the working class of labourers is not defined through the notions of productive and unproductive labour, but through their means of creating surplus-value in capitalist systems (ibid: 284). Despite service labour not producing material commodities, it is the usefulness of a person's labour, taking the role of a commodity, which is then used for the creation of value according to the aims of the employer. Consequently, the only means of

unproductive labour, in terms of economics, would be that of domestic labour performed on one's own account and outside the context of labour markets, such as the completion of household chores (ibid: 252).

Braverman's (1998) frame of reference explains how workers providing services, along with those manufacturing vendible objects, all fall into what is described as the "working class", in light of their market-driven labour exchange with employers. These workers, having sold their labour to employers, are then open to exploitation via the labour processes in which they come to operate (ibid: 284). As we have discussed, the very essence of a service worker's labour-power becomes the commodity in terms of the collective labour processes of modern firms (ibid: 252).

In his Theories of Surplus-Value, Marx wrestled at length with the uneasy concept of unproductive workers creating surplus-value. Citing those who provide their labour to tailor garments as an example, Marx implies that those tailoring directly to the consumer of their service would be unproductive. Alternatively workers tailoring on behalf of a capitalist, who subsequently sells their service to those consuming the use-value of that service, would typify productive labour as a form of capitalist production (Marx, 1969: 403-404). This provides a context whereby unproductive labourers generate no surplus-value as they do not generate capital for their "master", the person by whom their labour is consumed (ibid: 406).

Such a definition of a productive labour presents immediate problems in a theoretical context when considering state-employed welfare workers as opposed to service workers employed by modern corporations. This problem reflects how such workers would sell their labour to the employer in a similar fashion as those

employed by private sector firms. However, the use-value of the labour performed to state-employed welfare workers is not generally sold to the consumers of this for a money price, effectively meaning no surplus-value has been generated for a capitalist. However according to Braverman (1998), this explanation was not designed to address the labour processes performed by service or manufacturing workers, but was grounded in the framework of the employment relations which occur as a result of production. Ultimately, Marx's argument was a reflection of the "class structure of society" at his time of writing (Braverman, 1998: 284-285).

As Braverman (1998) points out, the changing economic outlook of modern capitalism has caused the debates of productive and unproductive labour to be rendered defunct, as too has modern management regulation (ibid: 288). In light of extensive debates regarding this, the labour process has increasingly become dominated by task routinisation and endeavours to measure and control the flow of expenditure. As a result, measuring the productivity of workers has become an elementary management objective in the regulation of all forms of labour, even those which have no productivity (ibid: 287-288). Additionally, the early notion of the wealth of nations has come to be displaced by the idea of prosperity. According to Braverman (1998), prosperity "has nothing to do with the efficacy of labour in producing useful good and services, but refers rather to the velocity of flow within the circuits of capital and commodities in the marketplace" (ibid: 288). This echoes the changing nature of capitalist economies whereby national manufacturing output is not the sole means of measuring a country's wealth

During the time-frame of Marx's assessment of unproductive and productive labour, it was evident that the amount of unproductive labour was minor in quantity

relative to today. Unproductive labour was typically seen to take the role of "commercial workers" who seemed closely allied to employers and enjoyed associated privileges; this enabled a more fortuitous lifestyle. Whereas productive labourers directly created surplus-value for a capitalist, it was generally seen as the role of the unproductive labourer to realise the conversion this surplus-value into profit for the capitalist and to manage workers. The unproductive labourer typically gained status from their functions both in the workplace and society, hence the basis of Marx's argument relating to social structures (ibid: 288-289). In his argument Marx acknowledged that unproductive labourers could be subjected to requirements seeing them perform "unpaid labour", akin to the unpaid labour of productive labourers which we have defined as surplus labour (Marx, 1976: 325). This opens up the prospect that workers performing unproductive labour are susceptible to exploitation and alienation by capitalists, as are their manufacturing or "productive" counterparts alike. According to Braverman (1998: 291), such features of discussion left Marx unconvinced of his own theory regarding surplus labour and unproductive labourers, and it is commonly thought this was a matter which was set aside for further discussion.

Despite his arguments being orientated towards discussions of class structure, Marx avoided any categorical assertion that unproductive labour symbolised an elevated class of worker by way of definition. This was rooted in reality that as wage labourers themselves, those performing unproductive labour remained at the mercy of capitalists for employment and, accordingly, for the means to sustain their livelihoods. As such, their basis for employment was to function for a capitalist, within a capitalist system, and therefore provided no clear distinction to those who performed productive labour (ibid: 290). Additionally, Marx's work does

show foresight into the progression of service sector work which would eventually come to dominate modern capitalist economies (Marx, 1969: 410-411). However the extent to which such forms of labour would grow in scope were not, and could not, be anticipated (Braverman, 1998: 292).

By analysing an extract from Marx's Theories of Surplus-Value, a most striking resemblance to labour associated with modern welfare services becomes apparent in its depiction. This references a relatively small passage of text which Marx termed "manifestations of capitalism in the sphere of immaterial production" (Marx, 1969: 410). This argument described two kinds of production, the first of which is concerned with vendible objects that are independent from both the producers and consumers. These exist "during an interval between production and consumption" (ibid: 410) and within this interval circulate as commodities. As these commodities mainly take the form of artisan products, this particular facet of discussion is extraneous to the thesis (ibid: 410).

It is in the second form of immaterial production whereby Marx alludes to a type of labour potentially performed by those providing welfare services. In these cases, "production cannot be separated from the act of producing" (ibid: 410), such forms of labour can take a variety of shapes and the performing arts was cited as an example. Marx also likens this mode of production to that of a teacher, as teachers may act as "mere wage wage-labourers for the entrepreneur of the establishment" (ibid: 411). In this sense, although teachers are not productive labourers in relation to their pupils, "they are productive labourers in relation to their employer" (ibid: 411). The underlying logic to account for this notion is found in the realisation that an employer would exchange capital for a teacher's labour and would be enriched

through the process; this was described as meeting the capitalist mode of production but "only to a small extent" (ibid: 410). At the time of writing such forms of labour were limited in scope and this led to Marx's deferral of further analysis by stating forms of labour within this sphere to be "so insignificant compared with totality of production that they can be left entirely out of account" (ibid: 411).

It has now been documented that 'immaterial' production and service sector economies have become a profoundly important aspect of most modern day capitalist economies, both in terms of public and private sector employment (Braverman, 1998: 248). As noted, unlike corporate firms many public sector organisations are not designed to generate capital for its conversion into profit and, as a result, they are heavily dependent on state spending policy (Bach and Winchester, 2003: 293).

The thesis will first address the structural make-up of modern capitalist systems in both the work and social context. This will note how specialised managers have come to assume the decision-making prerogatives, traditionally associated with small-scale owners of capital (Braverman, 1998: 179), and the inadequacies of monopoly capitalism as the default means of social coordination (ibid: 187).

3.4 Work Structure in Capitalist Systems

The class-based argument regarding the modern dynamic between workers and managers has been addressed by Braverman (1998: 179), noting that traditional structures saw the owners of capital having a more direct role in the management of labour processes than is seen in modern day organisations. The cause of this is generally associated with the rise of specialised management staff assuming control of specific departments on behalf of their employers. This could be argued

as true to the public sector insofar as managers do not directly own the state-funded capital for which they are responsible. It is, however, noted that the owners of capital may still maintain a great level of influence on management policy, although the "direct and personal unity between the two is ruptured" (ibid: 179).

An additional effect of specialised management staff is seen in the sub-divisions from which they function in the context of modern corporations. As a result, complex management structures are often formed in both public and private sector workplaces (ibid: 181). The consequence of this is seen in the distortion of the "direct chain of command", which, in many large-scale organisations, has been replaced by a complex pyramidal structure. These management structures are argued to reflect the expanding divisions of labour in an employment context (ibid: 185). Such divisions of labour are also highlighted by the spread of management functions across various staff members, a feature that has become increasingly common in large-scale organisations. Braverman (1998) describes this as "an organization of workers under the control of managers, assistant managers, supervisors, etc" (ibid: 185). The purpose of such management structures is argued to be the administration of control, essentially employees are forced to work under increased management supervision and thus to the expected organisational norms, which will be addressed further. This reflects how supervision requirements and administrative subdivisions disassociate workers from the produce of their labour, from which they lose their individual control. In effect, as Braverman (1998) continues to explain, alienated labour has "become a part of the management apparatus itself" (ibid: 186).

At this point a greater analysis of social divisions of labour also becomes important, mainly as the aforementioned growth of large corporate entities has had significant real life implications in what Braverman (1998) terms the corporate function of social coordination. This relates to the complexity of the social divisions of labour which have arisen through the historical development of capitalism, along with the concentrated urban society "which attempts to hold huge masses in delicate balance", which in turn requires "an immense amount of social coordination which was not previously required" (ibid: 186). As capitalist society persists and has no means of providing an overall planning mechanism for the provision of such social coordination, large parts of this public function becomes the internal affairs of corporations. This is simply by virtue of the colossal size and power of these corporations, whose "internal planning becomes, in effect, a crude substitute for necessary social planning" (ibid: 185). The crucial issue here is that corporate enterprises lack sufficient motivation to engage in refined administrative planning and instead operate on a capitalist basis and reflect capitalist motivations; this leaves little room for the notion of equality to gain significant leverage. The advancement of government functions of social coordination that have developed in response are a reflection of urgent need, and these governmental functions being highly visible, in comparison to those of corporations, is an expression of this need, therefore leading to the false notion of government's exercising prime social control. In contrast, so long as investment decisions are made by private enterprise rather than overseeing social coordination, the government simply plugs the gaps of inadequacy which capitalist motives fail to address (ibid: 187).

In filling these interstices of social coordination left by capitalist imperatives, the government upholds its role, according to Miliband (1982), by acting as an organ of the state to preserve the interest of capitalism and maintain the power imbalances inherent to a capitalist democracy (Miliband, 1982: 28). This not only shows the significance of how the progression of capitalism, divisions of labour and evolution of the capitalist labour process has come to dominate society and pervade all aspects of civil life, it also provides a conceptual bridge to bring discussion onto the modes in which the government attempts to maintain social cohesion within capitalist society through the provision of public services. Having discussed the notion of the welfare state and public services in the previous chapter, the following section will explore how the labour process plays out in public sector employment and the aims which the government seeks to achieve when regulating, at shopfloor level, the services imparted onto its users.

3.5 The Labour Process and the Public Services

As argued in the above discussion, the labour process in a capitalist system has altered the broad process of producing things with an inherent use-value to a process of creating objects or services with a surplus-value. These subsequently become commodities to be exchanged in market transactions with the underlying purpose of generating monetary profit for the capitalist (Marx, 1976: 163). Although the sub-sector of the public services pertinent to this thesis, the youth justice sector, is defined under Gough's (1979) categorisation as a non-marketed service, not producing goods or services to be sold, as with all service sector work or unproductive labour, it follows in practice the same line of labour-exchanges as that of traditional manufacturing production (Braverman, 1998: 252). From the

viewpoint of an employee, it should be noted that, as part of a capitalist labour market, people are legally entitled to wilfully enter an employment contract in order to sell their labour for financial remuneration, a contract in which they are equally permissible to leave (Ironside and Seifert, 2000: 9). However, economic necessities in a capitalist society tend to obligate the employee to seek to maintain work in the compulsion of securing a means to a livelihood (Braverman, 1998: 47) and, therefore, remain bound by the terms of their contract.

The contract itself, as a way of regulating the labour process, does lay down explicit terms of employment but, in other respects, when considering implied rules is indeterminate by nature. Explicit terms may include a definitive measure of holiday entitlements, hours of work and rights to trade union representation; however in most cases the amount and quality of work performed is implied, therefore open to subjection and indeterminate (Wilton, 2011: 33). As a result, rather than a definitive quantity of labour purchased, the employer is sold the concealed labour-power of a worker and this, from a worker's perspective, embodies the social relations of production, "the relations of subordination to authority and exploitation" (Braverman, 1998: 280). From a Marxist perspective an employer will pursue "absolute control" (Burchill, 2008: 5) as a means of maximising production from a worker's labour-power which they purchase, the manner in which that is attempted within general production and also the public services will now be discussed.

In traditional manufacturing production Marx explained that divisions of labour are a means of creating surplus-value and converting capital into "social wealth" at the expense of the worker (Marx, 1976: 486). Social wealth is a term used to illustrate

how capitalism depicts the collective produce of specialised workers, categorised by the division of labour within a working cluster or "single mechanism" (ibid: 486). The chief criticism of this levelled by Marx was an objection to the form of work regulation it subsequently engenders. A worker who possesses a great understanding of a particular trade or craft may be seen to act inappropriately in the eyes of the capitalist overseeing the working cluster by expressing individual creativity and craftsmanship as this is not the approved mode of working. Such actions would, therefore, be deemed damaging to the collective mechanism of the labour process whereby each worker is restricted to their own particular facet of production whilst acting under the associated workplace constraints (ibid: 490).

Central to the above argument from Marx is the notion that a capitalist would engage in task routinisation in the production process, which results in a de-skilling of the labour process. These are prime features behind the logic of Taylor's scientific management which, despite the name and intention, is not a true science but simply a set of assumptions with an underlying capitalist outlook regarding the conditions of production. Based on a premise that antagonistic social relations are inescapable in the worker/employer relationship, scientific management, rather than confronting the cause of this, suggests a method to which labour can be adapted to meet the needs of capital. Hence not being representative of science, "but as the representative of management masquerading in the trappings of science" (Braverman, 1998: 59).

Braverman (1998) asserts it to be impossible to overstate the importance of scientific management in shaping all institutions of capitalist society which command the labour process (ibid: 60), supported by Bach and Kessler's (2012:

48) view of a variant of scientific management presenting itself in the contemporary public sector workplace. Essentially, the goal of scientific management, rather than the affirmation of the best way to work, was an attempted solution of how to best control alienated labour, which is to say "labour power that is bought and sold" (Braverman, 1998: 62). Taylor based scientific management on a set of principles, firstly to reduce the discretion of workers to improvise and engage their skills to control the pace of work unbeknown to management, as this increases a worker's control of the labour process. For this to happen it is the requirement of management to collect sufficient information to ascertain the time that workplace tasks should take in the speediest form, thus managers can then dictate with authority the amount of work an employee should perform by prescribing the best techniques and enforcing them. A feature Braverman (1998) termed, "dissociation of the labour process from the skills of the workers" (ibid: 78).

Following this, the goal of scientific management is quintessentially disposed to removing a worker's need to think in the act of production. Based on the principle that human labour has an inherent ability to pre-conceive the process of executing their craft to create a desired outcome from start to finish, there is a need for management to separate "conception from execution" (ibid: 78). Without doing so there is no known way to enforce either the prescribed methodological efficiency or the pace of work desired by managers. To achieve this management is said to drip-feed information to workers, not explaining the full extent of their knowledge as to their preferred mode of production but in the form of simplified tasks, ruled by simplistic instructions, which the worker should duly undertake and follow unthinkingly. In what is argued as a de-humanising procedure (ibid: 78-8), workers

are organised into distinct divisions of labour within the workplace, each regulated separately and detached from the overall process of production, whereby specialist managers "control each step of the labour process and its mode of execution" (ibid: 82).

The salience of scientific management, to this thesis, is in reference to the labour process when applied to the public services and that the aforementioned notion that scientific management, or a variant of it, presents itself in the employment relationship of contemporary state sector employment. Whilst scientific management has traditionally been associated with industrial capitalism, the previous chapter discussed its influence on New Labour's modernisation reforms. In discussing the target culture of these reforms, an element of deskilling and the establishment of more routine work practices were noted features (Bach and Kessler, 2012: 165). With the same underpinning unitarist ideology as scientific management, New Labour's agenda for New Public Management had the fundamental belief that management, rather than public sector professionals, know how to best engender improvements in performance delivery with a central focus on efficiency or speed of production (Worrall *et al,* 2009: 124). This forms the theoretical link between the prescription of best practice by management in terms of completing the work carried out by public sector employees and the "dissociation of the labour process from the skills of the workers" rendered by scientific management (Braverman, 1998: 78).

Furthermore, the mode by which task routinisation is regulated suggests Taylorism as the key driver behind New Public Management under New Labour's reforms. This is to propose that the chief methods of achieving the more routine practices,

associated with Taylorist techniques, are task fragmentation and work measurement (Rose, 1988: 26), to which distinct parallels can be drawn to the contemporary public sector workplace. Written in the early years of New Labour's governmental reign, a policy area that Martinez Lucio and Mackenzie (1999: 165) argued as highly visible in the continuation from Conservative governments through to New Labour is the obsession with measurements, which will be a key theme running through this discussion. Strikingly, Martinez Lucio and Mackenzie (1999) made explicit links to performance measurements and Taylorism, citing that employment in the public services appeared to have become "increasingly routine and controlled, with the execution of work separate from its conception" (ibid: 165). Before focus shifts to arguments surrounding New Labour's modernisation reforms and the progression of neo-Taylorist management techniques that are argued to underpin them, the context in which New Labour assumed power from successive Conservative governments will now be explored in greater depth.

In their documentation of public sector employee relations and the developments that post-dated the arrival of the 1979 Conservative government, Martinez Lucio and Mackenzie (1999) pointed towards the greater fragmentation of the workforce and the "way new elites are emerging within it who may exploit performance for their own personal gain", such as increased political intervention in determining working practices, often for political gain. This was seen to occur even in highly unionised workforces (ibid: 165). They cite Total Quality Management (TQM) as influential in the restructuring of the public services by the Conservative's in the mid 1980's, a clear engagement with private sector management techniques. The rhetoric behind TQM is one that advocates the sanctity of the customer, pursuing managerial commitment and leadership, providing a voice for the customer

towards whom the noted performance measurements would be geared (ibid: 158). However, the underlying motives when applied to the public services were argued to be different, the associated management techniques were seen to adjust employee behaviour and undermine the public sector ethic, while the new managerial language of a customer-focussed regime led the way for more restrictive work practices (ibid: 158). Many occupational groups working in the public service at the time were argued to have viewed the resultant practices as obstructive towards improving the genuine quality of services, with these groups having their own views about how "public services should be managed in the public interest" (Kirkpatrick and Martinez Lucio, 1995: 2).

Essentially the ideology behind the engagement with TQM was one of governmental control over the public sector labour process, invoking the needs of the customer to legitimise their actions, to strengthen their position in relations with trade unions and justify alterations of work practices to employees and control costs. The notion of cost reductions, despite a growing demand for the public services (ibid: 157-158), gives a clear indication that a process of work intensification would take place and thus a requirement to extract surplus labour from employees, executed through managerial control techniques. At the time of writing, Martinez Lucio and Mackenzie (1999) were clear on one thing, the advent of the New Labour government's public sector policies and discourse had assimilated "the culture of blame, the interest in performance monitoring and the use of indicators to increase work related effort levels" (ibid: 166). How this played in out in the ensuing New Labour years will now be discussed in greater detail with particular emphasis on the advancement of neo-Taylorist work arrangements which came to be implemented under their modernisation agenda.

According to Hewson (2002: 557), the modernisation agenda of New Labour was based on an assumption that a strengthening of the process of measurement, calculation and heightened control over the activity of workers should be used to manage the public services in a more effective manner (ibid: 557). This resulted in the public sector workforce being hit by a deluge of performance indicators and performance appraisals and inspections (Kurunmaki and Miller, 2006: 97); with managerial, measurements and planning used to provide an administrative base for the performance indicators and target setting (Mwita, 2000: 19). This again points to a Taylorist approach to public sector management, with management having the supposed necessary information to dictate the methods of practice and amounts of work needed to be performed in order to denote their conception of effective performance.

The effects of imposing Taylorist work processes in public service workplaces, which is to control alienated labour (Braverman, 1998: 62), can potentially manifest in the feelings of employees differently than in their counterparts bound to the subservience of industrial capitalism. There has been a long-standing concept of a 'public service ethic', attributing a normative foundation for a public service employee to desire to serve the public interest, essentially as an altruistic behavioural trait which exists even when the construct of what the public interest entails is forged by the individual subjections and perception of any given employee (Perry and Recascino Wise, 1990: 369). The existence of the 'public service ethic' was supported by Marsden *et al* (2000) who found that, even in cases of considerable tensions in the employment relationship in the public services, through unpopular performance related pay schemes that have been operated in parts of the public sector, commitment remained high. This was due to

a belief "one's work was contributing to an important public service" (Marsden *et al*, 2000: 7), despite employees not feeling financial remuneration from schemes reflected their level of commitment of good performance (ibid: 12). Therefore, Marquand (2005: 3) argues that given the high commitment, experience, expertise and training associated with many public service professionals, the notion that management is best placed to prescribe defined work practices undermines the 'public service ethic', implying it is little more than a con, a self-serving declaration used by public service professionals to amplify their power in the labour market (ibid: 3). From this, the importance of heightened management control tactics to undermine the normative identity that professionals may have to the public service ethic in order to enforce Taylorist techniques becomes paramount, as this explains the need for power-based and coercive performance management techniques which Worrall *et al* (2009) argue have proliferated public sector workplaces .

The relevance of the suggested public service ethic to this thesis will become clear in the following chapters, particularly in the sub-sector specific debates about the workings of YOTs, in which Field (2007: 320) claims practitioners display strong "underlying professional values" associated with their respective trades (ibid: 320), and which are argued to reflect distinctive practice cultures (Muncie, 2005: 54). It is argued that such subject positions of public service professionals emerge when individuals reflect on their self-identity in conjunction with the subjective forces of New Public Management, which are sometimes contradictory. According to Thomas and Davies (2005: 690):

> *"It is the ambiguity and tensions that arise from this incoherence, together with an individual's self-reflective understandings, that provide both the*

stimulus and space for political contest over meanings and identities" (ibid: 690).

The relationship this has to powerlessness, through Blauner's (1964: 16) categorisations of "the separation from the ownership of the means of production and the finished product" and "the inability to influence general management policies" (ibid: 16), along with ensuing debates of normlessness and self-estrangement will become clear as the thesis progresses.

In returning the debate to the theme of management control over the labour process with regard to New Public Management, attention can be focussed in greater detail to the forms of management coercion used to generate control. The notion of accountability, as mentioned in the previous chapter, has been argued by Gintis (1976: 47) to be a coercive technique to neutralise "team centered solidarity", which signifies horizontal worker solidarity influencing workplace behaviour (ibid: 47). Increased accountability is, therefore, favourable from the outlook of management, as it can further individualise relations with workers to increase management power in the employment relationship (Edwards, 2003: 24). Consequently, New Labour's modernisation reforms can be argued to have displayed a deliberate attempt to illicit control of the labour process through the individualised HR practices associated with performance management and accountability (Bach and Kessler, 2012: 165-166).

These arguments and critiques of the public sector modernisation reforms may portray an image of control seemingly devolved from central government onto local authorities and the managers operating the public service within the local government context. However, Bach and Winchester (2003: 210) argue whilst this

may have been extolled in rhetoric, it was not the case in reality. Worrall *et al* (2009: 123) contend that "when it comes to the crunch", central government would discard the subterfuge of devolved decision making, an illusionary impression of local solutions, and firmly take over "the operational reins" (ibid: 123). In addition, there is clear evidence of central government control tactics by way of publishing performance tables and the implementation of "standards regulator bodies" (Bach and Kessler, 2012: 169), as alluded to in the previous chapter. Hence the New Labour government, along with an increased emphasis on the use of performance indicators and Taylorist management techniques, continued the Conservative policy of establishing central government control over public sector employment relations.

Associated with the operations of the standards regulator bodies, which in the youth justice sector would refer to the Youth Justice Board (YJB), was an apparent "audit explosion" (Clarke and Newman, 1997: 80), a process which has largely shaped public sector performance management approaches (Worrall *et al,* 2009: 125). Similar to the Conservative government's adoption of TQM techniques, the burdensome audit and inspection regimes of New Labour according to Worrall *et al* (2009) did not, in practice, raise the standards of public sector delivery.

As explained by Braverman (1998: 288), in manufacturing sectors measuring performance, particularly given the propensity for standardised routine tasks, may seemingly be a simple process as performance can be defined by tangible outputs. However, when providing a service, outputs cannot be quantified by tangibility as no material commodity is produced, therefore in service industries performance management practices employ a subjective process whereby

productivity is measured from labour which, essentially, has no productivity (ibid: 288). This makes performance management problematic in certain occupations, not least the public services, supported by Marsden and French's (1998) survey conducted across a variety of public service agencies which found "large numbers of staff who believe the nature of their work is hard to measure" (Marsden and French, 1998: 9). Given the highly politicised nature of the public services, the performance measures chosen can be swayed to suit ideologies and leaves the process open to manipulation for means of gaining favour with the electorate (Bach and Kessler, 2012: 169).

Having previously addressed the notion of public sector managers becoming fixated with government performance targets, which omit potentially crucial aspects of care and provision to service users (Worrall *et al*, 2009: 123), it is argued that that New Labour's increased preoccupation with performance management regulation had ulterior motives other than raising delivery standards (ibid: 123). Worrall *et al* (2009) explain an assumption that comparisons of standardised measures between public service providers would raise output or throughput (Shaoul, 1999 cited in ibid: 125) with a primary focus on the quantity of service performed given the available resources, as opposed to actual ground level quality. Additionally, they cite Givan (2005), who suggested a sharp contrast in the ideals of public service professionals and the indicators used to measure performance with practitioners showing an unwillingness to discard their own ideals, which enable them to perform towards at their highest possible level, while also attempting to hit the targets against which they are officially measured (Givan, 2005 cited in ibid: 125).

As the views of front-line practitioners were not taken into account in the formation of performance indicators and, despite the rhetoric, nor were those of service users, a system has been created which solely reflects the interests of government ministers, and the performance management regime acts as a coercive power to assert them. This means it is central government that determines what is viewed as good or bad performance which they re-inforce through funding streams to reward success and punish failure. Perhaps, more importantly, the measurements used to decide the quality of performance are scorned by many public service practitioners. In terms of rhetoric, HRM techniques proclaim the need for superior employment relations to bring about high quality public service delivery. However, those used in the context of public sector managerialism have created conflictual relations whereby the locus of control as to "pace, volume and quality of tasks are determined" has shifted from professionals to managers (ibid: 126), which supports the argument that the neo-liberalism that has underpinned New Labour's modernisation agenda "leads directly towards Taylorism" (Ironside and Seifert, 2004: 68). Thus, the use of performance monitoring regimes that do not abide with the "professionally-determined standards, behavioural norms, judgements and value systems" of the professionals upon whom they are imposed indicates a degradation of work in the public services (Worrall *et al*, 2009: 127).

The overall effect of the reforms on public sector employees has been argued to cause a deterioration in the quality of their working lives, explained by factors including increased workloads, the sense of job insecurity, lessened resources due to cost-minimisation, poor job design, poor communication and the use of unsuitable, in vogue, private sector initiatives (Vickers, 2006: 69). It has been argued that genuine progress will only be made when those who deliver the public

services are responsible for instigating practice rather than being compliant towards policy (Worrall *et al*, 2009: 132), which is degrading the working lives of those delivering services and having significant consequences on those in receipt of them (Ironside and Seifert, 2004: 68).

3.6 Emerging Themes from Austerity

Possibly the foremost themes to transpire in the public sector from the austerity measures implemented following the election of the Coalition government are those around employment reductions. According to Bach and Stroleny (2013: 9), the reductions which have affected the UK public sector are "unprecedented in their severity" (ibid: 9). Along with redundancies on a voluntary basis or through early retirement schemes, a process of mandatory redundancies was also incorporated into staffing reduction, traditionally rare in the public sector, with the period between 2008 and 2013 seeing job losses "in excess of 14 percent" in local government and the civil service (ibid: 9).

The importance of a long established New Public Management model in the public sector, detonated by a powerful managerial prerogative and the use of coercive performance to management systems to augment control of the labour process (Bach and Kessler, 2012: 165-166), is the marked strengthening of management authority. This lessened the scope for public service professional and their representatives to "curtail central government policy measures" (Bach and Stroleny, 2013: 4) designed to bring about a quantitative reduction in staffing and wages. In addition, trade unions in the public services have faced distinct barriers in mounting an effective challenge to the austerity drive.

Firstly, Bach and Stroleny (2013) argue that legal restrictions from the ongoing presence of employment legislation, which constrains the capacity of wider trade union mobilisation against central government, would deem a general strike illegal. Secondly, there is a general acceptance that public service workers have grown fearful of industrial action due to the climate of squeezed living standards and public sector job losses (ibid: 11-12), which has continued to gain a considerable media profile (The Telegraph, 2014). Thirdly, there is a degree of reluctant acquiescence from union members that the fiscal position is inescapable with substantial lack of belief over the extent to which trade unions can realistic alter government policy (Bach and Stroleny, 2013: 12). The final barrier of trade union resistance to austerity is a noted difficulty in trade unions securing sufficient shopfloor representatives in the public services to effectively organise workers and generate a sense of collective grievance to use against employers (ibid: 12). The overall context of public sector employment relations at the time of research was one of the Coalition government continuing the modernisation reforms inherited from New Labour to maintain control of the labour process through management authority and performance monitoring, while building upon and redirecting them in their favour to bring about large-scale reductions in employment (ibid: 12).

Albeit, it is necessary to give a cautionary note, in reference to the model employer debate, not to take the public sector reforms of the post-1979 Conservative and New Labour governments in isolation from the wider historical context of the state as an employer (Coffey and Thornley, 2009: 87). Given Miliband's (1969: 81) argument that the state has regularly sought to implement policy with the purpose of devaluing the terms and conditioners of wage earners, instead being designed to favour employers (ibid: 81), there is little question that the degradation of work

has been a long-standing feature of public sector employment. However, providing a detailed backdrop of the salient arguments surrounding the contemporary public sector as a contextual basis for empirical research, gives an in-depth explanation of the causes contributing to the depreciation of staff morale in public service workers (Massey and Pyper, 2005: 59).

3.7 Conclusion

In summary, this chapter provided a broad overview of labour process theory using Marxian arguments drawing on use-value and exchange-value, explaining how the capitalist system adapts the broad process of creating things with an inherent use to create an object or services with monetary value in exchange relations, as in the price of a commodity (Marx, 1976: 163). The aim for the capitalist would therefore be the creation of surplus-value in the commodity produced as this would generate profit for the capitalist; in order to do so the capitalist would need to extract surplus labour from those whose labour-power is purchased (ibid: 325). Whilst Marxian text traditionally associated this process with industrial capitalism and agricultural work, it was argued how, in a modern day setting, the capitalist labour process also applies to service sector work as those employed in a service sector trade are still subject to the same market-driven labour exchange with employers as those in manufacturing or agricultural industries (Braverman, 1998: 284).

Braverman (1998) nullified the distinction between productive and unproductive labour, the latter being equated to Gough's (1979: 10) concept of "non-marketed" sectors of the public service (ibid: 10), owing to the changing economic face of modern capitalism, which gave rise to a proliferation of service sector work which

Marx had no means to anticipate (Braverman, 1998: 292). It was explained how the process of measuring production occurs where no tangible production exists, as service-sector organisations use performance measurements as a means of creating surplus value for the service by attempting to quantify the amount of service performed (ibid: 287-288). Despite its widespread use in the non-marketed sectors of the public sectors, implemented through neo-Taylorist management techniques associated with New Labour's modernisation agenda (Worrall *et al,* 2009: 124), measuring performance in such a workplace context was agued to be problematic.

The Neo-Taylorist management practices developed were suggested to have been driven by a government imperative to centralise control of the public sector labour process (ibid: 123) in a similar vein to the motives of the preceding Conservative government's engagement with TQM (Martinez Lucio and Mackenzie, 1999: 157-159). The result of New Labour's reforms created a degradation of work with increased task routinisation, increased workloads and intensive performance monitoring systems and targets which do not corroborate with the "professionally-determined standards, behavioural norms, judgements and value systems" of those upon whom they are imposed (Worrall *et al*, 2009: 127).

As a result, it was argued that the performance management regimes of New Labour were not reflected in the improved delivery of service provisions, but instead heightened management authority and sacrificed service quality by primarily focussing on an increased quantity of provisions given the resources available (Ibid: 125). Discussion then shifted towards the Coalition government

and the impact of austerity, with the modernisations reforms of New Labour being maintained and built upon, which provided a platform for a quantitative reduction in staffing and wages in the public sector. Despite the severity of the public sector cuts (Bach and Stroleny, 2013: 9), public sector professionals and trade unions are constrained in their resistance to austerity reforms, in light of existing employment legislation, a membership which has become fearful of industrial action, an acceptance that trade unions and their members are unlikely to influence governmental policy to any large degree and a lack of workplace representation which is able to organise workers collectively against employers (ibid: 11-12).

Again it is important to acknowledge the larger-historical context of state sector employment to avoid the assumption that the 1979 Conservative government instigated a radical ideological change in the role of state, representing a dislocation from the state's position as a previously good employer (Coffey and Thornley, 2009: 87). Instead it is prudent to suggest changes in the work processes of the public sector as representing the state capitalising on the political and economic climates of the time. Thus, rather than further degrading the labour process of public service professionals by way of an ideological departure, it is better to consider contemporary reforms as a continuation of unfavourable state policies towards public sector employees.

The study now moves on to potential ways alienated labour can be identified in the capitalist labour process, with reference to the mechanisms which scientific management uses to control alienated labour (Braverman, 1998: 62) and how this reveals itself in the perceptions of workers. As this chapter has contended that all

labour which is bought and sold is, indeed, alienated (ibid: 62), this will form a basis to critique past studies of alienation that display a theoretical divergence from a Marxist perspective in order to discuss the methods in which this thesis employs a broader frame of analysis to include wider economic and structural conditions.

Chapter 4

Alienation

4.1 Introduction

The thesis will now seek to develop past models used in studying alienation and adapt them to form a wide analytical sphere, accounting for criticisms of previous studies into the concept. Although prior attempts to research alienation have supplied a useful base to categorise different ways in which the concept can be applied to workplace settings in the observable context, they will be argued as limited in scope from a Marxist perspective. These limitations equate not only to theory but also to the methodological approaches used to obtain the research findings from which conclusions were made. As a result this chapter will provide a framework to bridge the gap between prior psychological models, often accused of superficial findings based on a reliance of questionnaire techniques, to a broader investigative model. This will not only ascertain worker experiences of, and responses to, forms of alienation but apply them to understand how these responses can be used to inform the nature of the capitalist system. Thus, the framework which is developed will contribute to the field of study by incorporating debates drawn from the political economy of a capitalist democracy and labour process theory, enabling a more robust Marxist analytical framework.

Discussion will begin by examining the origins of the concept dating to back to the debates of Hegel and Marx in the 19th Century, before considering the renewed interest in discussions of alienation from the mid-20th Century onwards. The chapter will examine the ways organisational theorists have come to conceptualise alienation in somewhat contentious fashions, providing a view of alienation as

restricted to the closed context of a workplace. The broader model utilised in this thesis will allow for a wider frame of reference as to how the advancement of capitalism has fuelled the manifestation of indications of alienated labour. The chapter will also unpick the relevance of the model to state sector employment and, when appropriate, the youth justice sector. This will open up debates in the chapter as to the industrially specific context of YOTs within which practitioners operate and relate the factors which may intensify alienation within this sub-sector.

4.2 Historical Context

The existence of alienation as a concept is known to pre-date capitalism, and therefore the earliest work of Hegel or Marx, as it was initially conceived in the context of organised religion (Mandel, 1970: 14). Indeed due to its ancient origins, which are suggested to be "almost as old as organized religion itself" (ibid: 14), this chapter will circumvent the classical theological debates and begin discussions at the point when the concept became grounded by labour theory. Though eventually criticised by Marx, along with subsequent theorists over the course of history (Baxter, 1982: 126), it was Hegel who initially made this theoretical leap. In his time Hegel was renowned as one of the foremost philosophers of his day and by formulating early analytical frameworks of alienated labour his arguments symbolised an important progression in the field of philosophy (Mandel, 1970: 15).

Hegel theorised that the alienation of human labour exists via two processes (ibid. p15) with the first of these claiming that economic resources would never be able to match human needs. Consequently, it was the predetermined fate of many people in society to expend great effort at work yet still lack sufficient remuneration

to meet their basic needs. This gave a somewhat bleak outlook as it suggested that material resources could not be distributed across humanity to adequately meet human needs and desires (ibid: 15). Hegel's second qualification of alienation was that humans have the inherent ability to externalise a conceptual vision of the product which their labour subsequently creates. To this end "every man who works, who produces something, really produces in his work an idea which he initially had in his head" (ibid: 15). This facet of Hegel's theory was one which Marx agreed as true and was something which sets human labour apart from species which rely on purely animalistic instincts. Indeed this is noted in Marxian text where he cites stories of Robinson Crusoe by way of explanation. On being shipwrecked, Marx described how Crusoe needed to expend various forms of useful labour simply to satisfy his human needs of survival. The use of Robinson Crusoe as an example was a means to externalise the performance of human labour from the context of the social relations present in capitalist production modes, as explained in the following passage:

> *"Despite the diversity of his productive functions, he knows that they are only different forms of activity of one and the same Robinson, hence only different modes of human labour. Necessity itself compels him to divide his time with precision between his different functions. Whether one function occupies a greater space in his total activity than another depends on the magnitude of the difficulties to be overcome in attaining the useful affect aimed at. Our friend Robinson Crusoe learns by this experience, and having saved a watch, ledger, ink and pen from the shipwreck, he soon begins, like a good Englishman, to keep a set of books" (Marx, 1976: 169-170).*

Marx continued to explain that the content of these books catalogued an itinerary of the useful items he possessed, the various labour functions that produced them and the quantities of labour-time they cost to produce. To clarify the point of his endeavours we can see that Robinson Crusoe conceptualised the tools and functions necessary to maintain his survival before exercising his labour-power to produce them (ibid: 170), essentially producing in his work "an idea which he initially had in his head" (Mandel, 1970: 15). However, despite Marx's depiction of human labour's ability for pre-conceived thought seeming to support the work of Hegel, we can also see how it was used as a tool of disagreement. This becomes evident when analysing Hegel's interpretation of the externalisation of human labour in which he suggested that the process in which a person should express an idea they have initially conceived in thought, unavoidably separates them from the product of that labour. As described by Mandel: "Anything we project out of ourselves, anything we fabricate, anything we produce, we project out of our body and it becomes separate from us" (ibid: 16). This is a means to suggest that once a person's labour has produced the object in question, that product of labour is no longer simply an idea conceived by human brain-power but something which has since separated from the person whose labour produced it and thus becomes alienated from that labour. The connotations of Hegel's belief have been abridged by Mandel (1970) in the following quote:

"every and any kind of labour is alienated labour because in any society under any conditions men will always be always be condemned to become separated from the products of their labour" (ibid: 16).

Marx contested this assumption on the basis that humans were not inevitably separated from the products of their labour by the act of production alone, but instead through the societal interactions in which the labour is expended. When considering a "society of commodity producers" (Marx, 1976: 172), Marx suggested the social relations which dictate the labour process and production revolve around the fact that "they treat their products as commodities, hence as values" (ibid: 172). The result of this, in a capitalist society, is that the producers of commodities play a subordinate role to the bourgeoisie, or employers, for whom their labour power is purchased to accumulate surplus-value (ibid: 172). Consequently, separation of labour transpires because production occurs under a socially oppressive force and the product of one's labour is consumed by an exploitative and suppressive mechanism (Mandel, 1970: 16).

This recalls the notion that to fully understand the concept of alienation we must first give thought to the contrasting state, which in this case is a state of un-alienated life (Baxter, 1982: 3). When considering the story of Robinson Crusoe, as Marx pointed out, the products he created from labour are "objects that form his self-created wealth" (Marx, 1976: 170). Marx seemingly uses this analogy to mock the prominent political economists of the day, which he describes as being "fond" of using Robinson Crusoe stories in their work. Marx uses the stories of Robinson Crusoe, which he associates as the favoured tales of bourgeoisie economics, to draw a clear contrast with production in capitalist systems to that of its natural state, "the natural form of labour" (ibid: 170). Here, in the case of Robinson Crusoe, the value of labour is seen purely in its immediate and natural form, that which will sustain and enrich life. Divergently, in a system based on commodity production the value of a labour's produce is not defined by its immediate use-

value but as a commodity, therefore the object of labour takes on a fantastical identity and is assigned a somewhat illusionary value (ibid: 170). By this time the commodity has been rendered totally devoid of the human labour from which it was produced and its ownership now lies squarely with the capitalist, who uses it through market-based transactions to acquire profit.

The first part of Hegel's argument, as described earlier in this section, was also contradicted by Marx. This refers to the notion that available economic resources could never satisfy the collective needs of humankind (Mandel, 1970: 15); however Marx negated this theory on the grounds of historical analysis. His argument suggested that the discrepancy between needs and material resources, the tension between needs and labour, is limited by and conditioned by history. The collective needs of society were not therefore destined to increase in limitless fashion and nor should the collective labour of human kind fall short of this need, essentially the problem lay with the unevenness of resource distribution (ibid: 16).

Marx's critiques of Hegel have come to be renowned in critical thinking and have important implications. Marx maintains that the alienation of labour is not an inherent and unavoidable happening during the act of production and, therefore, humankind need not be burdened by the hardship it creates. Crucially, this logic suggests that alienation of labour is not an inevitable and perpetual failing of society but one that is present due to "specific forms of social and economic organization" (Mandel, 1970: 17), that is those of capitalist systems. Marx therefore "transforms Hegel's notion of alienated labour from an eternal anthropological notion into a transitory historical notion" (ibid: 17). As previously mentioned, the transcripts of Hegel and particularly Marx spawned extensive

consideration and debate which have spanned across the prevailing years with a notable upsurge in interest emanating from the mid-20th Century (Baxter, 1982: 1-2). This chapter will now examine how organisational and social theorists have since applied the theories of alienation to workplace scenarios.

4.3 Alienated Labour

Many theorists have sought to explain the occurrence of alienation at work and this has resulted in what can be seen as of hotchpotch of theoretical strands found within an unwieldy mass of literature (Baxter, 1982: 1-2). In consequence, this section will consider some of the most historically significant notions of alienation at work and, at times, cast a critical eye over any potential inadequacies of each one's definition. In the above section it was noted that, according to Marx, labour is alienated due to the labour process in capitalist systems in which the commoditisation of the products of human labour is a constituent feature (Marx, 1976: 172). This suggests that all labour expended under such conditions is subjected to underlying social and economic structures found within capitalist economies, which cause the alienation of labour as an objective consequence. However, though in agreement with this premise, Braverman (1998) argues that indications of alienation in the labour process become apparent through workers expressing dissatisfaction with their jobs.

It should be noted that a crucial feature of Braverman's (1998: 20) argument, from a Marxist perspective, was that the study of dissatisfaction should not be constrained by simplicity. This refers to Blauner's (1964: 177) statement that the average worker is able to "make an adjustment to a job which from the standpoint of an intellectual appears to be the epitome of tedium". In directly responding to

this statement, Braverman (1998) sees this line of reasoning as the acceptance that modern labour processes are degraded; to which he adds:

"the sociologist shares this foreknowledge with management, with whom he also shares the conviction that this organisation of the labour process is necessary and inevitable" (Braverman, 1998: 20).

The importance of Braverman's (1998) argument is to suggest that the function of industrial sociological theory which it shares with management and personal administration, or more recently HRM, then becomes the evaluation not of the nature of work but the extent of a worker's adjustment to it (ibid: 20). As a result, previous studies have not challenged the inherent degradation of work as a consequence of the capitalist labour process and have instead given sole focus to "the reaction of the worker to it" (ibid: 20). Thus in researching the concept, Braverman (1998: 20) guards against the ineffectual results of what he terms "questionnaire-sociology" as this holds but a cursory glimpse into the study of alienation due to its mechanistic and withdrawn nature. This has been used as a clear criticism of Blauner's (1964) research, notably by Grint (2005) who also challenged the credibility of the sources used, particularly the reliance on secondary data in forming conclusions from surveys which originally "were gathered for other purposes" (Grint, 2005: 286) and focussed on questions of job satisfaction. Grint (2005) argued that questions of satisfaction are notoriously problematic as they "depend on transient economic and social conditions" (ibid: 286).

In overcoming such shortfalls in cohesively understanding a class or part of a class, one must consider the resilience of capitalism and the class consciousness

to which it imparts. Firstly, Braverman (1998: 20) uses the term "absolute expression" of class consciousness whereby the attitudes of a class toward its position in society is ubiquitous and inherent. His subsequent notion, "long-term relative expression", concerns the gradual change of "traditions, experiences, education and organisation of the class". Thirdly, he characterises its "short-term relative expression" in which changing circumstances play out dynamically and hence the emotions and sentiments of those affected by the changes in circumstances are, in tandem, reflected by changing "periods of stress and conflict, almost from day to day" (Braverman, 1998: 20).

The three aforementioned narratives of class consciousness are argued to be related as the historical degradation of work in the capitalist labour process is pervasive. Yet, in the long-term it is exposed to gradual modification, and the changes in sentiment by those afflicted express the ingredients of class attitudes which are engrained within the organisation of work at the core of the labour process. These attitudes may be concealed below the surface but are argued to be of an inexhaustible pool (ibid: 20). The importance of this, with regards to the thesis, is to acknowledge the limitations, from a Marxist perspective, when researching alienation, while precluding potential shortcomings. As will be explained further in the methodology, researching from a perspective of prior-acquaintance of the history of a certain group of employees and an acknowledgment of the circumstances which affect them is considered crucial to gain a meaningful understanding of worker attitudes, along with forming "assessments from intimate contact and detailed information" to avoid superficial findings (ibid: 21). Furthermore, in analysing the data retrieved, as will become apparent, the context in which feelings were conveyed by respondents must be

considered in the wider historical accounts of the political economy when considering the nature of the work itself, combined with the reaction of the workers to it and how this came to be expressed. The chapter will now examine the models, within existing literature, which have attempted to provide a robust analytical framework in the study of alienation.

4.4 Theoretical Models of Alienation

Many of the organisational theorists of the 20th Century seemed to be influenced to a larger degree by the theories of Hegel rather than a direct affinity to Marx's work (Baxter, 1982: 74). For example, the theory constructed by Melvin Seeman explained alienation from a social-psychological level, a clear departure from the writings of Marx which dealt with social processes as opposed to psychological perspectives (Israel, 1971: 208). Seeman's (1959) theory has been argued to be closely associated with Hegel's definition of alienation as it adopts what Baxter (1982: 70) describes as a "closed form" and is based within a specific social system, that is the organisation in which a person is employed (Israel, 1971: 208). As discussed in the prior sub-section, a Marxist critique of this theory in relation to alienated labour suggests that it overlooks the larger debates surrounding the organisation of work in a capitalist system without questioning the principle of its necessity. Baxter (1982) contended that this contributed to Seeman's inability to "comprehend the complex interactions and forces present in the organisational system and the world generally" (Baxter, 1982: 88). This was caused by Seeman's concern with cataloguing individual psychological experiences, which caused him to overlook the social processes that were integrated within them (ibid: 88). Seeman initially used a series of measurements to contextualise work alienation

when formulating his theory in 1959, to which revisions were made in 1972 (ibid: 72).

Although the basis of Seeman's theory was to establish a set of measuring criteria for alienation thereby attempting to overcome the vagaries of many prior suppositions (ibid: 72), the theory is seen as problematic due to its unsatisfactory explanations as to how these measurements came to be chosen (Israel, 1971: 213). This theoretical problem remained unresolved even following the later revision of his theory and has been cited as a critical factor undermining the validity of Seeman's work (Baxter, 1982: 72). The aforementioned categories which underpinned the theory were professed to epitomise a structured Marxian representation of alienation which Seeman interpreted as the "engagement in work which is not intrinsically rewarding" (Seeman, 1971 cited in ibid: 73). Despite this intention, a Marxist perspective suggests Seeman's theory to be oversimplified largely on the grounds of its general disregard for the social processes which cause alienated labour, and the fixation with psychological measurements. Consequently, it is argued that Seeman likely started with a psychology-based theoretical outlook and then attempted to tailor the range of meanings associated with alienation within this psychological context (Israel, 1971: 214).

Notwithstanding the theoretical problems associated with Seeman's (1959) work, it has provided an analytical scheme for subsequent research to take place; for example Blauner's (1964) research of American factory workers utilised Seeman's (1959) initial framework (Israel, 1971: 215). Blauner (1964: 16) did not however use this framework rigidly and freely admitted to redefining certain categories to corroborate them more clearly with the specific occupation of his research sample.

As this thesis will follow a method similar to Blauner's (1964) research where the framework was adapted to fit the specific occupations studied, the chapter will now consider the categories used in Blauner's (1964) framework in greater depth and consider any constraints or criticisms that may be applied to it, particularly from a Marxist perspective.

4.5 Blauner's Theoretical Framework

Blauner's (1964) analytical framework for the study of alienation adapted the discussion to fit the industrial situation of his research, an application he believed Seeman's study lacked (ibid: 16). The approach taken in this model, from what Blauner (1964) described as a sociological or social-psychological outlook, was to view alienation as "a quality of personal experiences which results from specific kinds of social arrangements" (ibid: 15). Despite his stated consideration of the "sociotechnical setting of employment" (ibid: 15), Schwalbe (1986) contests that, from a strict theoretical stance, here lies a dissociation from a Marxist perspective. This argument was based on Blauner's (1964) framework failing to challenge the capitalist system itself and not straying farther afield than the specific technological production techniques implemented at each site (Schwalbe, 1986: 21). Thus, the capitalist requirements which compel the use of technology and the arrangements of work were left unquestioned and, as a result, the wider context of the labour process was not fully considered. Indeed, Blauner (1964: 3) stated that at the time of his research:

> "…most social scientists would say that alienation is not a consequence of capitalism per se but of employment in the large-scale organizations and interpersonal bureaucracies that pervade all industrial societies" (ibid: 3).

The above quote displays a departure from a Marxist perspective as, according to Braverman (1998), capitalists find the wide-ranging pliability of human labour as a crucial resource for the realisation of capitalist imperatives, the attainment of surplus-value. As discussed in the previous chapter, this relies on a worker's capacity for surplus labour, defined as the labour-time spent by a worker in the production of surplus-value, which the capitalist seeks to extract by other means than simply prolonging the working day. Braverman (1998: 38) explains the truly distinctive ability of human labour not as the as the capacity to produce a surplus, which could be achieved simply by extending the working day, but instead as human labour's:

"… intelligent and purposive character, which gives it infinite adaptability and which produces the social conditions for enlarging its own productivity, so that its surplus product may be continuously enlarged" (ibid: 38).

The significance of this highlights Blauner's (1964) theoretical disjuncture from a Marxist perspective as Braverman (1998) argues that the distinctive capacity of human labour is its "infinite adaptability", thus as capitalists seek the means to increase the productivity of the labour they have at their disposal, this forms the basis of their work arrangements. As stated, arrangements may be enforcing longer working days, as used in early capitalism, but also employing technology to augment efficiency or increasing the labour intensity with the aim invariably being to maximise the surplus-value of production and seize the maximum profit. However, Braverman (1998) also argued that the "indeterminacy" (ibid: 38) of this distinctive capacity also poses the greatest challenge to capitalists in achieving a surplus as, although a capitalist may purchase its potential, realising the infinite

adaptability of human labour becomes problematic. This is due to numerous factors such as a worker's historical background, the conditions of work, the organisation of labour and the level of supervision over it.

The progression of monopoly capitalism was argued to have made this more acute since technical features of the labour process have become subjugated by social features introduced by capitalists that, in turn, have created new features in the employment relationship. Workers, along with selling their labour power to an employer, also surrender their interest in the labour process, which has become alienated as the responsibility for the labour process has been placed in the hands of the employer. In consequence, the opposing interests of those upon whom the labour process is applied and, conversely, those who direct it, is argued to establish a circumstance of antagonistic relations. Braverman (1998) argues that this necessity of the capitalist to gain control of the labour process is cast in history as "the progressive alienation of the process of production from the worker to the capitalist, it presents itself as the problems of management" (ibid: 40).

The onset of management arose through the development of industrial capitalism when large amounts of workers fell under the employment of a single capitalist. This led to early problems of coordinating production and maintaining the capitalist's control over the labour process. Thus the early role of management was the centralisation of control, be it orchestrating the supply of materials, arranging work schedules, overseeing pay and calculating profit and loss. As certain industries required an amalgamation of various forms of labour thus utilising different tradespeople within production, the considered need for more involved coordination systems grew and, in capitalist industry, this took the form of

management (ibid: 40). As discussed in Chapter 3, this conceptual need for coordination and centralised control led to early innovations of divisions of labour, the sub-division of work into specialist tasks and regulated, limited, activities. This systematic subdivision of labour, with instilled regulated limited tasks, is argued to be unique to capitalism and, despite progressive managerial techniques such as scientific management and human relations, divisions of labour have remained the core feature of capitalist work organisation within its various guises. The importance of this, according to Braverman (1998) is underlined in the following quote:

"… the capitalist mode of production conquers and destroys all other forms of the organization of labour, and with them, all alternatives for the working population." (ibid: 130)

As this, therefore, makes "all other modes of living impossible" (ibid: 131), a fundamental flaw, from a Marxist perspective, is highlighted in Blauner's (1964) framework. That being in reference to the aforementioned notion that capitalism does not create the outcome of alienation "per se" but instead, alienation is in consequence of the employment relationship in large-scale organisations and the "interpersonal bureaucracies that pervade all industrial societies" (Blauner, 1964: 3). In discussing Braverman's (1998) argument that the bureaucracies attached to schemes designed for the organisation of labour are rudimentary to the evolution of the industrial capitalist system, a distinction cannot be made between capitalism and the interpersonal bureaucracies which permeate through industrial societies, as these reflect the elemental feature of capitalism. Thus, Blauner's (1964) framework falls victim to Schwalbe's (1986) criticism that it does not call into

question the essence of capitalism itself and that the labour relations, which expose a worker's subjective concerns and responses to work, are not fully considered relative to the wider imperatives that drive the capitalist labour process.

In acknowledging this limitation of Blauner's (1964) framework, attempts will be made to bridge this theoretical gap when debating theory, conducting field research and analysing interview data. Starting with the concept of "powerlessness", the chapter will now provide an overview of Blauner's (1964) model providing links with debates discussed in Chapters 2 and 3. This will allow discussion of alienation to include state employment and the labour process, which will be expanded on further in the following chapter concerned with the historical debates of the youth justice sector and the role of front-line practitioners in present day YOTs.

4.5.1 Powerlessness

According to Seeman (1959), powerlessness is said to occur when individuals realise they are incapable of influencing their own destiny within the context of the social systems which they compose. This social system may represent a whole community or a social organisation, such as an employer. As Seeman's (1959) definition suggests powerlessness to be "a feeling within a person that the probability that he can influence the satisfaction of his needs by his own acts is very low" (Seeman, 1959 cited in Israel, 1971: 208-209), it can be argued to apply to a variety of settings. To explain this Israel cites two different examples of powerlessness and when powerlessness can be experienced; firstly subordination, whereby a person feels their actions are dictated by others whilst being unable to influence them and, secondly, deskilling. In terms of deskilling the person may not

see themselves as a creative individual but instead experience the feeling of being "a passive object, lacking a will of its own" (ibid: 209).

Seeman (1959) described powerlessness as the notion of alienation "as it originated in the Marxian view of the view of the worker's condition in capitalist society" (Seeman, 1959: 784). Marx's interest in the powerlessness of a worker flowed from his interest in the consequence of alienation in the workplace, such as the degradation of workers into commodities. Seeman (1959: 785) explained that his version of powerlessness neither rejected nor undermined the Marxist assertion that objective conditions in society ordained powerlessness as an inherent outcome. From an analytical viewpoint, he therefore sought to explore "expectancies" (ibid: 784), which is related to where the objective conditions of society met the subjective perceptions of a worker. This was argued to result in an observable dissatisfaction between the levels of control over events workers might desire, and the control over events they would realistically possess given social conditions out of their control (ibid: 784).

From this context he examines the value of control to an individual set against the forces, both known and unbeknown to that person, which constrain it. Hence the basis behind Seeman's (1959) notion of powerlessness was argued as the dislocation between the expectations of controlling a state of affairs compared to an individual's ability to influence them. His stated aim was to limit the applicability of this version of alienation for research purposes to the individual's sense of influence of socio-political events, in terms of that individual's relationship to an organisation (ibid: 785).

His use of 'expectancies' as a strand of empirical analysis provides a potentially weak definition to enable robust research findings, with criticisms of his overall model of alienation being enclosed in a specific social system (Israel, 1971: 208), as evidenced by the aforementioned limitations he chose to apply. However, the noted dislocation between objective conditions, which inevitably cause alienation, and subjective expectations to influence circumstances, uncovers a meaningful research strand which this thesis seeks to develop. This is not in the concept of 'expectancies' per se, which is arguably too restrictive for a study to obtain detailed information, but instead the objectivity of powerlessness set against a worker's subjective perceptions. This theme will be discussed throughout all categories of alienation in the contextual model of this thesis and the broader political economic framework it utilises in comparison to previous studies of workplace alienation.

Blauner's (1964) research analysed powerlessness from the contextual tagline of "Modes of Freedom and Control in Industry" (Blauner, 1964: 16), in which it was argued that should powerlessness refer to one who is dominated rather than self-directed, then the polar opposite would equate to individuals who are in a state of freedom. These people would have the ability to remove themselves from a dominating position and express their creative will to avoid being what was described as a mere "reacting object" (ibid: 16). It is important to emphasise the range of workplace activities that could constitute powerlessness according to Blauner's (1964) theoretical framework which clarified a greater extent to which it could potentially be applied to an industrial setting when compared to Seeman's (1959) interpretation. For example the "possibility of movement in a physical or social sense" could mean freedom to leave a job given the opportunity of other

employment, or simply being able to walk away from a machine without undue coercion (Blauner, 1964: 16). As will now be discussed, Blauner (1964) subsequently identified four key "social questions" in terms of industrial powerlessness. These were categorised as "the separation from the ownership of the means of production and the finished product", "the inability to influence general managerial policies", "the lack of control over conditions of employment" and "the lack of control over the immediate work process" (ibid: 16).

4.5.1.1 The Separation from the Ownership of the Means of Production and the Finished Product

In his discussion of this mode of powerlessness, Blauner (1964) argued that workers in large-scale organisations have surrendered the right of ownership of the finished product through the nature of their employment. Similarly, they do not own the premises of their workplace, the machinery and often the tools they utilise in production, although Blauner (1964) did not consider this to be overtly problematic in the eyes of workers. Relating his argument to Weber's analysis of bureaucracy which suggests that civil servants would only be separated from the means of administration in the same sense that soldiers would be from the means of violence, Blauner (1964) concluded that the factory workers surveyed in his research did not feel deprived through a lack of ownership of machinery.

Allen (2004: 137) argued, from a Marxist perspective, that the dispossession of instruments of production and the exploitation of workers through surplus production were the cornerstone of capitalist economic power (ibid: 137). Thus, further criticism could be levelled at Blauner's (1964) framework for failing to adequately deal with the capitalist system itself. By giving reason for this, it was

argued that, whereas "orthodox Marxism" would see the separation from the means of production as the elementary fact of capitalism invariably causing a worker's alienation from society, this had not transpired to happen. In acknowledging Marxian thought that this was due to historical conditioning of workers by social and political structures (Marx, 1960: 46-48), Blauner (1964) suggested "ownership of powerlessness" to be a constant in modern industry, precluding one to foster expectations of influencing this fact. Despite this, he did admit that it was unknown for certain "whether or not the worker's alienation from ownership unconsciously colours the whole quality of his experience in the factory" (ibid: 17).

It can be argued that the above statement provides a theoretical base to analyse the individual perspectives of a worker fostering hope to influence their ownership of the means of production and the finished product being curtailed by the objective conditions of the capitalist labour process, which naturally negates worker influence. Thus a broader examination of the political and economic structures that affect a worker's control over employment practices, which impact on their subjective expectation to influence the work carried out, can provide a useful insight into the feelings of dissatisfaction that alienation can stimulate. This will be considered alongside the degree of acceptance they display to any such lack of influence garnered from historical conditioning. As will be discussed in ensuing chapters, the industry specific context of YOTs can arguably usher a more candid discussion about this facet of capitalist production than noted in Blauner's (1964) factory setting, when equated to the role of practitioners. This is due to the increasing use of standardised work practices employed in YOTs furthered by the stronghold of New Public Management (Raine and Willson, 1996: 20-21). The

effect of which has been to constrain the use of the interpersonal skills of highly trained professionals, which they considered the most effective tools of the job when engaging vulnerable young people (Pitts, 2001: 8). As a result, there is the potential for a sense of lost ownership of this aspect of their work due to the customs of best practice undermining their specialist traits.

This feature will be explored in greater depth in the following sub-section when building on Blauner's (1964) subsequent mode of industrial powerlessness which specifically looks into the inability of workers to influence management policies, and will be adapted in line with the broader analytical model of the thesis. However, as with many of his overall conclusions Blauner (1964) did not see alienation as an automatic product of the inability of workers to influence management policies, which is possibly due to Braverman's (1998: 20) criticism of his reliance on "questionnaire sociology" to form generalised conclusions. As discussed, the theoretical model employed in this thesis will give greater salience to broader aspects of the political economy in order to challenge the inherent structures of the capitalist system and the labour process they come to advocate.

4.5.1.2 The Inability to Influence General Management Policies

Blauner (1964) claimed most employees did not resent the inability to influence management policies, a feature common to the employment relationship. This was argued to be embedded in industry and the average worker had no expectation, nor conscious desire, to hold responsibility of "what, for whom, and how much to produce; how to design the product; what machinery to buy; how to distribute jobs; or how to organise the flow of work" (ibid: 18). He conjectured that a worker would only seek to influence management policy when it directly affected one's

immediate job or workload and that top-down pyramidal decision-making structures had become an acceptable part of working life. However, in this thesis, the manifestation of industrial powerlessness in this mode will form a more substantial part of discussion accounting for the role of the state as the central policymaker for the public services (Salaman, 2000: 300), along with the specific management-led policy of the individual service sites.

As described in Chapter 2, part of the state's function is the provision of public services (Gough, 1979: 3) and therefore has a crucial function in generating policies which infiltrate daily shopfloor activities in public sector workplaces. When considering the highly politicised environment of the youth justice sector, the following chapter will describe how policy affecting the delivery of YOT provisions has been strongly influenced by ideological, media and public perceptions. The result of this is an assortment of policy initiatives, driven by successive governments, to create a historical transience in the nature of service delivery, which has been criticised for lacking cohesion or a workable strategy (Garland, 2001: 103). This may have distinct connotations when considering YOTs, a sentiment echoed in past empirical research by Field (2007). In light of the prevalent multi-agency work practices of YOTs, this research examined suggestions that "the distinct practice cultures" of each representative agency may be manifested in differing levels of compliance or agreement with the pressures imposed by YOT management (Muncie, 2005 cited in Field, 2007: 312).

Field's (2007) notion that practitioners in YOTs display strong attitudes to youth justice, which often reflected the ethos of their respective professions, thus this mode of powerlessness forms a greater salience in the industry specific to the

research. In terms of analysis, a greater appreciation for the wider social and political structures that influence workplace policy can be afforded, with the perceptions of practitioners regarding the successes or failures of the policies to which they abide and whether they are dissatisfied with their inability to influence them, forming a greater level of discussion than that of Blauner's (1964) research. This will allow the resulting findings chapters to challenge factors external to simply that of workplace management, opening debates around the state's influence on the labour process in a sector of state employment described in Chapter 1 as "synonymous with the era of advanced capitalism" (Gough, 1973: 74). The research in question will be examined more closely during the chapter evaluating employment issues in the youth justice sector, however it is useful to draw attention to how alienation, in this framework, can be applied to real life employment practice.

In addition, this thesis will go beyond the limitations of Blauner's (1964) model by challenging his line of thought which Braverman (1998: 20) criticised for being shared with management, regarding the perceived foreknowledge that the degradation of work, as prescribed by capitalism, is both "necessary" and "inevitable" (ibid: 20). A foreknowledge that unsurprisingly led Blauner (1964) to conclude that alienation in this mode of powerlessness was not evident in a worker's inability to influence management in terms of the imposed organisational structure. To challenge this, the relationship between workers and managers within the individual research sites will not be overlooked, with a greater depth of analysis as to the tensions caused by the organisation of work and the contestations practitioners may have towards both its necessity and inevitability. This will document themes such as management regulation and consultation

procedures, with succeeding debates on how the rigidity or lack of management regulation is seen to affect practitioners in service delivery. Notions of accountability will provide scope for discussion, which is seen by Gintis (1976) as a coercive managerial supervision technique to impose control over the labour process. Modes of employee involvement in the labour process will be discussed through the understanding of internal, unilateral consultation practices at each Research Site, which has been argued by Williams and Adam-Smith (2009) as often being emblematic of management spawning the illusion of worker voice despite it having no palpable effect on organisational policy. Complimenting this, the role of trade unions and the level of unionisation in the workplace are an important aspect of discussion. As the traditional vehicle for workers to challenge management (Flanders, 1968: 41), the presence of trade unions and their ability to influence workplace or even state policy can be argued as instrumental in suppressing or aggravating the manifestation of industrial powerlessness in this mode.

Displays of dissatisfaction from the inability to influence management policies can be assessed by comparison between the individual, subjective perceptions to workplace policy of practitioners and the idiosyncratic views of management, whereby even in accepting the right to manage, workers can be considered militant if they "challenge managerial demands" (Edwards, 1986 cited in Gall, 2003: 9). The theoretical model of the thesis will analyse how these differences might play out in terms of shopfloor industrial relations. This could be through worker militancy in terms of collective trade union action or noncompliance on a much smaller, individual scale such as "low-level misbehaviour" (Thomas and

Davies, 2005: 686), which will form a guide to evaluate the strength of powerlessness displayed in this mode within the workforce studied.

4.5.1.3 The Lack of Control Over Conditions of Employment

A key aspect of the conditions of employment, according to Blauner (1964), is that of economic security; one such factor of this is wage labour. In a similar vein to the preceding mode of powerlessness, Blauner (1964) argues that the lack of control over conditions of employment is of limited concern to workers unless their economic security is directly threatened. He goes on to argue that "a number of economic changes have greatly reduced workers' powerlessness in this area" (Blauner, 1964: 19), claiming, in the American factory context, that aspects of modern industry have generated an increased control for workers over their conditions of employment. These are related to the important role he considered American trade unions to have played in industrial relations leading up to the time of his research, resulting in features such as a guaranteed annual wage and more secure forms of employment (ibid: 19).

Having discussed that a fundamental feature of the capitalist labour process is the elicitation of surplus labour, this thesis will attempt a more critical analytical model in relation to this mode of powerlessness. As surplus labour involves an employer obtaining more from a worker through the means of production than the value assigned to that labour in terms of wage (Gintis, 1987: 69), a worker's economic security can be argued to be at constant risk. This is because the setting of wages involves relations of control and, in the capitalist context, one where the sellers of labour of are inherently more vulnerable than an employer within these relations (Hyman, 1989: 25) as the employers themselves have little motive for generosity

(Hyman, 1975: 19). While this may seem more apparent in private sector industries, it is also true in terms of public sector employment.

As discussed, the state's role as a "model employer" is a disputed concept, according to Coffey and Thornley (2009), as governments have historically sought to restrain costs at the expense of public sector employees, with Harvey and Hood (1958) suggesting that within a capitalist democracy the government's role has evolved to safeguard capitalist interests (Harvey and Hood, 1958: 15). This argument has particular grounding when coupled with Miliband's (1969: 81) assertion that government intervention, in an industrial relations context, has generally led to a weakening of collective power to workers and strengthened the positions of employers in the employment relationship. However, Massey and Pyper (2005: 65) also argue that the onset of New Public Management brought about further policies guided by economic pragmatism in the state sector of employment with quantitative restrictions in public sector costs, with both wages and job numbers featuring in such policies (Bach and Stroleny, 2013: 4). Whilst this alone provides reason for the possible encouragement of this mode of powerlessness in the public services as wage-relations are argued to be unfavourably affected by New Public Management on behalf of workers; another factor to take into consideration is the politics of austerity implemented by the incumbent government at the time of research. As a result, the research took place in the backdrop of large-scale spending cuts in the public services with YOTs judged to be some of the worst hit agencies in terms of job losses (CYPN, 2011). This returns discussion of powerlessness to the context of economic security in terms of job retention, argued by Blauner (1964: 19) as most pivotal, with added concerns of redundancy facing workers brought about by austerity

measures. As a result, these measures may cause working conditions which further encourage this mode of powerlessness.

Closely linked to this form of powerlessness, it the "the lack of control over the immediate work process" (Blauner, 1964: 20), which takes into the account the daily mechanics of the labour process and the potential adversity towards it from workers. Powerlessness in this mode will now be explored more closely.

4.5.1.4 The Lack of Control Over the Immediate Work Process

Blauner (1964: 20) saw the organisation of the labour process as crucial to this form of powerlessness citing a lack of freedom of movement and the inability to control the pace of work as the main factors encouraging it. In this respect, the use of technology was regarded as prevalent in encouraging and creating a "lack of control over the immediate work process" drawing upon the distinctions between "machine-paced and "man-paced" work (ibid: 20-21). In the context of a factory setting, it was therefore argued that machine-paced assembly line work was the greatest factor restricting a worker's control of the pace of work as this work would be dictated by the of pace of the relevant technology. Such a worker would also lack the physical freedom to leave the assembly line as their movement is constrained by the need to remain at the assembly line and adhere to pace of the relevant machinery (ibid: 21). Despite Blauner's (1964) discourse grounded in the contexts of factory settings and assembly line production, two non-factory based occupations were highlighted to explain the notion of "machine-paced" and "man-paced" actions:

> *"The man who takes money or issues tickets at the toll plaza of a bridge or highway has virtually no control over the pace of his work, since it is*

determined by the flow of traffic. He can only respond. An unskilled clerk in an office who adds columns of figures all day on an adding machine, however, has considerable control of his work pace. Often he can slow down, speed up, or take a break at his own discretion, although supervisors or other clerks might have some influence over his work pace" (ibid: 21).

Blauner (1964) therefore theorised that those engaging in work which is not categorised as assembly line production are at a considerably lessened risk of experiencing this mode of powerlessness, however he also presented a judgement that a "lack of control over the immediate work process" (ibid: 20) was not restricted to assembly line workers. While numerous jobs away from the context of a factory environment may not see a worker controlling the pace of work, Blauner (1964) believed that office workers, citing unskilled clerks, to be the most likely to control work pace and as a result this work would be considered man-paced. By way of providing reason for this verdict, it was suggested that workers in an office setting are required to work to a daily "minimum production" yet have the control to speed up or slow down their pace of work or, indeed, take a break from working so long as they achieved the required amount of work for that given day. The key factor in this being that their productivity can vary at different points throughout a working day, a feature of employment not afforded to the given example of assembly line workers (ibid: 21).

It should be noted that the research of this study relates to a context of public service delivery which, as will be discussed further, requires front-line practitioners to undertake office work and direct interventions with young offenders. In a similar way to the example of a worker collecting money at a toll plaza, despite the work

itself being very different, YOT practitioners are required to respond directly to actions and statements of young people during interventions. As practitioners cannot easily control the actions of young people, the pace of work may be controlled to a large extent by this external factor. Blauner (1964: 21) highlighted the importance of lacking freedom of movement in encouraging this form of powerlessness, by noting that the context of a production line caused a worker's freedom of physical movement to be constrained. This can be also be argued to apply to YOT practitioners when engaging in interventions as freedom of movement may be restricted due to welfare concerns for the young people and those around them, which require the practitioner to remain present.

From this, a point of comparison can be formed as to whether there was a distinct intimation from practitioners suggesting they experienced powerlessness to a greater extent during direct interventions away from the office, whereby the nature of these interventions may deem the pace of work beyond the control of the practitioner. Given that Blauner (1964) conceded that supervisors could have control over the pace of an office clerk's work, a long standing feature of the employment relationship which may have gathered greater salience in contemporary public sector work due to the onset of New Public Management. This, according to Pollitt (1993: 168), has largely led to the attempted implementation of a "neo-Taylorist version of managerialism" in the UK from the early and mid-1980s (ibid: 168), which in the context of criminal justice was argued to signify an increased level of target-setting, management supervision and performance monitoring, as a growing feature of the employment relationship (Garland, 2001: 188-189). The nature of this change may have resulted in evidence that practitioners are subjected to heavy regulation imposed by

management in relation to their office based activities, which resulted in supervisors having a large influence in the pace of their work and thus potentially amplifying the encouragement of powerlessness in this form. Debate will now shift to the discussion of meaninglessness, with focus on the structural bureaucracies of an organisation and the prospect of workers experiencing a loss of connection to the overall structure of roles.

4.5.2 Meaninglessness

Meaninglessness is derived from a loss of connection with or a loss of meaning in work, regarding the overall structure of an organisation, and is argued to occur when people lose understanding as to the functions of the social system in which they belong (Israel, 1971: 210). Blauner (1964: 22) saw bureaucratic organisational structures as a key factor in encouraging feelings of meaninglessness, believing that in the face of complex divisions of labour with an organisation:

> *"individual roles may seem to lack organic connection with the whole structure of roles, and the result is that the employee may lack understanding of the co-ordinated activity and a sense of purpose in his work" (ibid: 22).*

According to Kanungo (1982: 89-90) this can brought about by a process of deskilling in situations whereby work processes are broken down into simplified tasks, akin to Taylorism, resulting in a high degree of task fragmentation and job simplification. This subsequently constrains their responsibility and control over the labour process, causing their work to lack a sense of purpose (ibid: 89-90). Blauner (1964: 22) argues that the distribution of meaninglessness is not

considered to be equal amongst each person within the confines of an organisational pyramid and that meaninglessness will decrease with seniority. In addition, meaninglessness may not be of a universal level for people of similar standing across different social systems; for example, those in a small-scale workforce are likely to have a clearer understanding of the overall work processes than those of larger organisational structures (ibid: 22).

The above notion brings to light industrially-specific connotations, regarding the organisation of labour, affecting the extent to which the concept of meaninglessness will be present in any given study. Therefore, it is again worth considering how the infiltration of New Public Management ideals in public sector employment may have relevance to meaninglessness. According to Jenkins *et al.* (1995: 87-88) this had led to political regulation and intervention and bureaucratic procedures and Martinez Lucio and Mackenzie (1999: 156) cite the use of performance measurements as an "attempt to develop a greater degree of management control over the employee in the public sector" (ibid: 156). However, Thomas and Davies (2005: 689) warn against taking "blanket discourse" in the portrayal of New Public Management colonising the public services, instead believing its effects on the workplace within it to be decidedly context dependant with "external bureaucratic controls" being more prevalent in the social services when compared to different agencies. As a result, how this plays out in the employment relationship varies across different public services and agencies (ibid: 689) and therefore the specific context of the youth justice system may act to encourage or mediate the manifestation of meaninglessness presented in this study. This feature will be examined further in the following chapter, which provides a detailed background of the youth justice system and YOTs.

4.5.3 Normlessness

Conceptually, normlessness has long predated the literature of 20th Century organisation theorists and their models of alienation and has been linked to criminal behaviour and social deviance. However, from a work context it can broadly be explained by the divergent aims of workers and employers (Israel, 1971: 211). Blauner's (1964) outlook on normlessness encompassed themes of cultural estrangement and social isolation, taking reference from the concept of anomie as this was the theoretical forerunner to Seeman's (1959) classification of normlessness. The theme of cultural estrangement has been defined as an "individual's refection of commonly held values in the society in which he lives versus commitment to the existing group standards" (Seeman, 1959 cited in Baxter, 1982: 72) and is regarded as an ambiguous concept which has been used to describe many social phenomena (Israel, 1971: 212). In a similar vein social isolation is described as "the sense of exclusion or rejection versus social acceptance" (Seeman, 1959 cited in Baxter, 1982: 72). It is the notion of normative values and group standards in the idea of cultural estrangement and the social norms to which one is either accepted into rather than excluded from described by social isolation, which clarify the links Blauner (1964) maintained with anomie.

According to Durkheim (1893), anomie was a condition of society and would occur given a lack of sufficient regulatory systems which maintain and promote social structures. As a result the individuals, who make up a society, are not exposed to sufficient information to conceive and observe social norms. In this manner of anomie, as a variant of alienated labour, Kanungo (1982: 89) suggested normlessness could be observed in persons who have "a salient need to predict

their physical and social job environment so that they can evaluate their present job behaviour and plan future courses of action" (ibid: 89). Merton (1959) took a differing view, though conceptually linked, he argued that anomie occurred not through insufficient regulation governing social norms but when the prescribed mechanisms of pursuing social norms failed to match the individual resources available to members of a society. Thus, fellows of a particular social grouping would seek alternate methods of achieving the normative aims which had been advocated.

While acknowledging the existence of social alienation in wider society, Blauner (1964) noted how anomie, as the breakup of integrated communities forming the distinguishing feature of society, contrasted with traditional Marxian thought as to the cause of, and solutions to social problems. Marx emphasised the powerlessness of workers in industry as the root of social struggles with restoring control of workers over their conditions of work as the means to counter their oppression (Blauner, 1964: 24). This is problematic from an analytical perspective when studying alienated labour for the reason that Seeman's (1959) classification of normlessness is explicitly "derived from Durkheim's description of anomie" (Seeman, 1959: 787). Normlessness, as a notion, was recognised by Seeman (1959) to have been over-extended to encompass a wide variety of both social condition and "psychic states" (ibid: 787). His model incorporated anomie as a concept by defining it as "a condition of normlessness" (ibid: 787) which became the focus of his model relating to his categorisation. This approach enabled Seeman (1959) to essentially forego a robust definition of his notion of normlessness, linking it to the anomic feature that is the expectancy for

unapproved behaviour. Therefore, allowing his model to be applied to "as broad or as narrow a range of social behaviour as seems useful" (Seeman, 1959: 787).

The sweeping application of Seaman's (1959) use of Durkheim's notion of anomie within his interpretation of normlessness, arguably left it as a separate theoretical entity from alienation altogether. This can be seen at its extreme in Durkheim's concept of anomie having being attributed to those who have experienced rapid social change when usual norms break down, from scenarios as far reaching as losing large sums of money on the stock market and winning large lottery jackpots (Delaney, 2006). Thus as a derivative of anomie given its far reaching applications, normlessness becomes a competing theory to a Marxist interpretation of alienation, by potentially encompassing similar circumstances but explaining them differently, or at best a non-compatible sociological construct. Blauner's (1964) focus stemmed from the context of an industrial community as a social group in which it was argued "isolation" would occur when a worker "feels no sense of belonging to and is unable to identify or uninterested in identifying with the organization and its goals" (Blauner, 1964: 24). In his definition, isolation and a state of normlessness would occur when a clear dislocation was detected between the values of an employer and those which are inherent to the workers employed. This conceptualisation of normlessness will be used as the main gauge to signify indications of a sense normlessness presented by research participants within the framework utilised in this study.

Again, the distinction between objective conditions and individual perspectives can be applied to normlessness as noted by Seeman (1959: 788) in reference to individual experience, despite him not seeing it as empirically useful. However, in

developing the theoretical context of "isolation" (Blauner, 1964: 24) this thesis will assess how political and management imposition dictating organisational work practices and goals are divergent from those of practitioners, particularly given the politicised nature of the industry researched. Thus the dislocation between the subjective personal goals of practitioners in relation to the work they perform can be contrasted with the objective conditions resulting from political and management decisions which control the organisational goals their job is designed to achieve. The importance of the subjective goals of a worker will now be discussed further in the ensuing sub-section, by way of the "self-approved occupational identity" (ibid: 26) as associated with self-estrangement.

4.5.4 Self-Estrangement

It is important to clarify that self-estrangement is not seen as interchangeable with the Marxian terminology of estrangement. According to Baxter (1982: 144) Marx saw "the act of surrender, or the alienating of one's activity to another, as the primary source of estrangement" (ibid: 114). Whereas self-estrangement has been defined as:

> *"The condition in which the various activities of the individual are no longer a goal in themselves, but are carried out with a view to economic or other rewards, which are achieved by means of these activities" (Seeman 1959 cited in Israel, 1971: 213).*

This can be seen as a means to qualify the concept so it can be interpreted through the feelings and behaviours of individuals, an internal process based on the perception people have of their surroundings. It is the development of Blauner's (1964) definition, as discussed below, that the thesis will loosely follow.

Again the theoretical model this thesis presents will seek to widen the scope of discourse based on factors of the political economy and youth justice policy which come to influence the working lives of research participants.

In a work-based context a self-estranged person would not feel involved in the work performed and the person's predominant concern would be apparent in terms of time. According to Israel (1971) reason for such concentration on the time factor is due to the complete lack of involvement in the given activity, thus the primary concern becomes the length of time the work will take and how quickly the time can pass as the worker experiences tedium. This concept is intrinsically linked to those of powerlessness, meaninglessness and normlessness as peoples' involvement with their work is seen to depend on the opportunities they are given to experience their activity as meaningful and to express control over it (Israel, 1971: 213). In Blauner's (1964) model, self-estrangement is represented in an employment context by way of the following explanation:

> *"When work encourages self-estrangement, it does not express the unique abilities, potentialities, or personality of the worker. Further consequences of self-estranged work may be boredom and monotony, the absence of personal growth, and a threat to a self-approved occupational identity"* *(Blauner, 1964: 26).*

The above notion of a "self-approved occupational identity" (ibid: 26) can be linked to Field's (2007) study, which argues a divergence in attitudes between practitioners of different professional backgrounds; such as social workers displaying a traditionally liberal ethos of child welfare and seconded police officers, who generally exhibited a more punitive outlook on youth justice (ibid: 318). These

distinct outlooks were considered a result of the "underlying professional values" of the specific occupations (ibid: 320). This will allow discussions to examine the extent to which differences in perspectives from practitioners of varying professional backgrounds may prove to undermine this "self-approved occupational identity" (ibid: 320).

4.6 Conclusion

This chapter has provided a literature-based overview of discussions surrounding alienation, noting the historical development from its early roots in Marxian and Hegelian texts to the more recent frameworks which have been used to analyse alienation in past organisational research. These have been shown to provide a theoretical grounding which has been adapted in the model used by this thesis to challenge the broad structural issues that affect employment in a capitalist system, which can then be applied to a specific occupational or organisational context.

From a Marxist perspective, alienation is an objective consequence of the capitalist labour process (Marx, 1976; Braverman, 1998), a criticism levelled at Blauner (1964) for not calling into question the very nature of capitalism itself (Schwalbe, 1986: 21). Moreover, Blauner (1964: 4) displayed a theoretical divergence from a Marxist perspective because, whilst acknowledging that powerful alienating tendencies preside over industrial organisation, he rejected "a priori extreme position that workers either are or are not alienated" (ibid: 4) thus further disputing the inherency of alienation in the labour process. The notion that alienation was not an automatic effect of capitalism per se but of "employment in the large-scale organisations and interpersonal bureaucracies that pervade all industrial societies" (Blauner, 1964: 3) was roundly disputed by Braverman (1998).

This is due to such interpersonal bureaucracies having essentially been created through the historical development of the capitalist production; therefore such interpersonal bureaucracies cannot be isolated from capitalism and treated as a separate entity.

Attention then shifted to the pitfalls of past research into alienation, particularly Blauner's (1964) framework as his study has provided a loose framework for this research. This highlighted the problematic nature of researching alienation given that the very essence of the capitalist labour process deems it foreordained. Despite being a key critic of past studies into the concept, Braverman (1998: 20) did not discount the worth of research in this area, instead denouncing the methods chosen and interpretation of data, to which he termed "questionnaire-sociology" (bid: 20) which has led to generalised findings. In order to provide a creditable insight into alienation, Braverman (1998) contended that a researcher should not simply focus on the reaction a worker has to their work, but to adopt a wider exploration of factors that affect the industry of the work researched and the historical development of the industry. Additionally, Braverman (1998) stated the need for a researcher to obtain field data reflecting "intimate contact and detailed information" to substantiate research findings and avoid shallow conclusions (ibid: 21).

The chapter then examined theoretical models of alienation, with particular emphasis on Blauner's (1964) framework which has formed the loose investigative model underpinning this research. Blauner (1964) himself adapted Seeman's (1959) categorisation of alienation, which he based on his perceived weakness of Seeman's (1959) categorisation and subsequently moulded to apply relevance to

the industries he sought to study (Blauner, 1964: 16). Blauner's (1964) framework was then considered in depth, citing his theoretical grounding, related criticisms of these, and factors to be brought into consideration when studying alienation from the context of a public sector welfare service and applying it to the wider political economy for a more holistic approach of data analysis. Such consideration will include the wider implications of a capitalist labour process (Braverman, 1998; Gintis, 1987), state employment in a capitalist democracy (Gough, 1979; Miliband, 1982), the effects of trade union influence and management regulation, the model employer debate (Coffey and Thornley, 2009) and recent developments in state sector employment.

In addition, certain arguments relating to the industry-specific of the youth justice system were highlighted such as public and media perceptions, political influence and past research information regarding strong perspectives and professional values of practitioners making up the multi-agency YOTs (Field, 2007). The following chapter will now seek to develop these arguments and encompass additional themes that are specific to the youth justice sector and the people who are employed within it. This will provide a context for findings to be related to the workplace issues which directly affect YOT practitioners whilst calling into account the broader political and economic factors which have influenced them.

Chapter 5

Contextual Overview of the Youth Justice Sector

5.1 Introduction

The thesis will now provide a comprehensive occupational context of the sector of employment studied. This will outline the history of the youth justice system, its relationship to the welfare state, through to the influence of New Public Management and New Labour's modernisation reforms. The purpose of this is to provide insight into the historical conditions of the political decision-making and public and media pressures which have led to present day practice. This will provide the reader with an insight into the conflicting principles which have come to dominate the development of youth policy. The chapter will argue that a critical feature in the makeup of the youth justice system is that it has been strongly moulded by the state through significant policy decisions motivated by the ideologies and agendas of a succession of governments. As will be seen, the historical context of the youth justice system reveals distinctive time-periods that have influenced the nature of its operations and this is argued to have resulted in complex and somewhat contradictory approaches to solving the issue of youth crime. One such contradiction, relating to the balance between the welfare and punitive models of youth justice, is noted as a prominent feature of the historical response to young people and criminal behaviour in terms of policy making in the UK.

The welfarist model draws heavily from arguments of working class disadvantage. Notably, young people from certain working class areas are argued to lack the family and community resources of those who are more affluent and this is seen

as a factor in the precipitation of youth crime (White and Cunneen, 2006: 17). From this perspective, juvenile crime is argued to be typified by "poverty and low socio-economic status" (Schiamberg, 1973: 6), with relative deprivation, seen as a source of discontent among young people, being a consequential trigger for youth crime (Young, 2001). Contrastingly, the punitive model is shown to treat the offender as a threat to society and advocates deterrents and stricter sentencing with, consequentially, less emphasis on welfare provisions. The value of this discussion is to highlight the potential dislocation of the subjective expectations of YOT practitioners to control the aims of their work and the functions they perform to meet them, set against the objective conditions brought about by the development of social policy which dictates their workplace operations. Such a dislocation of subjective perceptions and objectives conditions being argued, in the previous chapter, as a key strand to alienation and one that could have great salience to YOT practitioners due to the suggested professional values they possess.

The chapter will then seek to provide insight into how the effect of contemporary public sector reforms, the effect of New Public Management regimes during successive Conservative governments and the impact of the New Labour government policy modified operational parameters in the context of the youth justice system. This will include the ways in which the centralised government control tactics of New Public Management, cost-minimisation agendas and the performance management systems which come to define New Labour's regime in terms of employee relations in the public sector (Bach and Kessler, 2012: 49), influenced youth justice practice. The standardisation and routinisation of work tasks of New Public Management, which were associated with Taylorist

techniques to establish control over the labour process (Worrall *et al*, 2009: 126), will be considered as to how this potentially constrains professional discretion within the sub-sector. Furthermore, the impact of New Labour's drive to reconfigure government departments through mergers and joined-up partnership practices (Bach and Kessler, 2012: 167) will be afforded specific focus as this led to the formation of YOTs and the YJB as a result of the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act (Crawford and Newburn, 2003: 12).

The chapter will then discuss the modes in which funding streams are delivered to YOTs, associated problematic features and the attached implications for workplace job functions which are argued to reflect political agendas rather than a drive for effective practice. The final two sections will examine past empirical research sources on YOTs to contextualise some of the salient issues that are seen to affect front-line practices from the perspective of practitioners, before investigating the contemporary debates around youth justice practice in the present-day timeframe. This will further contextualise the working conditions which YOT practitioners are subject to at the time of research to set-up discussions of access and the collection of field data in the research sites before the theoretical analysis of the thesis is linked to substantive findings.

5.2 Historical Overview of Youth Justice

The concept of youth crime, as recognisable today, is argued to date back to the early 19th Century and refers to the identification of the juvenile delinquent. While it has been acknowledged that adult concerns of child delinquency precede this time-period (Shore, 1999: 148), the early 19th Century saw the emergence of distinct definitions for the criminal child, notably in terms of legal discourse (King,

1998 cited in ibid: 148). Prior to this time period, the only form of legal regulation shielding children from the severity of the adult centred penal justice system was the Doli Incapax, the age below which criminal responsibly for one's actions was no longer accountable. This, however, only exempted those below seven years of age and by the mid-19th Century a new system to govern juvenile offenders had gathered momentum (ibid: 2). Despite a failure to acknowledge the need to separate juvenile and adult issues, the criminal justice system of the 18th Century is, in one respect, known to draw from a surprisingly logical assumption. It was accepted that capitalism creates an abundance of wealth which is constrained in its distribution, therefore crime is likely occur when those with little access to this wealth are presented with opportunities to appropriate money and goods via unlawful actions. The effect this had on practice may not have been grounded in altruism, as further evidence taken from the 18th Century document the 'Treatise on the Police of the Metropolis' suggests that the preferred methods of overcoming this type of crime was through policing strategies and opportunity prevention. Very little reference to addressing the inequalities of distribution was apparent and thus the disparity of wealth argued as a precursor to crime, was not addressed (Garland, 2000: 3).

The 19th Century saw somewhat radical changes in the perceptions of criminal justice as the issues of juvenile delinquency were formally recognised as distinct from those of adult crime. In light of this, and despite many sociological arguments being derived from previous eras, the main historical events and legislative rulings considered in this chapter will have entered existence following the dawn of the 19th Century and the creation of a distinct youth justice system.

5.2.1 Beginnings of the Youth Justice System

Reasons for the evolution of the juvenile justice system over the 19th Century lay partly as a response to rapid industrialisation, the growth in population and the increased urbanisation of the UK's environment (Hendrick, 2006: 4). The culmination of these factors was seen to contribute to increased levels of poverty in the UK, particularly in urban communities (Royal, 1987 in ibid: 4), and, as discussed, excessive disparity between the rich and poor creates cycles of disadvantage which are argued to elevate crime rates (White and Cunneen, 2006: 17). In terms of juvenile delinquency, crime was suggested as a means of expressing other social issues and discontent that, by their nature, had no direct relation to criminal acts (Hendrick, 2006: 5), such as high unemployment and a lack of apparent job prospects (Gatrell, 1990: 249). Subsequent developments showed an acceptance that juvenile delinquency may have been a product of social conditions as opposed to malice of intent, and this led to the development of contradictory observations which determined the child offender as both a victim of social structures and a threat to society through their criminal actions (Hendrick, 2003 cited in ibid: 5). Essentially, this generated a prevalent view that middle-class values were absent in impoverished children and, consequently, their moral outlook would become tainted as juveniles (Hendrick, 2002: 29). The subsequent effect of this outlook, in a political sense, saw Parliament pass the Youthful Offenders Act (1854). This was the first occurrence of government legislation recognising juvenile delinquency as a specific social happening, accepting that the causes of youth crime were complex and possibly unrelated from the criminal act itself. It can therefore be argued that this act heralded the dawn of the youth justice system in the UK (Hendrick, 2006: 6).

Consequently, there is an evident shift from the portrayal of young offenders as threats to their representation as victims. This exemplified a greater leaning towards a welfare based youth justice system as opposed to a punitive approach (White and Cunneen, 2006: 17). This time-frame is argued to have furthered sensitivity towards the plight of juvenile offenders and highlighted the need to address the fundamental reasons that underprivileged young people are driven to crime. As a result, additions to the Youthful Offenders Act in 1901 and the Probation Act (1907) advanced the use of alternatives to prison when sentencing juvenile offenders. Furthermore the Children's Act (1908), at its time of instigation, was regarded as the foremost political response to child neglect and juvenile offending (Hendrick, 2006: 7-8). This act, along with the subsequent Children and Young Person Act (1933), helped shape juvenile justice in the UK up to the post-war period. These can be considered as a clear attempt to protect the vista of national affluence from the potential threat of juvenile delinquency, propelled by uncivilised youths hailing from pockets of destitution within the UK's society (Clarke, 2002: 132). The result of these acts found ill-favour with the police and magistrates, who were critical of the welfare measures they practised (Bailey, 1987: 62).

5.2.2 Post Welfare State

In Chapter 2, it was shown how the post-World War II period saw a change in the "perception and expectations" of the British public and the formation of the welfare state. This resulted in strategic government control measures to increase and improve public services as a means of political expediency (Miliband, 1982: 34) and this time-frame occupies a prominent place in academic and professional

discourse regarding the application of youth justice in the UK based within the framework of the 1948 Children Act (Hendrick, 2006: 9). The act furthered the welfarist mantra of alternative treatments for young offenders as previously configured in earlier acts of parliament, and was partly driven forward by the creation of the Parliamentary Care of Children Committee in 1945; a political response to a single tragic incidence of child cruelty (ibid: 9). This also reflects an enduring feature of youth justice policy decisions; that is, government ministers responding to media and public outcries (Muncie and Goldson, 2006: 36).

In 1969, the Children and Young Persons Act was passed and showed a greater understanding for the need of professional support and interventions, which must include the juveniles and their respective families when formulating the nature of interventions and treatments provided (Hendrick, 2006: 11). The act was considered a culmination of the welfarist sentiments of the 1964 Labour government and their collective work with key actors in UK social work (ibid: 11). As a result of the act, the government displaced the right of authority within youth justice away from the police, magistrates and the prison department towards the direction of local authorities, social services and the Department of Health (Thorpe *et al,* 1980 cited in ibid: 11). However, the election of the 1970 Conservative government saw policy favour a stricter approach to penal retribution, magistrates and police (Bottoms, 1974 cited in Muncie, 2009: 278).

The outcome of this placed an emphasis on punitive sentencing strategies with community minded welfare programmes being largely overlooked. In consequence, the welfarist principles that appeared to dominate youth justice were reduced to mere subsidiary concerns with any practical actions to address them

becoming a secondary consideration (ibid: 278). Essentially, professional authority was at its heyday by the 1960s; however this began to wane during the 1970s as faith in rehabilitative ideals diminished (Garland, 2001: 151). This resulted in the delegation of authority to social professionals becoming less commonplace, with legislators reclaiming the right to regulate punishment of offenders and adopting a more rigid penal-welfare framework (ibid: 152). Youth justice, therefore, has historically represented a set of operations whereby two ideologically opposed systems, welfarism and punitive measures, have run simultaneously in the realms of practice (Thorpe *et al,* 1980 cited in Muncie, 2009: 279).

Having provided an overview of the historical development of the youth justice system and the conflicting ideologies, those of welfarism and punitive practice, that influenced political decision-making, which Garland (2001: 103) argues led an incoherent and muddled array of policies, the chapter will now proceed to the theme of contemporary reforms associated with managerialism that have infiltrated the public services. Particular emphasis will be placed on the modernisation agenda of New Labour as this saw the creation of YOTs and the standard regulator body of the youth justice system, the YJB (Crawford and Newburn, 2003: 12).

5.2.3 The Influence of Contemporary Public Sector Reforms

During the 1980s, the managerialist agenda of Conservative governments was described by Pratt (1989: 25) as a shift to a "corporatist model" of youth justice, signifying a "centralisation of policy" and an "increased government intervention" in work processes (ibid: 25). Smith (2000: 141) commented that the corporate model could be seen to have evidenced "the further encroachment of a monolithic and

repressive state power" (ibid: 141), to which Burnett and Appleton (2004) add as a minimalist approach in response to youth crime based on controlling resource allocation (Burnett and Appleton, 2004: 35).

The increased centralisation of policy caused a diminution of discretion afforded to front-line practitioners, and according to Garland (2001: 88) this was due to political pressures to attain "value-for-money" through mechanisms of financial constraints and managerial discipline (ibid: 88). As mentioned, this mirrored the wider movement of a cost-efficient and "performance-conscious" public sector (Pollit, 1993: 112), in-line with the government's engagement with TQM rhetoric to justify alterations in work practices and lower public sector spending. This caused a process of work intensification to take place, implemented by increased managerial control (Martinez Lucio and Mackenzie, 1999: 158).

During the 1980s managerialism became the prominent ethos in regulating youth justice employment practice (Muncie, 2009: 140), which reflected the "neo-liberal ideological dimension" of New Public Management under the Conservative part's reforms (Bach and Kessler, 2012: 25). The general aim of Thatcher's neoliberal policies was a reduction in public sector spending, hoping that the private sector would ensure economic stability. This has been argued as a blinkered approach to a nation's economic wellbeing given that, even with depleted and constrained benefit schemes, social spending increased during the course of Thatcher's reign (Garland, 2001: 110). The reason for such incongruity stems from the mass unemployment that resulted from the assault on the public sector, meaning that despite derisory benefits for unemployed people, the sheer number of claimants enlarged the financial output. A further and equally profound criticism of the public sector spending policies was that welfare programmes that benefited the middle

class, such as tax breaks, social security and education subsidies, remained well supported by government spending policy. As a result, either deliberately or unwittingly, the government's policy decisions actively marginalised the working class (ibid: 110). From the perspective of crime, the crucial problem of Thatcher's market driven ideology is represented in an earlier passage, whereby people's lack of financial health will lead to criminal acts for the acquirement of money and goods when opportunity arises (Garland, 2001: 3). According to Garland (2001: 101) this explains the dramatic rise in crime statistics during Thatcher's law and order administration, whereby the crime rate was reported to have doubled.

The government's excuse for increasing crime levels during this time period was mostly grounded in rhetoric, citing reasons that emotively called into question the ability of the supposed 'underclass' to adequately raise their children and produce respectable members of future society. Criminal acts were seen to be caused by poor discipline and a lack of social control; this was often associated with single parents, teenage pregnancies and drug users, all suggested as more abundant in the social 'underclass' (ibid: 101). This can be argued as an attempt to conceal the most likely cause of increasing crime levels under a cloud of rhetoric, which shifted blame towards the underprivileged working classes to gain approval from the traditionally middle class Conservative supporters. Such defamation of the poor meant finger pointing heightened tensions between social classes as the political rhetoric focussed wholly on the victim, with little regard to the causes of the offence, such as poverty and social inequality. Indeed Hall (1979) cited these tactics as an early policy of Thatcherism and a crucial part of the "the repertoire of the radical Right" (Hall, 1979: 19), along with issues of race, in ceasing the electoral initiative, altering public opinion and regaining the ground in the

"confrontation with organized labour" (ibid: 16), a confrontation in which Thatcher's predecessor Heath's position "was destroyed" (ibid: 16).

This depiction of the poor, generated by the New Right, led to little sympathy for offenders from the public, who, in turn, grew fearful of the dangers posed by the preconceived 'underclass' who were mostly portrayed as deprived inner city dwellers (Garland, 2001: 101) and branded a threat to "ordinary people going about their private business" (Hall, 1979: 19) in Conservative party discourse, signifying a "wave of lawlessness and the loss of law-abidingness" (ibid: 19). As a result, cynical arguments, hostile to rehabilitative penal-welfare programmes, gained a growing impetus throughout the media and middle classes (Garland, 2001: 101-102).

In terms of sentencing specific to youth justice, Thatcher's Conservative government made few drastic changes to a system that was already orientated to punitive sentencing, however the use of custodial punishments for young people declined (Gelsthorpe and Morris, 1994 cited in Hendrick, 2006: 13). This can largely be explained by public sector spending cuts, the fact of reducing the numbers of juvenile offenders given costly custodial sentences was a principle means of achieving a key objective of neo-liberalism, namely a reduction in public sector spending (ibid: 13). Through the free market economics that dominated Thatcher's political ideology it became evident that state funding would purposely be reduced, not only in terms of criminal justice but across the whole political spectrum (Muncie, 2009: 140).

This resulted in a pragmatic approach to criminal justice and included the "quasi-marketisation of certain criminal justice functions" (McLaughlin and Muncie, 2000:

171). Additional plans included regionalised crime prevention strategies, community based punishments, re-establishing morale in the criminal justice system, emphasising the responsibility of individual offenders and, as mentioned, the managerialisation of criminal justice agencies (ibid: 171). In terms of overall regulation, the criminal justice system was subjected to nationally agreed guidelines and standards designed to "reduce the crime rate to 'acceptable' levels" and "ensure that demands for a scarce resource – 'justice' – were kept within economically manageable levels" (ibid: 171). The underlying theories behind the reforms were based on the concepts associated with New Public Management, crafted to create an economical criminal justice system. However, these reforms were met with powerful criticism, largely coming under-fire from criminal justice professionals. This criticism was based on the objectionable notion that criminal justice, a "public sector good", should not be run like a business as it was incompatible with the business model of "selling products to customers in a competitive market" (McLaughlin and Muncie, 2000: 171). Overall the management concerns underlying the reforms were seen as a channelled approach to "economy and justice" (McLaughlin and Muncie, 1994: 137). This also acted as a means to depoliticise the sensitivities surrounding criminal justice by bypassing the debates of welfarist and punitive ideologies, and instead focussing on financial imperatives as means of achieving objectives (ibid: 137).

During this time, as noted, custodial sentences were reduced in terms of youth crime, a feature explained by the high costs associated with custody and the minimalist approach adopted by the government (Hendrick, 2006: 13). This trend can be considered surprising due to the noted populist rhetoric which emanated from government channels used as means to elicit support from far-right

Conservative supporters (Feeley and Simon, 1992: 451). Despite being largely absent in policy, this rhetoric portrayed criminality as a pathological choice with the unemployed "underclass" opting for a life of crime over the prospect of employment, suggesting that strong deterrents and custodial sentencing would coerce control and protect society from future criminal activity (Muncie, 2009: 140).

These messages were continued by Major's Conservative government. However, following the murder of Jamie Bulger by juvenile offenders, the media fallout prompted the government to incorporate such punitive messages into legislation having previously consigned them to political gesturing, with front-line practice still remaining subject to ideals of economic efficiency. This provides an example of central government creating youth justice policy based on the subjections of public and media emotiveness, representing the highly politicised nature of youth justice (Muncie and Goldson, 2006: 36). The effect of this was evident in the 1994 Criminal Justice and Public Order Act, which saw a profound shift to a heavily punitive youth crime agenda, lowering the age of criminal accountability to children as young as ten years old and increasing maximum sentences for juveniles (Goldson, 2006: 143). Many of the policy impositions associated with this act have endured through successive governments (Muncie and Goldson, 2006: 36).

5.2.4 New Labour's Modernisation Reforms and the Creation of Youth Offending Teams

The application of punitive justice was continued under Blair's New Labour and seen as a clear departure from the traditionally welfarist outlook of Labour (Goldson, 2006: 142). During this time, youth justice was modernised in accordance with general public sector reforms and the 1998 Crime and Disorder

Act led to standardised worked practices via statutory follow-up contacts; this duty was given to the newly formed YOTs. Each YOT was then subjected to target setting determined by government enforced national standards (Muncie, 2009: 256-257), in-line with wider discussions surrounding public sector workplaces (Hewson, 2002: 557).

New Labour's approach did engage in debates around social contexts causing youth crime and this became evident in the way they targeted anti-social behaviour and social exclusion. However, as will be discussed, critics argued that the funding streams associated with initiatives of social crime policy "misrecognised" (Morrison, 2003: 143) these communities, and the government controlled measurements essentially furthered the performance management regimes of New Labour's modernisation reforms. Additionally, issues of parental responsibility remained a prominent feature of youth justice and this was highlighted in the act. However, little consultation took place with practitioners regarding the inherency of inter-generational problems and this feature of practice was heavily based on performance measures (Muncie, 2000: 14). It has been argued that the reforms were an attempt to introduce measured financial controls for youth justice spending with further standardisations of work practices introduced through the use of assessments based on national standards (Garland, 2001: 188).

The modernised glossary of risk factors, crime-costing, penalty-pricing and supply and demand was akin to cost-management techniques in private sector enterprises, and suggested that precise economic measurements could be translated into the somewhat complex field of criminology (ibid: 188-189). This

created a framework of heightened legislative and management controls dictating youth justice practice and with, what has been termed as a "standards regulator" body (Bach and Kessler, 2012: 169) earlier in thesis, overall regulation was governed by the YJB. The new system faced strong opposition by those claiming it caused regimented work practices and led to the heightened supervision of young people through the statutory standards associated with risk assessments (Howarth, 2010: 35). Many of these criticisms focussed on the increased rate of custodial sentencing of juveniles following the application of the act, thus seeming contrary to New Labour's stated aim of prevention (Smith, 2006: 80).

Although statutory obligations were not a new phenomenon in terms of child welfare, the arrival of YOTs signified a move away from child welfare structures at national and local levels. The operational requirements of YOTs were predominantly attached to multi-agency crime reduction and community safety strategies under the regulation of the Youth Justice Board and ultimately accountable to the Home Office (ibid: 215). Born directly out of the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act and regarded as the act's most sweeping reform, YOT's were a new entity based on New Labour's multi-agency framework and by April 2000 they were fully operational across all local authorities in England and Wales. Prior to the formation of YOTs, youth justice teams were primarily the responsibility of social services and comprised mostly of social workers, who were tasked with the responsibility of working with young offenders who were given non-custodial sentences. The nature of their work required cooperation with other youth justice agencies and relevant support teams as dependant on client needs (Crawford and Newburn, 2003: 12).

The amalgamation of multiple agencies to form YOTs was part of New Labour's efficiency drive spurred on by a pragmatic belief that a central hub of workers, forming a multi-agency team, would be more cost and time efficient than multi-agency liaisons. The YOT template therefore required the inclusion of probation officers, police officers, local authority social workers, local health authority representatives and specialist education officers (ibid: 12). The arrival of YOTs did not alter social services' position as the main player in youth justice; a 2001 report showed they contributed to 55% of workers seconded to YOTs, with the police accounting for 13%, probation 10%, local authority chief executives 9%, education professionals 7% and health authority workers 6% (Renshaw and Powell, 2001 cited in ibid: 12).

Regional YOTs were given two key operations, the coordination of youth justice services to those in need of provisions within local authority boundaries, and to perform the functions allocated to them via youth justice plans, which were administered annually by local authorities. Youth justice plans were a further stipulation of the Crime and Disorder Act (1998), requiring local authorities to formulate and coordinate the implementation of strategic action plans for youth service provisions. The act had a stated requirement that local authorities consult with senior representatives from the key agencies which constitute the makeup of YOTs when formulating the plans, the reports then being submitted to the YJB to monitor the plans and advise Home Office officials (ibid: 13). Additional joint inspections of YOTs, conducted by HM Inspectorates, commenced in 2002 (Leng *et al* in ibid: 13).

5.3 The Impact of Standardised Assessments

Having discussed how Taylorist standardised risk assessments became prevalent in youth justice underpinned by centralised control, performance indicators and economic frugality (Garland, 2001: 188), this section will briefly discuss the criminological arguments and criticisms surrounding their application to front-line practice and implications on effective performance delivery.

Although many agencies represented in YOTs have traditionally had a generic welfarist focus on the well-being of young people (Field, 2007) the assessment used within the youth justice system is an 'Asset'; an assessment tool largely concerned with assessing criminogenic risk factors of re-offending, this comprises the vast majority of the Asset's core profile (Pickford and Dugmore, 2012: 158). This concentration on risk has stressed a greater level of importance assigned to minimising the potential threat to society through monitoring and control of young offenders (Paylor, 2010: 30). Criticism of the Asset have been directed towards its over-reliance on negative risk factors, which present a cynical view of young offenders and overlook protective or welfare factors (Pickford and Dugmore, 2012: 158-159). In addition, its "tick box nature" (ibid: 158) can be argued to suggest an element of de-skilling.

The continued development of a risk focussed model is considered to be the one of the most striking features of contemporary practice and furthered the shift towards standardised assessments (O'Mahony, 2009: 99). This resulted in levels of intervention not being determined by the professional judgement of practitioners, but based on a standardised scoring system prescribed by assessments to decide the level of risk (ibid: 102).

Having identified issues which relate to the assessment tool Asset, it is important to note that concerns also exist with the 'case management' model, which is signified by 'Case Managers' having overall responsibility for a young person under a court order, but often losing a sense of ownership of the process by relying on appointment driven referrals to specialist staff for any required interventions. This is exacerbated by the knowledge that should a young person miss an appointment they are considered in breach of their court order and at risk of being returned to court to face further sentencing (Barry and McNeill, 2009: 11). Muncie (2008) argues this as an ethos of control leading which is detrimental to lives young offenders.

5.4 State Funding Streams in Youth Justice

It was noted in chapter 2 that, in a capitalist democracy, the state does not provide a truly democratic means of governance for its citizens and that all "representation is to some extent misrepresentation" (Miliband, 1982: 36). The implications of this regarding youth justice policy will now be explored. The notion of a 'misrepresentative state' is supported by Hillyard's (2009: 130) argument that state policy is "subject to little democratic control" and through a process of "misrecognition" this has revealed the nature of unequal power relations in "social crime policy" (ibid: 169). The concept of misrecognition is defined by Fraser (1998) by way of the following statement:

"It is… to be denied the status of a full partner in social interaction and prevented from participating as a peer in social life as a consequence of institutionalized patterns of cultural value that constitute one as comparatively unworthy of respect or esteem" (Fraser, 1998: 3).

According to Hancock (2006: 180) this is reflected in social crime policy through the notion of cultural subordination and, as a result, Morrison (2003: 143) argues that those termed socially excluded are constructed as the "problem to be fixed" (ibid: 143). This is considered disempowering to deprived communities who, in such a context, are represented as problematic or victimised on an array of government induced indicators (Hancock, 2009: 169). Therefore, those considered socially excluded are contrasted with the 'included' in policy documents and are argued to be misrecognised. This creates a stigma surrounding deprived communities as people are described by their deficiencies, and young people within these communities are portrayed as "threatening and potentially dangerous" (Morrison, 2003: 143).

The relevance of the above arguments to this study, regarding the work functions of YOT practitioners, becomes evident when considering how the indicators to which communities are judged socially excluded are generated. These indicators are often decided on by central government through a process of "state organised consent", whereby the government can proclaim to know the public's opinions and demonstrate some willingness to respond to them (Hancock, 2009: 170). This process was argued to have been used to a large extent by New Labour and involves three distinct procedures. Firstly, furnishing the public with more information about youth crime, the youth justice system and how it operates. Secondly, gathering increasing amounts of information about public experiences of selective crimes and the youth justice system. Finally, having gathered specific and selective kinds of information, this data is then disseminated back to the public through government or YJB endorsed surveys to suggest public consultation has

taken place and reflected in policy. This, in essence, is an attempt to mould public opinion and legitimise policy decisions (ibid: 170).

The notion of "state organised consent" (Hancock, 2009: 170) can be argued to be a means to legitimise policy making which signifies government aims, despite being sold as a reflection of electoral wants. Hence, rather than simply responding to public and media outcry, as argued as a historical feature of youth justice policy, the government attempts to manipulate public opinion and remain in control of social policy and practice. As argued, the marketization of the public services has left agencies heavily reliant on competing for central government controlled funding streams and, as associated with New Public Management, exposed to intensive performance management systems and standardised, neo-Taylorist, work tasks (Worrall *et al*, 2009: 126). Also, reflecting the wider public service in the process of policy formulation (ibid: 132), social crime policy is not done so in consultation with public service professionals but, instead, on government goals to which they attempt to legitimise to the electorate.

The resulting outcome of social crime policy in this manner sees local authorities competing to demonstrate their communities are "worst off" based on government indicators attached to funding streams, in which people from deprived communities are argued as 'misrecognised' (Morrison, 2003: 152). The lack of engagement with professionals in the youth justice system potentially renders the organisational goals being dictated by funding streams that may not represent interests of the communities to which they are aimed and divergent with the personal and professional goals of practitioners. Should these funding streams be granted to an agency, commonly a YOT, within the local authority, this too comes

with attached performance and measures, and formalised work practices (Garland, 2001: 188-189) further degrading the work of a practitioner who may oppose the principles of them.

It has been previously noted that this research took place at a time of unprecedented cutbacks, privatisation of public sector agencies and reduced staff membership across all services (Bach and Stroleny, 2013: 9). Funding is a sensitive issue and the respective agencies involved have received reduced budgets, staff cutbacks and increased political concerns, one example being payment by results. Many new government initiatives have been suggested to rely on centrally formed indicators as to the supposed measures of need, heavily influenced by political persuasion, and payment by results through performance criterion attached to funding streams. Early signs have been argued to show professionals are cynical about these initiatives as it is likely that the neediest young people and families will be deprived of the assistance they most require. This is argued because practitioners will be restricted in their practice as they are required to concentrate on achieving the completion of targets rather than the welfare of young people (Hancock, 2009: 169). Given all governmental agencies are currently operating in a climate whereby it is essential to secure all prospective funding, work practices look likely to continue being set up for the purpose of compliance to performance management as opposed to the stated organisation goals of youth crime reduction.

5.5 Past Empirical Research on Youth Offending Teams

Past empirical research following the formation of YOTs has largely been based on assessing the efficiency of Government aspirations to create a unified work culture in the delivery of youth justice practice (Ellis and Boden, 2005). Research in this area has been informed by the notion of a joined up youth justice system resulting from the above mentioned New Labour reforms. Thomas and Davies (2005: 689) warned not to assume a blanket discourse for the implementation of New Public Management across all sub-sectors of the public services, with Bach and Kessler (2012: 167) adding that certain local government sub-sectors have traditionally been more likely to resist changes in government employee relations policy. This view was reinforced by the criminal justice sector as a whole, where the arrival of New Public Management was slower than in other parts of the public sector. Nevertheless, towards the latter period of the 1980s managerialism began to take hold (Raine and Willson, 1996: 20-21) and consequently, the criminal justice system saw monetary restrictions and an emphasis on financial efficiency; greater standardisation in policies and practices to curb the autonomy of the professionals; and increased management authority supported by target setting and performance monitoring to sharpen accountability and affect greater centralised control over the labour process (ibid: 21). Standardised practices, performance management and greater accountability of practitioners were also noted features of New Public Management which were continued across the public services by the succeeding New Labour Government in their modernisation reforms (Martinez Lucio and Mackenzie, 1999: 166).

However following this, the creation of YOTs within the context youth justice system was considered the most radical reform in the criminal justice system at large (Burnett and Appleton, 2004: 36). Pitts (2001) was particularly critical of the underpinning policies which came to govern YOTs in what he called "the Zombification of Youth Justice" (Pitts, 2001: 2), alleging "fiscal prudence dear to the hearts of the Tory defectors whose ephemeral loyalties these policies aim to secure" (ibid: 5). He argued that the collapse into "target-happy", "outcome-led" bureaucratised practices resulted in even less time being spent in face-to-face contact with young people in need and in trouble (ibid: 7).

Additionally he suggested, at the time of writing, that a process of de-professionalization in the youth justice sector was occurring (ibid: 8), with non-professionals who have little or no knowledge of alternative ways of doing things coming to increasingly infiltrate the service's workforce. These new "non-professional" recruits are seen to receive training which is essentially practical and any ethical issues which arise during front-line practice resolved by reference to the relevant "values statements" or codes of practice (ibid: 8). Not only was this argued as a means of cost reduction, in terms of salaried staff in a similar fashion as found in Thornley's (2000) study of nursing auxiliary and healthcare assistants in the NHS providing a cheaper source of labour for healthcare to NHS managers, but also that a new division of labour was created in which non-professionals "deliver" the programmes and the diminishing number of professional workers essentially become administrative, 'Case Managers' (Pitts, 2001: 8). This new division of labour was argued to have distinct benefits to management as the stated lack of prior expertise and watered-down training of non-professionals reduced their potential for disagreement with, or deviation from, prescribed

methods or procedures (ibid: 8). Thus the neo-Taylorist techniques utilised in New Public Management (Worrall *et al,* 2009: 126) are less likely to be met with opposition from practitioners. This produces a cheaper and far more compliant workforce (Pitts, 2001: 8) further strengthening management's control over the labour process.

In relation to this study, the arguments around de-professionalization of the justice sector by the recruitment of non-professional staff presents two themes of research. The most apparent being from the perception of professionalized practitioners, who may indicate powerlessness from not engaging their skills directly in face-to-face contact with young people, instead completing administrative work to satisfy the noted "target-happy", "outcome-led" bureaucratised practices (ibid: 7). Additionally, the temporal lapse between Pitts (2001) work and this research provides a potential avenue for further research. In consideration that his writing was taking place while YOTs were in their infancy, the non-professional practitioners were considered to lack knowledge of alternative ways of dealing with issues. However this argument could be problematic in the present day context as in the preceding time many of these workers may have built up considerable knowledge and expertise through length of service, not only potentially making them less compliant with prescribed method or procedures, but also potentially forming a sense of realisation that their pay, being a cost-effective alternative, does not match some of their colleagues. As the skill-base which they have acquired over the prevailing years may give them considerable aptitude, this may affect their perceptions about their role and employer, particularly in the context of the "lack of control over conditions of employment" in terms of powerlessness (Blauner, 1964: 18).

Returning to the theme of a common practice culture (Muncie, 2005: 54) which the government has aspired to create in YOTs, argued to be an imposition of homogeneous aims and standards upon teams comprising of professionals from differing occupational backgrounds with traditionally strong and distinct professional values (Field, 2007: 320), past studies have examined the extent to which suggestions that "the distinct practice cultures" of each representative agency may be manifested in differing levels of compliance or agreement with the pressures imposed by YOT management (Muncie, 2005: 54).

Field (2007) conducted research, in the context of Welsh YOT's, to ascertain the extent to which the experience of multi-agency working had led to greater understanding between the traditional perspectives of each occupation and reduced the significance of certain strongly held stereotypical inter-professional prejudices (Field, 2007: 313). Past research of this kind is useful for this study when considering how the concept of alienation can be applied to the context of perceived professional standards within various occupations. Field's (2007) interview findings suggested a divergence in attitudes between practitioners displaying a traditionally liberal, social work ethos of child welfare and seconded police officers, who generally exhibited a more punitive outlook on youth justice (ibid: 318). These distinct outlooks were considered as the "underlying professional values" of the specific occupations (ibid: 320).

He found that social workers still expressed their priorities in terms of dealing with welfare needs, engaging young people to encourage change that is seen as positive by them and addressing problems that seemed to obstruct that change. Although recognising that youth justice had been repackaged politically leading to

its ground-level application in more punitive terms, Field (2007) noted a desire was expressed to resist or limit the impact of political and management pressures for a "punitive approach youth justice" (ibid: 314). This was best exemplified by the way in which several of the YOTs in the study had marginalised parenting orders, providing evidence that certain practitioners are willing to resist change and maintain their professional standards and values. Field (2007) also noted that many social workers felt that the legislative framework and managerial pressures promoted a narrow practice focus on the issues they considered most directly related to offending. In a situation of limited resources and key performance indicators, it was argued that priorities were not simply a matter of professional choice and, consequently, professional discretion was constrained (ibid: 315).

Field (2007) alluded to the dangers of over-stereotyping police officers closely involved with youth justice work in terms of a punitive focus. He contended that "police officers that apply to join YOTs may well not be typical of their force as a whole" (ibid: 318), it may also be the case that there is a tendency for generalisations and assumptions to be made in criminal justice and youth justice based on commonly held beliefs or personal subjections; a constraint the researcher has been aware to overcome in this study. Despite noting a shared perception of the importance of welfare needs, he found police officers in YOTs expressed fairly marked differences in the way this should be practised when compared with social workers. Police Officers were said to show a greater emphasis on the importance of providing discipline, making clear the unacceptability of certain types of behaviour and the negative consequences of doing otherwise, whilst tough experiences for young people were commonly regarded as beneficial (ibid: 318).

The study mostly noted conflicts between the relationship of social workers and police officers based on their values towards YOT practice. It found that social workers perceived notions of "engagement" with young people by police officers to be divergent from their own. They perceived police officers giving up on engagement too quickly and that their actions might actually reflect an underlying problem of a lack of respect. Conversely, police officers were found to consider that social workers in YOTs, and the youth justice system in general, continually tried to "engage" with young people even when there was "no reciprocity" and the only solution was punishment (ibid: 18). Despite this, general feelings were found on both sides that progress had been made between social workers and police in forming a better understanding of each other's perspective over the course of them working together. It was stated that an "initial two to three-year period" had been needed for social workers and police officers to "gel together", along with the importance of a relatively slow turnover of staff to enable a greater communal understanding (ibid: 319).

In the current climate of austerity and the resultant job-insecurity this might have important implications. As the majority of early redundancies in the public services occurred on a voluntary basis or through early retirement schemes commonly associated with experienced staff, along with a process of mandatory redundancies (Bach and Stroleny, 2013: 9), the communal understanding built over a period of years maybe weaken in the workplace as turnover increases. This could potentially erode "team centred solidarity", decaying worker solidarity and thus the ability of front-line practitioners to influence workplace behaviour (Gintis, 1976: 47). Another "sticking point" highlighted in Field's (2007) study was in the nature of the case management model, this showed evidence of a dislocation of

values with social workers and police offices alike towards organisational goals. This was said to occur when the YOT established a priority which was not in keeping with those of practitioners and an additional feature, which was problematic and specifically related to seconded workers, occurred when YOT priorities were not in accordance with those of their parent agency (Field, 2007: 320).

Field's (2007) study did, however, have numerous constraints. His research did not include interviews with local authority employed case managers, commonly known as YOTOs. Nor did it include any interviews with, what this thesis will term "specialist intervention workers" denoting those who specialise in specific interventions and may be employed by the local council or seconded from other agencies, such as the NHS. Similarly, no data was presented regarding the views of seconded Probation Officers employed as case managers at YOTs. In addition, his research took place solely in the context of Welsh YOTs, which have been argued to have a strong welfarist ethos (Cross *et al,* 2002: 156) and thus may suffer from reliability constraints when applied to those in England. Furthermore, despite an obvious interest in legislative and management reforms, with a stated concern for the way practitioners of different occupational backgrounds might "react or adapt to, or simply resist, management pressures" (Field, 2007: 313), the study mostly focussed on the conflicts between social workers and police officers, along with the views of magistrates. By contrast, this thesis has a greater focus on employee relations as to how legislative and management pressures seek control of the labour process and therefore the responses that front-line practitioners have to this, set against a theoretical framework of alienation. Nonetheless, past empirical research of this nature provides a useful insight into the diversity of

YOTs, owing to the multi-agency workforce and the strong professional values of those engaged in front-line practice giving an added complexity and theoretical intrigue into the sub-sector researched in this thesis.

5.6 The Workplace Context at the Time of Research

The austerity measures of the Coalition Government have been a source of apprehension for all public sector workers including those within youth services and the youth justice system. As a result, fears have mounted about the potential implications on young people supervised by YOTs in England and Wales. According to a 2011 Children and Young People Now (CYPN) survey, a policy of reducing funding in youth justice with a stated YJB aim of reducing youth crime is a contradictory proposition (CYPN, 2011). The survey indicated that YOT managers were concerned by the imposed spending cuts with 73% foreseeing that funding decisions will have a negative effect on youth justice service provisions. The survey also noted that 33% of YOTs had lost one or more partner agencies resulting from the impact of the cuts. The survey found that across the 33 YOTs which responded, an average of 4.4 workers had been lost (ibid.). These cuts may have significant repercussions, particularly as past efforts to maximise cost-efficiency have resulted in many YOTs operating at full capacity. This was argued in a 2010 memorandum submitted by local councils warning that continued spending cuts will directly negate the quality and quantity of front line services (UK Parliament, 2010).

5.7 Conclusion

In summary, this chapter has established how youth justice has long been a highly politicised area of discourse, creating debate amongst politicians, the public and

media alike, with varying and conflicting ideals toward to the practices which should be used to treat young people who offend. Government influence through successive regimes has heavily shaped legislation and practice in this sector with varying philosophies encumbering the historical development of workplace policy determined by the context of the time. Therefore, this has led to a conflicting, muddled, array of practices rather than a well though-out set of legislative processes (Garland, 2001: 103). Throughout its development there has been juxtaposition between welfarist and punitive approaches in the application of youth justice, which following contemporary public sector reforms have been joined by notions of pragmatism and managerialist principles.

These managerial principles reflected an increasingly centralised control of the sub-sector echoing that of the larger public services (Worrall *et al,* 2009: 123) and the reforms of New Public Management in the 1980s of financial constraints and managerial control which took hold of the youth justice sector (Garland, 2001: 88). It was argued that despite the punitive rhetoric there were low rates of custodial sentences for young offenders throughout the 1980s, due to the minimalist approach to resourcing adopted by the government and the high monetary cost attached to custody (Hendrick, 2006: 13). An approach that came to be upturned by Major's Government, noted for its punitive nature, implementing policies which have since endured in the sector. Even so, the government still maintained fiscal pragmatism by way of constrained resources for the delivery of welfare-based practice (Muncie and Goldson, 2006: 36).

It was argued that New Labour's modernisation reforms had a sizeable effect on the youth justice, firstly as a result of their "culture of blame… interest in

performance monitoring and the use of indicators to increase work related effort levels" (Martinez Lucio and Mackenzie, 1999: 166), as noted in Chapter 3. This can be argued to be a means to extract surplus-labour from youth justice practitioners by way of Taylorist management techniques, with the introduction of measured financial controls and further standardisations of work practices through the use of standardised assessments and national performance indicators (Garland, 2001: 188). The resulted lexicon of risk factors, crime-costing, penalty-pricing and supply and demand, was likened to cost-management techniques in private sector enterprises, and the suggestion that precise economic measurements could be translated into field of youth justice was criticised (ibid: 188-189).

However, perhaps the most radical effect of New Labour's reforms occurred within their re-organisation of public sector departments. In keeping with policies of mergers and joined-up partnership practices (Bach and Kessler, 2012: 167), YOTs and the youth system regulatory body the YJB were born, leading to what Pitts (2001: 2) damningly phrased "the Zombification of Youth Justice" (ibid: 2). This was argued to be seen as a de-professionalization of youth justice with non-professional staff forming a new division of labour. Such workers were seen as a source of cheap labour infiltrating the practice of youth justice delivery, with added benefit to management of being considered less likely to oppose and resist the imposition of prescriptive job functions (ibid: 8) and thus strengthening management control over the labour process. Arguing that the diminishing numbers of professional staff would be reduced to administrative "case managers", Pitts (2001) suggested that the extent to which highly trained and experienced professionals would engage their skills directly in face-to-face contact

with young people would be reduced. Instead, being tasked with completing administrative work to satisfy the "target-happy", "outcome-led" bureaucratised practices (ibid: 7), furthering the degradation of work.

The ways in which funding streams were furnished to agencies was considered problematic. A market-based process by which local authorities would bid for funding was argued to contribute to 'misrecognition'. This process required local authorities to compete against each other to show their neighbourhoods were "worst off" based on government indicators attached to funding streams, misrecognising the actual social problems that existed (Morrison, 2003: 152). The performance indicators which were attached to these funding streams are seen to further the standardisation of tasks imposed on practitioners, representing an increased use of Taylorism and the centralised control techniques of government over public sector policy.

Finally the chapter examined previous empirical research in YOTs giving particular reference to Field (2007). As with the majority of workplace research studies in YOTs (Ellis and Boden, 2005), this was concerned with effects of government aspirations to instil a homogeneous work ethos into youth justice practice. The basis of this being through notions of best practice, imposed by legislative and management pressure to practitioners from a variety of occupational backgrounds that consist in the multi-agency YOT teams. Field (2007) examined how the distinct practice cultures of social workers and police officers played out in their responses to the unified practices of YOTs in a workplace setting. His study mostly focussed on the differing perspectives of the two occupational groups, particularly given their contrasting viewpoints in a "stereo-typical" sense, and any evidence of

shopfloor conflicts between them as a result (Field, 2007: 319-320). However, data also provided an insight into how social workers resisted management and legislative pressures regarding the implementation of parenting orders (ibid: 314). Despite this, information regarding the responses of workers to their prescribed work functions, performance management systems, scope for influencing management and political decision-making through trade union representation or unilateral involvement and the detachment from their labour process was minimal by comparison. Additionally, the study only provided focus on these two occupational groups.

Further research undertaken by this thesis to provide a detailed investigation of practitioners from a wider-range of backgrounds and job roles, including local authority employed case managers, social workers, probation officers, police officers and specialist intervention workers, along with those of senior practitioners and managers will provide a greater breadth of perspectives in the research findings. Unlike previous studies, this thesis will not focus on providing a comparative analysis between YOT practitioners from differing occupational backgrounds, but provide evidence that centralised government control and management authority plays out in the labour process to manifest itself through alienation amongst practitioners. While the distinct occupational backgrounds may affect this, the analysis of findings will focus on the employment relationship. In addition to this, the research will differ still by obtaining a trade union perspective on policy and management regulation, both at shop steward and regional level, to ascertain trade union involvement in employee relations and their ability to influence policy on behalf of their members. This will build on past research and provide an alternative perspective on the nature of YOT work and the perceptions

of it from front-line practitioners, including the effect of political and management control on the quality and quantity of service delivery and the ways in which the job affects practitioners on a personal level. The following chapter will provide an an overview of the research methods used, the research questions posed, constraints to which were acknowledged by the researcher and the level of access gained for empirical data to be data to be collected.

Chapter 6

Methodology

6.1 Introduction

The aim of this research has been to evaluate the perspectives of front-line practitioners regarding services provided by YOTs, with particular focus afforded to the labour process and how indicators of alienated labour may be identified in the responses of interviewees. It is important to note that YOTs consist of workers both employed directly by the local authority and seconded from a variety of occupational backgrounds (Muncie and Hughes, 2002: 4). Access was gained to interview a good cross-section of all types of practitioners employed at the research sites including seconded Social Workers, Probation Officers, Police Officers and NHS Health Workers, and local authority employed YOT Officers, Substance Misuse Workers, Education Workers, Restorative Justice Workers, Court and Report Team Workers, Prevention Workers and YOT Managers. This enabled a wide ranging level of responses to issues affecting the workplace setting, augmented by interviewing UNISON Officials covering both research sites to supply further views on policy and worker representation.

According to (Field, 2007: 312), "distinct practice cultures" are present within workers from their individual representative agencies, which Muncie (2005) has suggested could may be manifested in differing levels of compliance or disagreement with impositions from YOT management. These distinct outlooks are considered as "underlying professional values" (Field, 2007: 320), most strongly portrayed by those practitioners representing a traditionally liberal social work ethos of child welfare. It is argued that such welfare-driven practitioners may

express "priorities in terms of dealing with welfare needs" (ibid: 314) in comparison to the legislative framework and management pressures regulating YOTs which are to seen to promote a "narrowed practice focus on those issues most directly related to offending" (ibid: 314).

Areas of consideration for this research included the extent to which standardised risk assessments have constrained scope for professional discretion (ibid: 256-257), hence involving a potential deskilling of front-line practice through the loss of worker control in their labour process (Muncie, 2009: 256-257). Despite the stated aim of the YJB, the organisation tasked with overall regulation of the youth justice system, being to "prevent children and young people under 18 from offending or re-offending" (Gov.uk, 2015), it has been noted that youth justice policy has been moulded by ideologies and agendas of past and present governments (White and Cunneen, 2006: 17). In this regard significant policy decisions have been shaped by public and media pressures, largely in response to highly publicised events (Muncie and Goldson, 2006: 36), hence the legislative and management demands placed on YOTs often emanate from media agendas and social pressures rather than the opinions of front-line practitioners who have direct experience of issues that affect young offenders. As a result, governments have incorporated successive punitive ideologies into legislation, having previously consigned them to political gesturing (ibid: 36); this was evident in the 1994 Criminal Justice and Public Order Act, argued as an overriding punitive agenda (Goldson, 2006: 143).

Running alongside policy decisions, which have been influenced by media and public discourse, has been a political pressure to attain "value-for-money" through mechanisms of financial constraints and managerial discipline (Garland, 2001: 88),

mirroring a wider movement of a cost-efficient and "performance-conscious" public sector (Pollit, 1993: 112). This has created a framework of increased legislative and management controls dictating youth justice practice, associated with regimented work practices and the heightened supervision of young people through the statutory standards associated with risk assessments, which has been agued as incompatible with the stated goals of youth crime prevention and reduction (Smith, 2006: 80).

The extent to which these themes have an influence on the perceptions of practitioners and impact on their own personal feelings as to the nature of their work was sought by the research. How this played in the employment relationship, with any sense of dislocation between organisational functions and their personal goals as practitioners, was then to be analysed for indicative signs consistent with theoretical ideas of alienation.

6.2 Key Issues for the Research

In light of New Public Management practices, which were promoted by politicians in the early 1990's (Hendrick, 2006: 5) and derived from the managerialist agenda of cost-efficiency (Garland, 2001: 188-189), the research focussed on the perspectives of practitioners in relation to the service they provide and if it meets their personal motivations in doing their chosen job. The opinions sought from practitioners referred to their views on the effectiveness of the service they provide in delivering the reported aims of YOTs, particularly in terms of prevention and in limiting the extent minor crimes escalate into more serious offences (Muncie, 2009: 256-257).

Areas of consideration included the degree to which standardized risk assessments have constrained scope for professional discretion (ibid: 256-257) and the consequential potential deskilling of front-line practitioners as this discretion is undermined. Additionally, the impact of performance management and individualised HR practices, as associated with New Labour's modernisation reforms (Bach and Kessler, 2012: 12), were addressed. This also included issues of employee representation, particularly in terms of trade union activity. The implications of allegedly pragmatic (Hendrick, 2006: 5) and cost-efficient work practices were addressed in terms of the tensions between practitioners and YOT management. This covered practitioner perspectives on the sufficiency of welfare measures for young people under YOT supervision, and the weaknesses or benefits of current employment practices.

Regarding the ability to influence management decisions (Blauner, 1964: 16), modes of employee representation were assessed, particularly as insufficient scope to express employee voice is a criticism commonly associated with public sector managerialism (Pollit, 1993: 112) and argued to restrain public service delivery (Ironside and Seifert, 2004: 68). Therefore, it becomes important to ascertain the circumstances in which employees express their opinions to management, and the role of trade unions in this function. For example, direct modes of communication are argued to be problematic as the power-relations are stacked in favour of management, whereas independent representation from trade unions minimize this effect (Flanders, 1968: 40). In a theoretical context these issues have relevance in terms of Blauner's (1964: 16) interpretation of powerlessness regarding workplace alienation. Trade union representation is a significant avenue for further discussions and so it became beneficial to determine

the level of trade union membership in YOTs, not only in terms of membership numbers but also the specific trade unions to which workers are affiliated. This may be influenced by the agency from which they are seconded and therefore could result in numerous trade unions operating in the same workplace.

In relation to standardised risk assessment, performance management, and the value derived from government statistics, consideration can be given to Marx's theory of use-value and exchange-value (Marx, 1976: 125-127); particularly when noting the thirst to measure production even for labour "which has no production" (Braverman, 1998: 288). This is argued as a means to ensure expenditure can be measured in predictable amounts (ibid: 288), which has led to contentious suggestions that precise economic measurements can be translated into the complex field of criminology (Garland, 2001: 188-189) and may represent itself as a resource issue in the perspectives of practitioners and management. The reasoning behind such economic lexicon entering youth justice and wider public services is argued as cost-minimisation (ibid: 288), thus perceptions of practitioners and management relating to the use of target-setting and performance management to monitor workers (Pollit, 1993: 112) was investigated. Particular focus was given to the extent that practitioners feel the service they provide is compromised by cost-efficiency measures and statistical performance indicators heavily enforced since the onset of New Public Management (Worrall *et al*, 2009: 123).

When considering the service provided to YOT clients in terms of both the quantity and quality, issues of social structures and deprivation rise to prominence. This provided an avenue to investigate the degree in which the needs of young people

may be represented in youth justice policy. Questions that arose here related to policies that are driven by government statistics aimed at securing public approval and potentially to the detriment of service-users (Bateman, 2006: 65).

6.3 Research Design

From the outset the research was designed to gain insight into practitioner, management and trade union perceptions in order to provide a rich narrative of information for the study of alienation. To best achieve this, the researcher adopted a deductive, qualitative, analytical approach as consistent with traditional studies in the field of industrial relations (Whitfield and Strauss, 2000: 141). The use of case studies has been an enduring, widespread feature of industrial relations research as argued by Kitay and Callus (1998: 101), due to its suitability for the exploration of multifaceted factors to explain and comprehend certain social happenings. In light of this, case studies might be viewed as presenting the most obvious approach for the researcher. However, it should be noted that despite adopting certain aspects of this method to maintain the aforementioned benefits, the approach taken in this thesis was not strictly that of case study research. This is because, despite research taking place at two distinct workplaces, the aim of this was not comparing their working lives and the direct differences between the two sites as a consequence of their different organisational structures as would be consistent with case study research. Instead, the aim of this analysis was not so much how the two sites function, as how within that context the workers form perceptions to their work and portrait the effect of any associated issues and, although differences in location and workplace setting may have been used to explain discrepancies between the workers in each workplace, the underlying goal

of the research was not comparative analysis per se. For this reason the terminology used in the thesis for each workplace is 'Research Site A' and 'Research Site B'.

The research method was chosen based on the most effective and efficient means to address the core research aims of the proposed study (Bell, 2005: 1). As a result interviews, supported by documentary evidence, were chosen as the central mode of assessing individual perspectives. Interviewing was the preferred as the method to realise these research aims, which are largely based on the perspectives of YOT workers, because this technique is considered the primary means to obtain the opinions and prior experiences of a research sample (Whipp, 1998: 54). Although consideration was given to other research methods, these were discounted due to likely constraints affecting their implementation and, therefore, the field data obtained. Before describing in greater detail the interviewing process that took place at each research site, the reasons for rejecting the alternate methods and the basis of their constraints will now be discussed further.

The first of these alternate methods considered was the collection of survey data which has been described as a systematic means of investigation (Hartley and Barling, 1998: 158) and is defined as the practice of "collecting information to describe, compare, or explain, knowledge, attitudes and behaviour" (Fink, 1995 cited in ibid: 158). Questionnaires are an established mechanism of surveying and rely upon posing near identical questions to respondents, with the questions being administered under similar conditions. Avoiding ambiguity in question design enables clear frames of reference to be established and act as benchmarks for

comparative analysis. Self-completed questionnaires would have allowed the administration of questions, generally with fixed options for the respondent to answer, to a designated sample of recipients who would then independently complete the questionnaires. This is beneficial to researchers as a way of assessing the opinions of large numbers of people both inexpensively and relatively quickly (ibid: 158). However, both the employment makeup of each research site, particularly in terms of employee numbers, and the nature of the research rationale were considered problematic for the use of survey data to reach the intended research aims.

Despite an acceptance that statistical data collected by surveying has substantially enhanced the knowledge of industrial relations in many contemporary studies (Brown and Wright, 1994: 154), the use of survey was firstly considered constrained by the potential number of responses from each research site, neither great enough in numbers to provide a useful sample. In addition, Whitfield and Strauss (2000) suggest there is a risk that such quantitative techniques of data collection as surveys may shift emphasis away from the causality of economic and underlying factors of the labour process which may influence perceptions on the employment relationship. As a result, surveying was considered incompatible with the aims of this project based on the lack of scope for probing and follow-up questions, obscuring an individual's true perceptions regarding the deeper dynamics of the employment relationship (Bell, 1995: 238) and Braverman's (1998: 20) warning against "questionnaire-sociology" (ibid: 20) in researching alienation provided a theoretical underpinning to the reason why this method was not utilised. Therefore, methods allowing for a greater insight into the breadth of

feeling of practitioners about their work, the wider political and economic factors seen to shape it, and effects it has on them, were sought.

Another method considered was that of ethnographic research and, despite many aspects positive to the nature of the study, this came to be rejected on the grounds of constraints. Ethnographic study, as one of its core benefits, taps into the contextual setting of a given environment, giving a first-hand insight on how people perceive their actions and those of others in a situational sense (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995: 1-2). This would allow for a fully integrated ground-level experience, not only of people's reactions to work but also gain deep insight as to the degradation of the labour process in which they work and both the internal and external pressures which are imposed on them within the capitalist economic system. This would subsequently act as a means to overcome Braverman's (1998) underlying criticism of Blauner's (1964) study.

However, ethnography was deemed impractical for the current study. For example Hammersly (2006: 5) argues that time constraints can negate this key benefit. In order to gain a full understanding of the historical factors that influence the situations that researchers seek to understand a lengthy period of investigation would be required, and due to the time constraints attached to this project insufficient time could be afforded to achieve this. As a result, the same temporal problems which can be connected with questionnaires and, as will be addressed further, interviews, would be associated with ethnography in the allowed time-frame. Thus, the time constraints would still encourage a historical account which "neglects the local and wider history of the institution being studied as well as the biographies of the participants" (ibid: 5). Further to this, ethical considerations

would have been a distinct barrier, both to gaining access to situations providing full ethnographic research and the morality of the study, due predominantly to the vulnerable nature of the client base associated with YOTs, and the sensitive information potentially uncovered. Despite these constraints ruling out the use of ethnography as a research method for this thesis, the researcher's experience of previously working in the this sector of employment and voluntary work undertaken during the thesis already provided some of the 'benefits' of ethnography, these benefits informed the research from the outset and explain the deductive research approach. Indeed, as will be explained in the succeeding section the past experiences of the researcher played a prominent role in gaining access to the research sites and acceptance from the practitioners, managers and trade union officials who came to be interviewed.

6.4 Access to Research Sites

According to Burgess (2000), gaining access is an elemental period of any research project, given that access is a necessary requisite for research to be realised (Burgess, 2000: 45). As stated above, access was granted at two separate Research Sites. These sites were chosen to reflect the theoretical strand of deprivation as cause for social discontent and youth crime, considered a salient issue from the perspective of practitioners in regards to the work they perform. The notion of deprivation as a feature of concern to practitioners interviewed was supported by statistical evidence, with certain areas coming under the remit of the Research Sites, cited in the English Indices of Deprivation (2010), as 'Lower layer Super Output Areas', these being categorised in the most deprived decile of the 'Index of Multiple Deprivation' (Gov.uk, 2011).

In both cases the gatekeeper for the site and initial point of contact was the Head of Service, although by the time of research the Head of Service at Site B was on long-term leave. In addition, access was obtained to two full-time UNISON officials whose remits covered each research site; these were the UNISON Branch Secretary covering Research Site A and a UNISON Convenor covering Research Site B. Having worked in the industry for two years, the researcher was able to gain trust with the gatekeepers of each workplace which greatly aided access. This was particularly the case at Research Site B as the researcher had the necessary field experience and relevant accreditations to undertake voluntary work experience at the service. Burgess (2000) highlighted such prior workings as a favourable factor in gaining access (ibid: 46) as not only did this gain favour with the gatekeeper, it also allowed the researcher to develop a rapport with front-line practitioners in advance of field research. It should be noted that the extent to which the researcher's past experiences and voluntary work within one research site facilitated acceptance as a 'practitioner' with interview participants varied considerably, with certain practitioners treating the researcher as a 'visitor' to the site, with one practitioner expressing a degree of scepticism as to the researcher's intentions when introduced at a team meeting in Research Site A. However, on many occasions at both research sites it was a clearly beneficial. This indicates what Burgess (1984: 88) explained as "the complexity involved in a research situation where the researcher may be simultaneously perceived in different terms by members of the same institution". As will be described further, arguably the most important aspect of the researcher's past experience in the industry studied is manner in which it directed and informed the questions pursued during interview (Burgess, 1983 cited in ibid.).

One possible result of the furthered engagement with Research Site B, where voluntary work was undertaken, could be argued as the extensive access to interview participants which included senior managers at Research Site B, whereas at Research Site A access was restricted to line-management, possibly because no prior contacts were developed with senior managers before initial access was sought. Once access was obtained, timescales for interviews were agreed with each gatekeeper and individual appointments were made with interviewees which allowed for a two hour period per interview. At both research sites the researcher was granted permission to contact interviewees either in person or via telephone or email communication following receipt of a contact list consisting of willing respondents. All interviews, barring two, subsequently took place in private rooms provided by the respective research site and, in total thirty-three interviews were obtained with a split of sixteen interviews at Research Site A and seventeen at Research Site B. The two interviews that took place outside of the research sites accounted for interview access to the UNISON Branch Secretary covering Research Site A and the UNISON Convenor covering Research Site B.

6.5 Interviews

Interviews according to Saunders et al (2009) are a form of directed discussion and can provide help to ensure validity and reliability, presenting data which is consistent to the aims of industrial relations studies. Interviews come in three key forms; structured interviews, semi-structured interviews and unstructured interviews. Structured interviews are prescriptive by nature, not dissimilar to the techniques used during face-to-face surveys. They mainly implement closed

questions, those which illicit exact responses but lack scope for interviewees to elaborate and give meaning to their answers, as opposed to open questions (Burgess, 1995: 101-102). For this reason greater focus will be afforded to semi-structured and unstructured interview techniques as these utilise open and follow-up questions to probe for further information (Whipp, 1998: 54) and therefore help combat the machine-like, systematic, research methods Braverman (1998) criticised as being inherently problematic for a creditable analysis of alienation.

In contrast to structured interviews, unstructured interviews have no set questions, instead the interviewer enquires about the specific topic intuitively which allows great scope for discussion. This is considered a high risk technique as the lack of structure and pre-set questions can lead to interviews lacking direction, whereby the information gathered can be of peripheral importance to the overall aims of the research, and the resultant validity of the interview may be questionable (Bell, 2005: 161). As a result, the researcher opted for semi-structured interviews which were conducted at each research site because such interviews can be seen to combine the techniques of the structured and unstructured techniques by having a loose framework of questions (Whipp, 1998: 54).Semi-structured interviews are less restrictive than structured interviews, but have similar gains to unstructured interviews in the sense that they allow for the researcher to ask follow-up questions and gain a better breadth of knowledge regarding the opinions of interviewees (Burgess, 1995: 101-102), in this case concerning their labour process and their personal responses to it.

Interview data would then be presented in the findings and conclusion chapters by way of "thick description" Geertz (1973), taking the form of direct quotations from

the interview data to support arguments. This allowed theories to be explicitly linked to the perspectives of interviewees and supported by direct statements, therefore giving transparency as to the analytical techniques used.

As mentioned, the interview design was influenced by the experiences of the researcher and subsequently the field relations and overall research process. To this end, it has been argued that the researcher can become a participant in their own analyses (Dawe, 1973 cited in Burgess, 1984: 89), as prior knowledge of the research setting provided for a basis to develop interview questions to illicit responses relevant to the aims of the study. While this may throw up notions of bias and reliability, the researcher actively avoided the pull to "go native" (Whipp, 1998: 55) during interview discussions, rather than the "projection of assumption on to respondents" (ibid: 54) the researcher opted for certain neutral questions, such as "Why did you go into this career?" (see Appendix Two), for the purpose of engaging conversation with respondents to form a foundation for interview relations and enable follow-up questions.

The interview questions and the order they were asked largely followed this approach, with early questions during the interview designed to build a biographical picture of the respondent in terms of their experience in working with young people or young offenders and encourage them to consider the reasons why they opted for such a career. This gave an indication of the perceptions and ideals of the interview respondents relating to broad issues of youth crime and their motives for working in the industry, with subsequent questions relating to political and management pressures on the work they perform. This enabled discussions to enter the conceptual realm of powerlessness, such as how

standardised work practices cause a "separation from the ownership of the means of production and the finished product" (Blauner, 1964: 16), along with issues of trade union representation, management regulation and accountability and discretion relating to the "inability to influence general management policies" (ibid. p16). Questions then moved on towards notions of financial efficiency and cost-minimisation to facilitate discussions relating to the "lack of control over conditions of employment" (ibid. p18) and performance management and target setting for analyses of the "lack of control over conditions of employment" (ibid: 18) to complete the investigative themes of powerlessness.

In regard to the examination of meaninglessness, questions relating to workplace procedure and standardised work practices were designed to ascertain the extent to which practitioners felt a connection with the overall structure of roles, particularly given the possible complexities of the multi-agency approach employed by YOTs. To investigate normlessness, the researcher was aware that themes of normlessness could potentially arise from all of questions asked at the interview, central to these however were the initial questions regarding the reasons why practitioners joined YOTs and the modes in which they felt their job should be performed. As a result, the dislocation between their personal aims in terms of the labour they perform and the aims of management and the state could be used to assess detectable feelings of normlessness. In linking questions to the theme of self-estrangement, when work does not express "the unique abilities, potentialities, or personality of the worker" (ibid: 26), similarly to the analysis of normlessness relevant data could potentially be yielded from a vast number of questions asked. Crucial to the research design for this analytical strand was ensuring sufficient scope for follow-up questions during interviews, this enabled

the research to ascertain the individual perceptions of respondents as to the lack of integration of the work into the totality of their "social commitments" (ibid: 26), along with the affect this had on any given individual and how they approach their work.

A further research source used by the researcher, for the purposes of analysis, was secondary data using documentary evidence to support findings. The use of this will now be discussed.

6.6 Documentary Evidence

Documentary evidence provided a means of assessing past policy decisions which may have impacted on the labour process of YOT practitioners. Due to barriers in accessing political stakeholders for purposes of interviews who may have influenced national or regional policy, documentary evidence provided an alternative source of research material (Johnson, 1984 in Duffy, 2005: 123). Although documentary evidence has a tendency to be biased as it may be written on behalf of an agency or relevant party and therefore suffer from a lack of neutrality (ibid: 131), accessing past legislative acts can generally be considered a reliable source. Also documentation of organisational aims and goals can be seen as a primary source of documented evidence as they were written at the time of the applied research (Patmore, 1998: 215).

The lack of impartiality of certain sources may be acknowledged as meaningful, particularly when assessing the impact of media or public opinion on policy responses. In such cases as media sources, these will be acknowledged as inherently biased, as will governmental rhetoric which may account for a distinct political agenda (Hendrick, 2006: 12). Documentary sources can come in a variety

of forms (Scott, 1990: 12-13), primary documents account for those written during the historical timeframe under investigation and secondary documents having been written after the event (Patmore, 1998: 219). Therefore, secondary documents would include books and journals, with primary documents including company reports, minutes and memos, legislative papers and newspapers (ibid).

Within the industry studied, issues of confidentiality regarding young people under YOT supervision effectively ruled out access to internal documents or minutes taken in team meetings known, in both services as 'case management meetings', although such meetings were a weekly occurrence at both research sites. However, the researcher was able to obtain an extensive array of legislative papers and YJB policy documents, all widely available as internet sources and formed the core primary documents informing this research. This provided benefits in terms of both interviewing respondents and analysing data, as the opinions of respondents could be directly set against the official policy documents which governed their service, aiding the critique of political rhetoric and a dislocation of ideals between practitioners and organisational goals, as associated prominently in discussions of normlessness.

The issue of bias, along with validity, reliability and ethics will be applied to the use of interviewing in the subsequent section, the primary research method adopted in this study.

6.7 Validity, reliability, research bias and ethics

Having discussed the constraints of alternative research methods considered for the project, attention will now turn to potential issues of validity, reliability, research bias and ethics with the chosen technique of interviews and, also, how the

researcher made efforts to combat potential constraints which undermine them. Reliability can be defined as the dependability of findings, the likelihood that similar results would be found following repetition of the chosen research method. The issue of validity refers to how successfully the claims made by a researcher are sustained by the procedures used (Bell, 2005: 117-118). Validity presents in two forms, internal validity, referring to the presence of the researcher influencing the responses from interviewees and thus the data received and, also, external validity, signifying the level that the data can be generalised to explain other situations, either in the temporal sense or similar workplaces in the context of different research sites (Burgess, 1995: 144).

A benefit of semi-structured interviews was the greater control granted to the researcher in comparison to unstructured interviews. This provided an opportunity to gain a considerable depth of information whilst implementing a degree of comparative analysis to uncover common themes running through the interview data. The loose-framework ensured the data obtained through probing and follow-up questions was focused on the projected aims of the research and, therefore, valid (Bell, 2005: 161-162).

Pilot testing in advance of field research was also implemented, as pilot testing allows a researcher to ascertain any potential flaws, weaknesses or ambiguity in interview design, and make any necessary revisions prior to data collection (Kvale in Turner, 2010: 757). This allowed achieving internal validity by ensuring the loose-framework was structured to meet the research aims and also maintain reliability by uncovering leading questions, which the researcher may not have initially considered problematic. In addition, pilot testing can help to avoid double-

questions whereby two or more topics are grouped together in a single question resulting in potential confusion; in such scenarios the information received becomes unreliable and undermines internal validity as the researcher may not be sure which topic was most prominently addressed by the respondent (ibid: 757). Pilot testing also helped prevent bias, which can occur when the researcher influences responses by manner, gestures or emotively worded language. Although one may unknowingly commit such indiscretions, it is considered important to guard against bias and endeavour not to manipulate outcomes, as such bias can severely undermine reliability (Bell, 2005: 166). Due to prior work experience in YOTs the researcher was able to access a robust volunteer for pilot testing who is a current practitioner at a YOT service outside of either Research Site, this enabled the researcher to ascertain if there were any clear problems with the interview questions prior to the field research undertaken in this study.

A final consideration for the researcher was that of ethics, this consideration was further magnified by the researcher opting, when possible, to make an audio recording of each interview for purposes of data analysis. In addition, the researcher administered standardised consent forms requiring written approval by way of signatures; these forms were approved by the university ethics committee. As Burgess (2000) argues, the use of consent forms in this manner can, conversely, jeopardise anonymity and put the respondent at a heightened risk of exposure. To combat this each respondent was assured that any recording would be held in a secure location and destroyed following the completion of the project. Only one interviewee refused to be recorded (Interview 12), therefore the researcher took notes throughout the interview and, by way of etiquette, the interviewee was given access to the notes on completion of the interview. In no

instance did covert recordings take place without interviewee consent, as such actions are considered unethical and could jeopardise the perceived integrity of the researcher (Bell, 2005: 164).

6.8 Interview Constraints

Despite the prior-mentioned efforts taken to avoid constraints, certain issues surrounding external validity proved unavoidable, most notably in terms of temporality. This constraint became apparent through interview respondents' views on political pressures which influence their work, and these were predominantly constrained by the timeframes during which they had been working at YOTs or by their working age in general. As a result, there was very little insight given into the historical context of public sector work and the youth justice system, with respondents maintaining large focus on the policies of the incumbent government or, in terms of workers of a greater age, those of governments throughout the 1980s and 1990s. In an analytical sense, this encumbered debates of the state as a model employer (Coffey and Thornley, 2009) and the historical context of the welfare state as an on-going tool of capitalist democracy (Miliband, 1982; Gough, 1979). This provided a barrier to ascertaining perspectives on the concept of "long-term relative expression" of alienation (Braverman, 1998: 20), thus not fully addressing the notion of long-term degradation of the capitalist labour process.

As this constraint was not possible to circumnavigate without the researcher steering interviewees, by way of leading questions, into responses which did not affect their personal outlooks, the researcher highlighted circumstances where discrepancies existed between views of interviewees and documented details of

the political economy. The additional feature of external validity, the ability to make generalisations to other institutions in related industries or workplaces (Burgess, 1995: 144), was another constraint to analysis. Interviews took place at two distinct YOTs, thus aiding the validity of generalisations made by the researcher (Beynon and Blackburn, 1972: 6), coupled with common themes presented during interviews at both research sites, which could potentially be applied to the national scale in instances of national policy regulating work practices. However, the geographical locale of individual YOTs may also influence worker perspectives in terms of the local economy and history of trade unionism. For this reason, generalisations applied to the national scale cannot be undisputed.

This chapter will now seek to describe each research site studied to provide a background of the workplace environments accessed by the researcher. The geographical context of each Research Site will be discussed along with hierarchical structures used in the management of workers.

6.9 Overview of Research Sites

Research Site A

Research Site A is situated in a large urbanised city and, by remit, serves the entire populous within the city boundary. The working structure of Research Site A represents clear divisions of labour between senior management, line management, Case Managers and specialised front-line practitioners, with attached administration teams providing clerical support for service operations. In terms of management structure, the service is overseen by a Head of Service with a Deputy Head of Service working directly below in the hierarchical structure.

Additionally, Senior Co-ordinators are employed to work above the line managers and these complete the senior management structure.

Due to the size of the city, the case management of young offenders is split between two separate teams, one covering the north of the city and the other the south. Each team has an Area Manager assuming overall line management responsibility and Senior Practitioners who, coupled with front-line practitioners, are granted certain management responsibilities within the teams. The managerial aspects of a Senior Practitioner's role consists of 'quality checking' work from Case Managers, authorising breach reports and approving certain decisions taken by other front-line practitioners. The inclusion of Senior Co-ordinators, also present at Research Site B, within the pyramidal work structure of the service can be argued to reflect typical trends in capitalist work arrangements. As discussed in the Chapter 3, Braverman (1998: 185-186) describes how sub-divisions of those with managerial functions can increase overall management control by intensifying the level of supervision under which workers operate. As a result, workers suffer a diminution in their ownership of the produce of their labour as additional control is in the hands of management, which was argued to be a possible factor causing alienated labour (ibid: 185-186).

As with Research Site B, the basis of YOT activities can be identified by what Gough (1979: 3) termed "the provision of social services". Operating as a statutory body the service falls under the category of imparting a compulsory service onto service users, potentially against their will. The statutory part of the service is the responsibility of the North and South area teams delivering statutory interventions to young people, and the Court and Reports Team, which provides a statutory link

to the courts. Centrally imposed national standards, regulated by the YJB, fuelled the perception of managerialist techniques and policies being used at both Research Sites which, as will become apparent later in the chapter, reflects the shift to standardised work practices. These are argued to focus on offender manager management rather than the traditional, client centred, social work ethos within youth justice practice (Garland, 2001: 18). Although both Research Sites also operate a separate Prevention Team which provides interventions to young people highlighted at risk of future offending on a non-statutory basis, these teams were said to follow similar managerial work processes as the statutory teams.

It should be noted that, even within the same service, workers in the distinct area teams indicated that different challenges can be faced by young people through court orders to the separate teams. A clear example of this is an observation by a seconded Probation Officer, who stated that the south area has a *"predominantly white"* demographic in comparison to the north area. Despite this, there is also a perception that considerable overlaps exist in the challenges facing young people supervised by each team, with a large emphasis placed on poverty. According to a Senior Practitioner in the South Team:

> *"Youth crime is a structural issue linked to deprivation, as pockets of the city*
> *which are very deprived have high proportions of young people who offend*
> *and then other areas of the city, which are more affluent, won't have those*
> *high numbers". (Interview 7, Research Site A, Senior Practitioner)*

The perceived problems of social structures leading to deprivation as a major cause of youth crime will be linked to themes of normlessness in the succeeding chapter. These factors are referred to by Hyman (1975: 22), who argued that

people born into such pockets of deprivation subsequently face similar barriers to societal advancement as their elders, thus constraining their future prospects. The resulting marginalisation of these deprived groups, who are unable to meet social expectations in terms of acquiring image and commodities (Wacquant, 2004: 5), is further argued to be a catalyst for offending behaviour (Garland, 2000: 3).

The multi-agency makeup of the workforce becomes evident within the North and South Teams, which are predominantly made up of Case Managers who assume overall responsibility for the supervision of young people under court orders. Case Managers take responsibility in overseeing the completion of initial and ongoing assessments of the young people who they supervise, and the referral of young people to specialist workers for related interventions with the aim of enabling young people to successfully complete their orders. It should also be noted that Case Managers have a dual role of enforcement as, in addition to welfare, they are responsible for filing breach reports which can result in a young person returning to court should they be deemed non-compliant with their order. This will be related to the historic debate between the benefits of welfarism and punishment within the criminal justice system (Hendrick, 2006: 11) later in the chapter.

Case Management duties are generally assigned to seconded Social Workers, seconded Probation Officers and YOT Officers, who are directly employed by the local authority. As will be addressed in further discussion, this provided a source of discontent within case management staff, also mirrored at Research Site B, regarding disparity of pay. The reason for the discrepancy in pay is due to the way pay scales are graded, reflecting Pitts' (2001) argument of the de-professionalization of youth justice. As a result, Case Managers seconded from

Social Services and Probation Services are paid more than YOT Officers for what is essentially the same job.

As mentioned, Case Managers work in conjunction with specialist intervention workers who received young people on referral from Case Managers according to perceived need. These workers include CAHMS Workers (mental health), Education Social Workers, Connexions (Careers) Advisors, Substance Misuse Workers and Restorative Justice Workers. Having previously employed a seconded Youth Worker specialising in exit strategies for young people at the cessation of an order, this worker has since been lost due to financial constraints, a circumstance also replicated at Research Site B. In addition, YOTs have a legislative responsibility to include Police Officers (Renshaw and Powell, 2001 cited in Crawford and Newburn, 2003: 12) and, as will be discussed further, their inclusion highlighted some of the potential difficulties in the multi-agency approach in context of the current YOT structure.

Research Site A was largely unionised in terms of membership. However, due to the multi-agency nature of the team, membership is spread over multiple trade unions with seconded staff mostly remaining with the union attached to their professional background. According to the UNISON representative this created some co-ordination problems for UNISON which, importantly, has the largest trade union membership in the workplace, particularly in relation to organising collective action.

Research Site B

Research Site B is also a city based YOT that covers an urban expanse that is smaller in size than Research Site A. Consequently, the service does not have

distinct area teams; instead it has two separate teams named the 'Integrated Offender Management Team' and the 'Integrated Intervention Team'. In this sense Research Site B differed in structure to Research Site A as each Case Manager, along with Police Officers, are placed in the 'Integrated Offender Management Team', while the specialist intervention workers are encompassed within the 'Integrated Intervention Team'. Research Site B also has a distinct Courts and Reports Team and Prevention Team, which operate in the same fashion as Research Site A. The Senior Management structure of Research Site B mirrors that of Research Site A, with a Head of Service, Deputy Head of Service and two Senior Integrated Co-ordinators operating above each team's line manager who, in this service, are known as Team Co-ordinators.

Case management duties are also split between seconded Social Workers, seconded Probation Officers and directly employed YOT Officers, with the pay disparities observed at Research Site A in evidence within this service. Despite all being placed within one team, the make-up of the specialist intervention workers is generally consistent with Research Site A. Due to the smaller size of the YOT, the overall number of specialist intervention Staff, as with Case Managers, is smaller than in the previous Research Site. However, despite a smaller workforce, the inclusion of a Clinical Psychologist denotes a slightly more diverse array of intervention workers.

Interview participants at this Research Site also repeatedly linked youth crime to deprivation, citing lack of opportunities and poverty in specific areas of the city as factors which perpetuate youth crime. Often this was considered a problem

inherited through generations in these areas, with young people seeing little chance to escape cycles of deprivation.

Public sector spending cuts were an evident concern in this service with additional pressures on staff being suggested as a reason for high rates of absence and low morale in the workforce. As with Research Site A, the workforce had been depleted with departing staff not being replaced and, in some cases, involuntary redundancies forced upon staff. Many workers on fixed term contracts had to re-apply for their own jobs each year, which was considered somewhat degrading to staff members and also resulted in colleagues competing for less available jobs.

Like Research Site A, trade union membership was high at Research Site B, although there was more evidence of non-unionised workers in the latter Research Site. All union members claimed representation in the event of disciplinary procedures as a critical reason for their affiliation with a trade union and, despite the high membership, only one worker actively sought to attend meetings and other union activities. Notwithstanding the seeming lack of engagement with unions by members at Research Site B, there were clear signs of political and ideological support for their trade unions. As will be described in the following section, Research Site B, unlike Research Site A, had no shopfloor representative. Trade Union information was disseminated by email or information sheets and booklets using a linked worker, employed as a Court Officer, who the UNISON Convenor described as a 'post box'. This worker had no responsibility as a representative but tried to maintain clear links with UNISON at the local council to publicise trade union activity in the area.

6.10 Conclusion

This chapter has provided an overview of how the core aims of the thesis shaped the research design, which was deductive and qualitative in nature. Although not strictly adopting a case study approach, aspects of this approach were incorporated in the design to ensure the complexities of the employment relationship were explored, such as using more than one research method in conjunction with each other (Kitay and Callus, 1998: 3). The research method of interviews, that of the semi-structured variety, was chosen as the best way to ensure a rich breadth of information could be obtained from respondents at each research site, with the loose-framework of questions keeping the dataset focussed on issues of the labour process and alienation. Interview data was supplemented by documentary analysis to access larger-scale goals of the youth justice system holistically and assess how these played out alongside the perspectives of front-line practitioners.

When discussing validity, reliability, research bias and ethics, it has been explained that certain constraints regarding external validity could not be evaded. The most prevalent constraint to external validity being temporality, as this meant that interviewee responses did not fully address the historical significance of the state as a model employer debate (Coffey and Thornley, 2009) nor the nature of capitalist democracy and its influence on public sector institutions. Thus, the long-term degradation of the labour process in a capitalist system (Braverman, 1998: 20) was not overt, on the whole, in the responses of interviewees who generally spoke of the current or recent governments. Notwithstanding such constraints, the thesis does, however, provide a contemporary, in-depth, analysis of how the

political and economic landscape and management regulation can influence the employment relationship in a statutory welfare service and result in indicators of alienation. The thesis, therefore, builds on previous research in this by acknowledging criticisms of past studies, such as Blauner's (1964) use of "questionnaire-sociology" (Braverman, 1998: 20), to engender consideration of the wider factors of the political economy and apply them to theoretical ideas of alienation. The final part of this chapter provided an overview of each research site, designed to further contextualise the workplaces examined in or to set up discussion in the forthcoming findings chapters in where interview findings will be critically analysed alongside the theoretical framework used in this thesis.

Chapter 7

Powerlessness

7.1 Introduction

This chapter will be the first of two findings chapters to analyse the key themes which emerged from the interview data at each Research Site in order to form a comprehensive evaluation of alienated labour at the respective workplaces. An insight will be provided into the work processes used by each site, along with the modes in which workers can express their opinions in management decision-making, this will include employee consultation procedures and the influence of trade unions on workplace operations. The chapter will also address the role of the State as an employer which directly affects the working lives of YOT practitioners through political agendas and decision-making, and constrains the quality of provisions delivered to service-users. Interview responses will be set against the theoretical framework discussed in the earlier chapters as adapted from previous studies of the concept of alienation in different industrial settings (Blauner, 1964).

As mentioned in Chapter 5, the notion of multi-agency, regional Youth Offending Teams was put into practice following the Crime and Disorder Act (1998). This act guided the make-up of YOTs through specific statutory requirements as to the professionals they employ (Crawford and Newburn, 2003: 12). Despite this, a degree of leeway was afforded with regards to the actual structure of the workplace, which most interview participants considered to be part of the managerial prerogative, and this was reflected in certain differences when considering the non-statutory, non-case management structure of the two Research Sites. The noted concerns of the interview participants regarding the

work arrangements of their YOT will be discussed in the following contextual overview of each Research Site, along with subsequent sections linking interview themes with the theoretical framework of alienated labour. As will become apparent, this chapter will focus on discussion of modes of powerlessness being the most frequently indicated manifestation of alienated labour in the industry-specific context, with the succeeding chapter accounting for meaninglessness, self-estrangement and normlessness thus completing the theoretical template for discussion.

7.2 Alienation

The chapter will now seek to address possible manifestations of alienation at both workplaces. According to Marx, all labour is alienated in capitalist systems as the products of labour are treated as commodities. Therefore, a value is assigned to the products of labour within the context of the system in which it was produced (Marx, 1976: 172). However, Braverman (1998) argues that, while this may be true, visible indicators of alienation within a workplace are discernible in terms of job dissatisfaction. Braverman cited Blauner's (1964) model, as covered in the Chapter 4, for observing possible signs of alienation, although criticising it from a Marxist perspective. This was due to Blauner's (1964) line of thought that a person's response to the work they perform, rather than the larger social and political factors which influence the nature of work itself, was the only thing worth studying (Braverman, 1998: 21-22). Schwalbe (1986) added to this criticism by arguing this led to an analytical disregard of the capitalist imperatives which compelled the work performed. The chapter will proceed to adapt Blauner's (1964) framework, acknowledging Marxist criticisms by giving consideration to larger

debates of the political economy, which have driven and shaped the work structures of YOTs and other public services, consequently affecting service delivery and the work performed. The degradation of work evidenced in interview responses will therefore not simply be considered as necessary and inevitable, but as an inherent feature of the capitalist labour process. This will allow discussion to challenge both the historical development of capitalism and the political and economic forces which have influenced its application at the Research Sites. The chapter will now focus on the contextual headings of "Powerlessness", the most eminent manifestation of alienated labour evident from interview responses.

7.3 Powerlessness

As stated in the literature, Blauner (1964) argued there to be four modes of industrial powerlessness which will form a theoretical guide as to how the concept is applied to the workers interviewed. In essence, it is argued that powerlessness reflects actions at work which are responsive to external direction such as other people, work systems or technology. The afflicted worker thus becomes dominated rather than self-directed. Blauner (1964) also argues that the degree to which powerlessness may be attributed to people depends upon their political and sociological outlooks, along with the facets of freedom which they, personally, covet.

While adapting Blauner's (1964) interpretation of powerlessness, or any other indication of alienation, it is important to distinguish between the traditional factory settings used for his study and the role of YOTs, which is that of a primarily service based industry. As argued in Chapter 3, the link between industrial capitalism and the service sector, as variants of the labour process, lies in the fact that the

usefulness of labour purchased is assigned according to the aims of an employer. This labour then takes the role of a commodity and thus creates value in accordance with the goals of the employer (Braverman, 1998: 252). The mode by which work is organised and regulated by management at the Research Sites, to achieve the aims prescribed by central government, will now be applied to the first mode of industrial powerlessness studied, cited as "the separation from the ownership of the means of production and the finished product" (Blauner, 1964: 16).

7.3.1 The Separation from the Ownership of the Means of Production and the Finished Product

Blauner (1964) argues that the reality of large-scale organisations creates a system in which a lack of ownership is a constant in the factory settings analysed. He provides the example that the workers in a car or chemical production factory have forfeited expectations to own the machinery and tools which they use and, "by and large do not feel deprived because they cannot take home the Corvairs or sulphuric acid they produce" (ibid: 17). Of course, YOT practitioners do not feel deprived because they cannot take home the young offenders with whom they work, nor do they expect ownership of the computers in their office. However, the intrinsic element of creating a human connection with the young people under their supervision is something that interviewees, by and large, sought ownership of and the main tool of their craft was seen as their interpersonal skills, often perceived as under-threat by the shift toward standardised work processes. Whereas Blauner (1964) argued that it could not be said for certain whether or not workers' alienation from ownership unconsciously shapes the quality of their experiences in

the factory setting, practitioners at the YOT displayed a clear indication that their experiences at work were tainted in this manner.

As mentioned, notions of accountability and standardised assessments have led to prescriptive activities becoming commonplace as part of a YOT practitioner's labour. This was perceived to have greatly constrained the opportunity to engage with young people and use their interpersonal skills as they believe necessary to effectively carry out their tasks. Their lack of ownership of the standardised assessments they were required to complete and their subsequent inability to adapt them to suit their preferred ways of working had notable alienating affects. For example, according to a qualified Social Worker employed as a Case Manager at Research Site A:

> *"Even when you are with a young person, which isn't often, you're just focused on what's asked from you in the job, do this performance tool, then you are like 'okay that's finished, see you next week' and onto the next job. But I am a social worker; I have the experience and training to prove it. So why not let me use my skills to connect with a young person and make a difference rather than making me follow these assessments we had no input on in the first place?" (Interview 14, Research Site A, Social Worker and Case Manager)*

Such a statement of dissatisfaction in the workplace may have greater significance as an indicator of other modes of powerlessness which form subsequent discussions. It does, however, show the strength of feeling from practitioners of the usefulness of their own skills and discretion when performing their labour, rather than relying on a unified or prescriptive 'best practice'. This was particularly

associated with those of a social work background, who, as discussed, are argued by Field (2007: 13) to have strong professional values of liberal welfarism. In addition to social work the multi-agency makeup of YOTs includes practitioners from other professional backgrounds, such as Probation and Police Officers, also being argued to have associative professional values (ibid: 13). However, prescriptive practices may have been expected to have had a greatest effect on social workers given their noted ethos of traditional welfarism, along with policy shifts towards punitive practice in the youth justice sector (Goldson, 2005: 34). The addition of more powerful Government means of micro-management, which have given less scope for professional discretion (Muncie, 2005: 54) and reflect the Taylorist policies that infiltrated the public services, have provided a focus of discussion spanning many of the ensuing themes of alienation. These relate to the subjective expectations that practitioners may have in terms of control over their labour process set against the objectives conditions which negate it.

7.3.2 The Inability to Influence General Management Policies

Linked to these points, the second mode of industrial powerlessness in Blauner's (1964: 16) model is described as "the inability to influence general management policies" (ibid: 16). Again the industrially specific pressures facing YOT practitioners are an important factor of consideration. Employees in Blauner's (1964) study did not show a general resentment of this facet of powerlessness. It was argued that workers accepted that top-down hierarchical authority structures, which gave them little to scope to influence major decisions of their organisation, were a "given" within their industry (ibid: 18). As discussed in the literature review, YOTs can be classified as public sector services. This means the state acts as the

employer and the incumbent government sits at the top of the hierarchical structure (Salaman, 2000: 300), thus having overall decision making powers to drive the direction of youth justice strategy at that particular time. These policies are implemented through the Youth Justice Board (YJB), a non-departmental public body set-up to regulate YOT activities originally proposed by the New Labour Government in 1998 as part of the Crime and Disorder Act (Crime and Disorder Act, 1998, c.37). This body became heavily associated with the rise of managerialism in the sector, limiting professional discretion (Smith, 2006: 80) through the "audit explosion" (Clarke and Newman, 1997: 80) and intensive performance management regimes (Worrall *et al,* 2009: 125) which came to define reforms under New Labour (Bach and Kessler, 2012: 49).

In the historical context, the YJB is one of many devices used by central governments to reorganise the delivery and practice of youth justice; according to Muncie and Hughes (2002: 1) the youth justice sector has been afflicted by continuous political and ideological "conflict, contradictions ambiguity and compromise" (ibid: 1). As a result, there have been numerous reorientations of criminal and youth justice policy and, subsequently, the expected role of the respective institutions involved within the sub-sector, as determined by the political and social contexts of the time. This is argued to have left a trail of patchwork repairs and interim solutions as opposed to well thought-out processes (Garland, 2001: 103). In such a politicised sector, given the argued professional values spanning the occupations of those employed in the multi-agency teams (Field, 2007), the inability to influence general management or, indeed, national policy decisions gives this form of powerlessness a greater salience within the industry researched. A further factor adding to this is the personal reasons given as to why

many practitioners first got involved in youth justice in their respective capacities, with a common theme suggesting a genuine desire to work with young people and "make a difference" to young peoples' lives. Subsequently, general management and government policies, which can greatly affect the work they perform with young people, were reflected as a very real concern of practitioners working at both Research Sites.

In terms of national policy, this was noted as an issue by the UNISON Branch Secretary, whose role encompassed Research Site A. It was her view that the opinions of YOT practitioners should have a genuine stake in government policymaking as "they're the ones on the ground meeting the young people and their families, not the politicians" (Interview 15, Research Site A, UNISON Branch Secretary). When asked whether there are effective measures to ensure this voice was heard and properly considered in decision-making at this level, she expressed her doubt:

> *"I know UNISON nationally certainly tries and there's a number of mechanisms that we have within UNISON to try and influence politicians, their thinking around those bigger policies, but the extent to which we are listened to and our views are taken into account when it comes to policy formulation is a different matter. I'm sceptical about that if I'm honest about it." (Interview 15, Research Site A, UNISON Branch Secretary)*

Evidence suggesting this encouraged the mode of industrial powerlessness in question was frequent and, at times, expressed in quite emotive terms by interviewees. Firstly, these reflected the perceived punitive nature of youth justice strategy by many practitioners which were not in-line their own individual beliefs.

This corroborates arguments that youth justice has displayed a notable shift towards punitive enforcement and offender management since the early 1990s (Muncie and Goldson, 2006: 36) and reveals the conflict between welfarism and punitive practices (Bottoms, 2002) as existent in front-line YOT practice at the Research Sites. Examples of this can be shown by the following responses from Case Managers at both Research Sites when asked if they believed youth justice strategy had the correct balance between welfare and punishment:

> *"No, there's far too much focus on punishment, particularly when they're already under a court order. The way it is, I think, once they end up with us they're more likely to reoffend." (Interview 14, Research Site A, Social Worker and Case Manager)*

> *"Youth crime's not as bad as people think and once they've got an order sometimes the system seems to punish them more. I mean, we're taking kids really, not fully developed adults. There isn't one child I have worked with over the last few years where simply the kid is a bad egg, it simply doesn't happen, it doesn't exist. There always more to it. Always things in their lives that make them that way, and the way they get punished for any mistakes they seem to make when they've got an order, I sometimes think maybe we make them that way." (Interview 26, Research Site B, Case Manager and YOT Officer)*

Such views were not exclusive to Social Workers at the Research Sites; although, supporting Field's (2007) argument, the strength of feeling was most detectable within this group of practitioners. Importantly, it was also displayed by YOT Officers, seconded Probation Officers and certain specialist intervention workers.

For example a Probation Officer at Research Site A also believed there was too much emphasis on punishment in the sector, believing public perception had more power to influence general policy decisions than practitioners:

"You have moral panics and the hoodies and all this malarkey. I think they're vilified (young offenders/young people) when it serves a purpose. If you think of the middle class, I suppose by definition I am one – working here. But youth justice, criminal justice, it's always a political football isn't it? And it seems to me that all parties are concerned with how punitive they can appear, it's a great shame, it seems to me really unintelligent, I don't think it's evidence-based, but there we are." (Interview 1, Research Site A, Probation Officer and Case Manager)

As suggested, the spectrum of professionals employed to make-up YOTs is diverse, with YOTS being required to include at least one Police Officer, healthcare professional and Education Worker, in addition to a Social Worker and Probation Officer (Crime and Disorder Act, 1998, Section 39). Therefore the shift towards punitive trends may not be expected to encourage powerlessness with all professionals in the workplace, who have different occupational interests (Piper, 1999). Arguably the most likely professional background not to feel dissatisfied by trends towards punitive policy decisions are Police Officers and further investigation during interviews at both Research Sites supported this hypothesis. When asked if young people were treated fairly in the criminal justice system a Police Officer seconded to Research Site A replied:

"Sentencing by courts is fair, yes. But when they're under order it's much too lenient, with them being juveniles they get another chance too often. I

agree with having another (chance) but there comes a time when we're putting stuff in place and they're not learning. They're juveniles, yes, but at that age they should be learning from their mistakes and we aren't enforcing that enough." (Interview 3, Research Site A, seconded Police Officer)

The Police Officer at Research Site B held a more radical view, suggesting punishment should extend to a greater degree, imposed on the young person, to enforce their engagement with welfare provisions. This interviewee believed the process in which a young person could be breached and returned to court for accessing provision for their welfare needs should be more commonly practised:

"We should enforce the rehabilitative side of it much more, and the mental health side of things. Make it a bit more enforceable on the grounds of their vulnerability. The Case Managers here are reluctant to breach on the grounds of vulnerability interventions, but if these young people aren't accessing the services which can help; more should be done to make them. A bigger threat of court might do that." (Interview 29, Research Site B, seconded Police Officer)

When asked if this affected their job satisfaction, both Police Officers suggested it did not because, according to the Police Officer at Research Site B "that's out of my hands, I don't have a say in that". As a result, it may be apparent that this form of industrial powerlessness in the Youth Offending Service, represented as the inability to affect central government policy at the top of the authoritative structural hierarchy of public services (Salaman, 2000: 300), is dependent on the individual

perceptions and subjections of practitioners which, in turn, are influenced by their occupational backgrounds and the associated training and practice culture.

In terms of an "inability to influence general management policies" as a mode of powerlessness (Blauner, 1964: 16) in the context of the individual YOT hierarchy, there were strong themes that emerged from interviews to suggest this was a concern for the majority of practitioners. There was evidence that there was a considerable amount of antagonism between practitioners at Research Site A, more so than Research Site B, however certain themes of dissatisfaction were evident at both.

As noted, both Research Sites displayed what can be concluded as a distinctly unitarist (Fox, 1966) management regime, with uni-lateral management decision-making perceived as the adopted strategy, in line with trends in the public services since the 1980s (Fredman *et al*, 1989: 27), particularly in terms of central government imposed policy. The inability to influence general management policies touches on themes of representation and, as such, the role of trade unions in the workplace; one such function has been argued to challenge management and influence workplace policy on behalf of its members (Flanders, 1968: 41). The presence and influence of trade unions in each workplace will now be examined to further understand the extent to which they provided a mechanism to influence policy on behalf of practitioners. As discussed, both Research Sites were heavily unionised in membership with multiple unions operating in the same workplace and UNISON the predominant trade union, in terms of membership numbers. There were many cases of dissatisfaction from practitioners emanating from an apparent lack of ability to influence general management policies, with an

overriding sense that trade unions did not provide a viable vehicle for practitioner voice to be heard at management level at Research Site A and B.

7.3.2.1 Trade Union Influence

As mentioned in the site overviews, both Research Sites were heavily unionised in terms of membership numbers, with multiple unions operating in the same workplace and UNISON the predominant trade union. There were many cases of dissatisfaction from practitioners emanating from an apparent lack of ability to influence general management policies, with an overriding sense that trade unions did not provide a viable vehicle for practitioner voice to be heard at management level. Research Site B had no shopfloor trade union representative and instead relied on a "Post Box" system with a specific UNISON member, also a practitioner at Research Site B, assigned the role of UNISON "Post Box". His role as "Post Box" was simply to act as a link between the regional UNISON Convenor and shopfloor level by circulating trade union information to the rest of the workforce. During interview the UNISON Convenor covering Research Site B stated her belief that this was an effective system of representation for her members, despite the lack of a shopfloor representative, giving reason that she had a high-profile in the workplace due to her frequency of visits:

> *"I've not got a problem walking around anywhere. I could walk into the YOT without an appointment and say 'Oh, hey up how is everyone?' and that's fine. I try and do that as much as I can because I don't want to be office based. I'm used to being out and about in my old job and me sat in the office isn't going to do anyone any favours because I'm not out there seeing my members when I'm tied down writing disciplinary cases and whatever*

else that has to be done. I like to try and get out and about." (Interview 28,

Research Site B, UNISON Convenor)

This freedom to enter the workplace could be seen as a result of the relatively sympathetic view senior management has to trade unions, with the acting Deputy Head of Service declaring she was a UNISON member. Despite this, the majority of the workplace did not reciprocate this viewpoint, claiming trade unions had little activity on the shopfloor other than disciplinary hearings or suspension. According to a Restorative Justice Worker, and UNISON member, at Research Site B:

"I would say no, there isn't much union presence round here, we get all of

*our emails from *** (The Post Box) but he's not an actual rep. They don't*

seem to directly challenge any management decisions or seem to have any

influence. I've never been asked my opinion on anything by someone from

the union." (Interview 19, Research Site B, Restorative Justice Worker)

At Research Site B there is a clear argument that emerges from interviews suggesting a worker's ability to influence management policy is constrained by the lack of workplace trade union presence, subsequently encouraging powerlessness in this form. At Research Site A, however, a UNISON Representative is present in the workplace and although this might suggest this mode of powerlessness to be manifested less in the service, this may not be the case. This is a result of a commonly held perception by practitioners that management was antagonistic and dismissive of employee opinion. Despite the existence of a UNISON Representative at Research Site A, argued to provide a mechanism for workers to influence management decisions (Flanders, 1968: 41), managers were seen to actively oppose his presence on the shopfloor. The person occupying this position

took up the role despite having no previous experience of trade union representation, describing this as a personal decision based on perceived need. He has since set-up procedures to provide a union presence to challenge management:

"There was no union in here, nothing was unionised in our service, so I decided then to join UNISON and get the ball rolling. Start the union (presence), have regular meetings, to challenge management, and things like that… certain things were going on, nothing was being challenged and everything was just being put on us. So that's why I set that up". (Interview 16, Research Site A, UNISON representative)

Such a statement indicates this form of powerlessness had encouraged alienation in this worker, also a practitioner at the service. The act of becoming a UNISON representative, despite no prior background of union representation, and setting up processes to enable trade union influence in the management decision-making process, can be argued as a response to this form of alienation by taking direct action against the management structures that encouraged it. Considering the opposition to him undertaking and continuing the role as a UNISON Representative, the YOT management at Research Site A, who he believed have become personally objectionable to him as a practitioner because of his union involvement, shows the strength of feeling this form of alienation elicited in him at a personal level. He elaborated on this during interview, while explaining his attempts to "drum up support" from other colleagues, which he believed is lacking amongst practitioners due to fear of management reprisals, asserting:

"I'm always saying to my workmates, 'don't go cap in hand tap dancing to nobody, always stand your ground and question everything. If you don't believe it then voice your opinion.' But they don't in here and a lot of them will put their hands up and admit it. I've stood in front of them and just said, 'where's your balls, you know, what are you lot about?'… Managers here know I've done that and they don't like me one bit." (Interview 16, Research Site A, UNISON representative)

The UNISON Representative believed this lack of willing from practitioners to voice an opinion to management was not indicative of satisfied workers and thus an absence of powerlessness in this form. Indeed, his perception contravened this assumption. In response to a follow-up question, the UNISON Representative asserted that staff had become disillusioned with management's disinclination to listen to their opinions. The interviewee went so far as to denigrate management integrity and claim they had an underlying motive of reinforcing their power over workers:

"Management think that they know best and don't want to listen to any of the actual staff that work here. It's very, very difficult… People feel they're looking at a kind of, if you like, a corrupt regime. That they're not listened to, and things are just done (by management) for the sake of doing them and managers would rather go against you than work with you". (Interview 16, Research Site A, UNISON representative)

During interview, the UNISON Representative continued his narrative to elaborate on negotiations attempting to influence management policies in his capacity as a shop steward. It could be argued that subterfuge provided him a legitimate means

to combat experiencing powerlessness in this form. He believed the procedures he had put in place to express workers' views were met with obvious adversity by management at Research Site A who would purposely seek to undermine the collective voice provided by UNISON. Furthermore, he perceived management disagreements with union opinions to be ideologically motivated rather than motivated by reason and, consequently, could use this as an advantage to trick management during policy discussions:

> *"Sometimes you will have to use reverse psychology on them... because whatever you want or you suggest they will go the total opposite, it's a very power controlled environment". (Interview 16, Research Site A, UNISON representative)*

This opinion was also upheld by the UNISON Branch Secretary, whose role embraced Research Site A, in quoting "I know reps who have used reverse psychology, I've seen them do it. They use is to really good effect and quite funny when you see it in practice" (Interview 15, Research Site A, UNISON Branch Secretary). The UNISON Representative also considered that the fear of job losses, which will be explored further in subsequent forms of powerlessness, in reference to continued government spending cuts affecting YOTs across England and Wales (CYPN, 2011), provided a barrier to staff influencing general management policies during the employee consultations provided by the service. In direct support of Bach and Stroleny's (2013) argument of austerity creating a climate of fear, hindering the likelihood of a collective trade union challenge to management, he believed management used this as a tool to strengthen their

control over the labour process, thus diminishing the prospect of worker resistance to unilateral management decisions:

"People are getting to address certain things in-house, during supervision with their Senior Practitioner and then we have regular team meetings once a month to address any issues. But as soon as someone brings up an issue management shouts them down and that's the end of it. People have never been in more fear of their jobs". (Interview 16, Research Site A, UNISON representative)

The fear of job losses, again, underlined his personal strength of dissatisfaction felt towards the inability to influence management, particularly given his stated belief that his trade union involvement and activities to combat this form of powerlessness had greatly increased his own job insecurity. Speaking about a recent meeting with YOT management at Research Site A, in his capacity as a UNISON representative, he claimed to have been informed of a forthcoming Service Review in which "a few jobs would go" and workers would face interviews in order to compete for the remaining posts. Firstly, expressing scepticism at the notion of a "few jobs" being cut, he then revealed his belief that he had already been earmarked for redundancy by management as an attempt to curb potential militancy within the work place:

"A few jobs will go? That means many jobs will go. We have to go for interview for our own jobs, but they probably have a list of who will go already and I just know my name is on it. 100% they won't keep me, they want to get rid of me and this will be their excuse. There's no two ways about that. It's not about the best person for the job here, it never has been

and you've seen it all around here. It's if your face fits, if you're on their side of the fence, then you'll be kept on." (Interview 16, Research Site A, UNISON representative)

Such forms of management pressure have been highlighted as a means of stifling trade union shop stewards due to their vulnerability to management (Waddington and Whitston, 1992), brought about through feeling marginalised and less confident, resulting from the threat of strategic management counteroffensives at shopfloor level (Terry, 1995: 217). Whilst this tactic could not be seen as successful in deterring the UNISON Representative, who was expressively militant by nature as suggested in his interview, from challenging management; management control had supressed collective practitioner voice at the workplace. Again, this has been argued as a method of managerial coercion in previously documented research whereby management has used "power to persuade workers where their own interests lay" (Edwards, 2003: 14). The significance of this, in relation to alienated labour at Research Site A, can be seen in interview data supporting the UNISON Representative's perception of widespread practitioner dissatisfaction towards management in the workplace. However, as will now be explained, YOT management at Research Site A provided a contrasting viewpoint.

7.3.2.2 Management Regulation and Consultation

During the interviews with managers at Research Site A there was a commonly held belief that practitioners did have sufficient scope to influence general management policy due to the internal processes of employee consultation at the service. Both area team managers and the Courts and Reports team manager

stated their "open door" policy, whereby practitioners could freely approach them in their offices and express concerns about the running of the service on an individual basis, and this provided an adequate avenue for practitioners to "have a say" in policy decisions at management level. Due to this "open door" policy and other internal mechanisms of practitioner voice, such as regular supervisions, development days and regular team meetings, management believed the notion that practitioners felt satisfied in their ability to influence general management policies. According to the South Team Area Manager:

"That's not a problem here, I have an open door policy, hence my grey hairs. Maybe I'm too open with my staff. People can come in whenever they want, I have an open approach to my team meetings, I have a piece of paper next to the duty rota and staff can write down any issues they have. I can't say we can solve all of them but at least they have a way of venting their spleen. We try to be as open as possible. We have team building days and development days. I think the staff here feel confident they have a say in our decisions." (Interview 9, Research Site A, Area Team Manager)

Front-line practitioners at Research Site A did not, however, share this perception. For example, the following interview respondents expressed a clear displeasure at employee consultation systems in place at the service, believing they provided no realistic means to influence management policy:

"You will go to supervision, the team meetings and the development days they put on sometimes… During the development days they will give you loads of flipcharts, paper and pens, they will ask you to wrack your brains all day coming up with ideas and strategies and gaps and solutions, and

you don't see any change. I think they have to been seen to be asking us, but whether or not we have a say, no not one bit". (Interview 12, Research Site A, Case Manager and YOT Officer)

"The managers will listen and you go to team meetings but I've always said it's more like a dictatorial system now, team meetings are not really problem solving anymore. It's just there's a directive from above and everyone's expected to do it. You do throw things out there, whether it's a good idea or a bad idea in general practice, but really it's all decided by management or the government." (Interview 8, Research Site A, Social Worker and Case Manager)

This perception, that internal consultation techniques were designed to give the impression that practitioners could influence management decisions when in reality they had no discernible effect, was a common theme of complaint from practitioners at Research Site A. According to Williams and Adam-Smith (2009), such techniques are used to legitimise management policy-making and, in turn, embed management control and relates to the increased use of individualised HR practices in public sector employment relations through the modernisation of the public services (Bach and Kessler, 2012: 12). The concerns of the UNISON Representative and front-line practitioners in service were also noted by UNISON at area level. The UNISON Branch Secretary (Interview 15), covering Research Site A, stated she was aware that YOT management would "at best pay lip service to workers" and were "aggressive and hostile" during consultations with trade unions.

The lack of voice, due to management intimidation systems and the suppression of collective resolve, suggests a contributory factor in encouraging this form of powerlessness described as "the inability to influence general management policies" (Blauner, 1964: 16). As mentioned, interview data in the service indicated that a significant proportion of practitioners held management in poor regard. For example, a Case Manager stated that management "don't know what they are doing" (Interview 2, YOT Officer and Case Manager) and, according to a seconded Police Officer they are "ridiculous, ridiculous people" (Interview 3). Such an apparent hostility to management can be argued to encourage powerlessness in this form, as management competence and decision-making was heavily questioned. As a result, the inability to influence general management policy at YOT level can have notable alienating effects.

When expanding on her reasons for describing management at Research Site A as "ridiculous", the seconded Police Officer elaborated further stating:

> "*We really are poorly managed, I asked for a meeting with two of these managers on April the 8th and I was told it's not protocol to ask. Two managers aren't able to sit down and speak to me, who do they think they are? They think their job is just to blame people when things go wrong. It's very demoralising." (Interview 3, Research Site A, seconded Police Officer)*

Not only is this statement a direct contradiction to management responses at interview claiming practitioners had sufficient internal consultation methods, such as the open door policy, it expresses a definite notion of dissatisfaction. Furthermore, the meeting the Police Officer sought was, in itself, an attempt to influence internal policy, which she believed had a detrimental effect on her ability

to perform her work properly and, subsequently, on her job satisfaction. In explaining her situation, the Policer Officer firstly gave her reason for joining the YOT on secondment "two years and six months ago", she stated:

> *"I was a patrol officer, answering the emergency calls and when you go to the emergency calls it's just putting a plaster on things. You're not actually resolving anything. I was told by managers here at interview and by those back at the (Police) station, if I came to the YOT I'd be able to work intensively with just one person, see a job through and shape how they see things. But it hasn't materialised that way because of the way I'm used, so I still feel like a patrol officer, not resolving anything." (Interview 3, Research Site A, seconded Police Officer)*

The Police Officer highlighted the issue of having managers at both the Police Service and the YOT, stressing that the source of her dissatisfaction was YOT management's policy on the use of her labour. This was due to YOT management using her as an "extra resource" with little regard for the purpose of her secondment from the Police. Her perceived role as a Police Officer, on undertaking YOT secondment, was to provide "a human face for the Police to talk to these kids", during which she would undertake crime prevention exercises and educate young people on the dangers associated with continued repeat offending. However, in treating her as an "extra resource" YOT management constrained her role to the extent that this was "to say a small part of what I do, a huge exaggeration". When explaining the use of her labour by YOT management she continued:

"They've got no-one to cover office duty, get the Police Officer in. But that's a conflict of interest; I'm in the Police so I can't talk to an appropriate adult. They want me to wear my uniform, but won't allow me to wear my belt kit, they don't want me to have firearms (CS gas), they don't want me to wear body armour. But, yes, then they think it's alright to call me up because there's somebody smoking weed outside, or a lad with two vicious dogs: 'can you go and deal with it please?' No I can't, how can I? On my own, no support and no equipment." (Interview 3, Research Site A, seconded Police Officer)

A sense of alienation, in this form of powerlessness from the Police Officer, became clear in quoting "all I want to do is tell them this and for them to listen, because it has to change, I've been dealing with this for too long already" (Interview 3, Research Site A, seconded Police Officer). The severity of this feeling of powerlessness, in her inability to influence this aspect of YOT management policy, was stark. As evidenced when she disclosed "but they won't meet me, they don't care. I feel like a second class citizen" (Interview 3, Research Site A, seconded Police Officer).

At Research Site B, the Police Officer did not elude to suffering the same problems as the Police Officer at Research Site A in terms of management regulation, although this was due to the Police Service from which he was seconded assuming responsibility for monitoring his work. Despite choosing not to elaborate on his relationship with those at the Police Service further, his general lack of regulation at the YOT was evidenced when stating:

"YOT management let me get on with it here, they don't interfere with the Police and I haven't got much need to talk to them often really. My role here is mostly decided by the Police, if I have a problem I have to speak to my Sergeant, not the managers at the YOT." (Interview 29, Research Site B, seconded Police Officer)

For Case Managers and specialist intervention workers at Research Site B, similar themes were evident as those at Research Site A. While there was less evidence of such an overt dislike for YOT management at Research Site B, despite negativity commonly being aimed towards the acting Head of Service, there was an equally sceptical perception as to whether practitioner voice aired through management consultation practices had any realistic impact on managerial decision-making. Examples of this can be seen in the following quotes:

"I think you do get opportunities to give feedback but I wouldn't say that it really influences anything." (Interview 22, Research Site B, Probation Officer and Case Manager)

"Some of the managers are good listeners; it's quite easy to talk to them. So yes, they hear what we say; they just don't do anything about it." (Interview 24, Research Site B, Prevention Officer)

The chapter will now evaluate accountability and discretion at each Research Site, themes which have been a frequent source of discourse emanating from academic literature about the public services. How these have influenced the labour process when applied to the work of YOT practitioners, resulting in indications of powerlessness will provide the basis of discussion.

7.3.2.3 Accountability and Discretion

The notion of a "blame culture" by management at Research Site A, as alluded to by the Police Officer in the previous section, was a common theme amongst practitioners, again reflecting a key theme of the literature corresponding to the "the culture of blame" in public sector employment policy (Martinez Lucio and Mackenzie, 1999: 166). This was often a factor attributed to stress and low morale at the service, which have been argued as noted consequences of public sector reforms (Massey and Pyper, 2005: 59), with a YOT Officer claiming "we have a high rate of attrition in here; people are absent due to illness and stress. They're dropping like flies" (Interview 12, Research Site A, Case Manager and YOT Officer). The perception of blame was widely associated with central government policy of accountability regarding "safeguarding children" (HM Government, 2015: 63), again suggesting powerlessness as a result of an inability to influence policy at the highest level of the authority structure. However, there was a belief at Research Site A that YOT management had an excessively stringent policy on workplace regulation. This was generally in reference to internal management policy on accountability in light of public protection and risk management, which, according to a YOT Officer, created an environment whereby Case Managers were suffering "death by policies". Such policies he believed to be "a mere arse covering exercise" (Interview 2, Research Site A, Case Manager and YOT Officer). Accountability in the workplace has been argued by Gintis (1976) to be a form of coercive power, as supervision is imposed on workers through managerial means. This perception was reflected in interview data from Research Site A. According to a Senior Practitioner at the service, she provided "a link to management from the

front-line", however in explaining her job it was apparent managerial duties dominated her work:

"I have a very small caseload, but most of my time I am quality checking the standard of reports and pieces of work, breach packs, stuff like that. It's our policy here that anything a Case Manager sends out should be checked by a Senior Practitioner or management. I also make key decisions for Case Managers on a day-to-day basis about their cases. I know they might not like it, but it's for their own good, at the end of the day it passes on accountability from them to me." (Interview 7, Research Site A, Senior Practitioner)

This account of YOT policy tallied with descriptions from Case Management at Research Site A however, many did not endorse the workplace model. As stated by a Social Worker and Case Manager in the South Team:

"Ultimately management make the key decisions. I mean you might write a PSR (Pre-Sentence Report) recommending a community sentence and it might be changed recommending custody. We also have to run the important issues by them with our cases and they advise us, basically tell us what to do. I might not like it, I don't always agree with them, but that's the way it is." (Interview 14, Research Site A, Social Worker and Case Manager)

This notion was supported by a YOT Officer at the North Team, who had previous experience working in a residential home. Although the narrative expressed by this worker suggested a more oppressive system of management regulation, indicating a genuine fear of management reprisals:

"My discretion is constrained more than ever now. Whereas people would have made decisions off their own back, and back them up by whatever reason, you'll find a lot of Case Managers running things past managers out of self-protection. That's the way the managers like it. We do it so we've got that 'Okay we've discussed it with whoever and this is what we've been told'. It's frustrating but I can't change it. A couple of years ago I wouldn't have batted an eyelid about anything I did. So it's changed massively. People seem to be suspended and losing their jobs left right and centre. I've got two kids I need to look after and, you know, for the sake of having a conversation for accountability it's worth it, because if something goes wrong they would just look to blame you." (Interview 2, Research Site A, Case Manager and YOT Officer)

Powerlessness expressed in this fashion can be linked back to previous discussions of the earlier mode of powerlessness stated as "the separation from the ownership of the means of production and the finished product" (Blauner, 1964: 16). In this sense the individual, human skills which Case Managers believed they possessed were under-represented in their work processes, thus separation occurs. In the context of Research Site A, this form of powerlessness is arguably deepened by the following mode discussed, "the inability to influence general management policies" (ibid: 16), as intensive management regulation at YOT level further constrains the use of these interpersonal skills, with little scope for practitioners to influence this workplace policy. This suggests that alienating effects can be fuelled by a combination of modes of powerlessness felt by YOT practitioners, which interview evidence exposes, to create an amplified form of worker dissatisfaction.

At Research Site B, indications of powerlessness in this form were arguably less prevalent than at Research Site A. This can be attributed to a lesser degree of conflict evident between management and front-line practitioners, which was largely rooted in the positive light in which the acting Deputy Head of Service was portrayed amongst practitioners at Research Site B. The acting Deputy Head of Service did, however, admit to her own reservations about staff morale. In relation to accountability, she stated a perception that "the place is being managed by fear at the moment" (Interview 20) and disclosed that a recent suspension and disciplinary hearings of certain staff members had exacerbated anxiety and dissatisfaction in the service. She continued to add that these circumstances had an emotional impact on practitioners who, she believed, despite official procedures affirming they should not be made aware of the nature of disciplinary hearings or suspension, are aware of why they are taking place. As evidenced in the following quote:

"We've recently had somebody suspended and a couple of people received disciplinary, which has a knock on effect on everybody, because although we can't talk about that, it's meant to be managed properly, everybody knows". (Interview 20, Research Site B, acting Deputy Head of Service)

Despite her concerns, interview data from front-line practitioners did not suggest this had encouraged powerlessness in the form of the inability to influence management policy at YOT level. According to a YOT Officer at Research Site B, it was acknowledged by workers that "our managers can't do anything about that" (Interview 21) intimating any expression of powerlessness relating to this may be confined to the inability to influence higher policy at government level. In a

response to a follow-up question, this argument is supported as the YOT Officer stated: "Listen… if any allegation of wrongdoing is suggested they have to look into it" (Interview 21). However, it is important to note that only two interviewees were willing to talk about these circumstances in what was undoubtedly a highly emotive issue to workers at the service. As a result, a true reflection of powerlessness encouraged by the inability to influence management policy during disciplinary procedures is, in this context, problematic to ascertain.

In terms of the rigidity of management supervision at Research Site B, argued as a source of powerlessness at Research Site A, this was again less of a prominent theme from interview data. Similarly to Research Site A, the punitive policy practices emanating from central government (Hendrick, 2006: 13) were a source of frustration amongst Case Managers at Research Site B. As a result, evidence of powerlessness from practitioners, in the form influencing policy at the highest echelons of the authority structures of the youth justice system, were comparable at both services. However, at YOT level, the inability to influence policy imposed by management, which curtails the use of their interpersonal skills and professional discretion as a tool in the daily supervision of young people, was less of a concern for practitioners at Research Site B. The reasons for this varied between practitioners, largely depending on their length of experience in working with young people or in the youth justice framework. Although acknowledging what was described as a "robust management system" by a Restorative Justice Officer at Research Site B, management were not considered as overtly hostile as they were at Research Site A. Consequently, and notably amongst inexperienced and specialist intervention workers, certain practitioners were happier to allow management a greater control of their labour process. For example the

Restorative Justice Officer, who had "only been working here for about a year", added:

> *"My line manager helps me go through what the risks may be and whether we should go through with restorative justice or not – and ultimately I would feel it was my decision if I identified reasons or feelings that suggest we wouldn't be successful or we shouldn't go along at that point, she would have overall, say but I would put my opinion forward and feel it would be listened to." (Interview 19, Research Site B, Restorative Justice Officer)*

This view was supported by a YOT Officer of "only about sixteen months" experience, who indicated no objection to the rigid policy of management supervision despite it clearly constraining his discretion. When asked about management regulation, the respondent stated:

> *"I think it's about right, about fair. We have supervision with line managers, our work is checked to make sure we are doing what we should be doing, it isn't just a free for all. Just people doing what they want, it's got to be structured because we have to fall in line with the YJB and the management make sure that we do." (Interview 32, Research Site B, Case Manager and YOT Officer)*

The fundamental difference between such inexperienced practitioners and those of greater experience in their approach to dealing with stringent management policies on job regulation was palpable. A seconded Probation Officer at Research Site B claimed to ignore the need to verify key decisions with management as it was "unnecessary really", which he followed up by claiming "I know what I'm doing, if they question my decisions I will defend them, it's happened to me before"

(Interview 22). This attitude towards regulation was replicated throughout the Case Managers with prolonged experience of working with young people, highlighted by a Social Worker of "almost fifteen years' experience" stating "yes I think we're meant to ask them (managers), but I don't worry about that". Additionally, a Social Worker who had longevity of work "been doing it for about twenty years" (Interview 25, Research Site B, Case Manager and Social Worker) agreed there were many procedural constraints, but "isn't bothered about them" and tends to "just do what I think is best and if I need to deal with people who disagree then I will do so afterwards" (Interview 25, Research Site B, Case Manager and Social Worker).

Despite the practitioners, mentioned above, displaying a tendency to disregard management authority in terms of workplace policies being identified as trade union members; these acts were not an expression of shopfloor militancy through the median of a trade union agenda. It has been argued that the commonly associated "social attribution" of trade union members reflects a "stereotypical", negative opinion towards management, whom they would consider untrustworthy (Kelly, 1998: 31). However, the practitioners in question were not engaging in unofficial industrial action, as a hostile act depicting purposeful conflict with management, because the practitioners displayed a greater degree of apathy rather than dislike or distrust towards management. These acts can be better categorised under the framework of Edwards (1986), as cited by Gall (2003), which argues that militancy:

> *"refers to the extent which workers perceive themselves as having interests which are opposed or inconsistent with the interests of management, and act accordingly… A group of workers would… be counted as militant to the*

extent that it challenged managerial demands… even though its members

accept the right to manage" (Edwards, 1986 cited in Gall, 2003: 9).

Moreover, this suggests a personal choice to guard against powerlessness encouraged by an inability to influence management policy, to protect the individual creativity of their work through the methods they use to engage with young people despite wider policy trends of work standardisation and common practice in the public services (Worrall et al., 2009: 127). Consequently, such acts can be far better equated to an attempt to maintain ownership of their labour rather than action supported through trade unions. Thus worker "grievances and aspirations" (Hyman, 1975: 17) formed the basis for industrial relations problems in this instance, with powerlessness indicated by workers expressing a form of "low-level misbehaviour" (Thomas and Davies, 2005: 686). As such, practitioners acted according to their interests of upholding the inter-personal skills they possess as the salient tools of their job, to avoid the feeling of being "a passive object, lacking a will of its own" (Israel, 1971: 208), argued in the literature review as a likely manifestation of a worker's experience of powerlessness. As a result, it can be argued that tensions existing at Research Site B, through an inability to influence general management policies, are not as overt and conflict-driven as those evident at Research Site A, which, as described, has a focussed trade union presence on the shopfloor by means of a UNISON representative. Despite this, worker resistance as an undercurrent propelled by experienced practitioners of considerable longevity in their field suggests powerlessness is comparatively less visible at Research Site B, but, nonetheless, provides an important driver in encouraging conscious actions of certain practitioners in the service.

As will also be discussed in the following sections, the noted drive of cost reduction in public services that has greatly affected this industry (CYPN, 2011), has had undoubted alienating effects at both services. This has been a factor in preventing practitioners from influencing certain management policies, which can be directly attributed to a lack of resources, and has impacted on the quality of service given to young people under YOT supervision. Again, this was acknowledged as the fault of central government, but was also reflected in policies of YOT management, at both services, reducing financial assistance to young offenders. Evidence that alienation was encouraged by powerlessness in the inability to influence policy was a common theme from Case Managers in relation to their initial motivations to work in the youth justice sector. Examples of these motives were to "affect change" (Interview 21, Case Manager and YOT Officer, Research Site B) and "to make a positive difference in young peoples' lives, even if it's just that one person" (Interview 1, Case Manager and Probation Officer, Research Site A). The lack of spending afforded to young people, such as policies to remove petty cash, which was used to cover immediate welfare needs, limited practitioners' ability to achieve this. Indeed, two Social Workers and Case Managers at Research Site A admitted to using their own money to buy food items for young people. More significantly, management policy not to fund bus passes for young people living within a set proximity at Research Site A, was considered to have dire affects. Contrary to affecting positive change, this was cited by a Social Worker and Case Manager at the service as "potentially criminalising young people further". As he explained in the following quote:

"We used to have a petty cash pot, so we could use that for sessional work

to do specific bits of work with young people, help them out if they needed it

there and then - and that's been removed from us. Another classic one is
the bus fares for young people, everyone used to get bus fares. Now you
only get bus fares if you live outside the two mile zone. Everyone's then
expecting young people to walk or the parents to fund it, which is okay if
you only live half a mile away but it's awkward sometimes in 'Research Site
Area A', because in the *** area you might need two or three buses, it's just
so awkward. For some families they just haven't got money and there'
examples where kids just won't come because they haven't got bus fares.
Then they breach their order and are returned to court, that can put them in
custody." (Interview 8, Research Site A, Case Manager and Social Worker)

As will be considered further in the following chapter, he expressed his feeling that there is often very little public or political sympathy for these scenarios, as they are associated with trends of an "underclass" or undeserving poor (Downes and Morgan, 1994). However, in respect to industrial powerlessness resulting from this management led and government influenced policy, the Social Worker and Case Manager expressed a clear dissatisfaction at the notion of young people breaching their orders and being returned to court as they could not afford travel costs, even within the two mile zone. Admitting "it makes you wonder why you do the job. I thought we were here to help, but sometimes I think we're creating the problems".

It is clear from interview at both Research Sites that the "culture of blame" in public sector has been a leading concern of practitioners affecting their daily work practices (Martinez Lucio and Mackenzie, 1999: 166) and increasing management's control of the labour process. Furthermore, it became evident that fiscal security was a significant concern topical to the time of research, notably due

to austerity measures imposed on the public sector during that time. In addition pay, disparities between YOT Officers and other Case Managers also became a theme of interview responses at both Research Sites, as will be discussed further in the following subsection.

7.3.3 The Lack of Control Over Conditions of Employment

This subsection refers to Blauner's (1964: 18) third mode of powerlessness, namely "the lack of control over conditions of employment" (ibid: 18). As mentioned, the fieldwork took place during a context of widespread funding to cuts to YOTs in England and Wales (CYPN, 2011). This will be argued to have resulted in definite perceptions of dissatisfaction of working conditions by practitioners at each Research Site. Key factors associated with this form of powerlessness are described by Blauner (1964) as economic security and factors controlling production, such as the role of technology, which will shortly be explored in greater depth.

In terms of economic security, Hyman (1975: 19) suggested a wage that a worker would seek equated to a "means of a decent life" (ibid: 19). Whereas many practitioners interviewed may not have considered their earnings particularly high, reflected in comments such as "I do this work for the young people, not the money, don't get paid enough for that" (Interview 23, Research Site B, Case Manager and YOT Officer). There was also a general pragmatism in the service that, despite feeling they might justify higher pay, other lines of employment could pay less. According to a Substance Misuse Officer at Research Site A: "I wouldn't say I earn a lot, but compared to most of my mates in other jobs it's pretty good" (Interview 13). As a result, it was mostly clear that practitioners at neither of the two

Research Sites experienced powerlessness due to an incapability to support an acceptable living standard through their wages. However, there was a measurable degree of dissatisfaction in terms of wage distribution and job insecurity. As noted by Blauner (1964: 19), "economic security is not distributed equally in the industrial structure" (ibid: 19), as regulatory trends in capitalist employment has not played out evenly across the job spectrum.

Being multi-agency teams, YOTs employ people from different, though related, industries (Renshaw and Powell, 2001 cited in Crawford and Newburn, 2003: 12). The notion of a multi-agency shopfloor was generally approved by practitioners and management at each Research Site. However, the implementation of pay structures in relation to this division of labour was a source of dissatisfaction in the context of the relative pay of YOT Officers. The reason for this was the lower pay afforded to YOT Officers, despite being given the same YOT specific title of Case Manager, when compared to seconded Social Workers and Probation Officers. This relates to Pitts' (2001) argument of the de-professionalization of youth justice and reflects noted examples of management using a cheaper supply of labour to undercut those of higher professional qualifications or accreditations (Thornley, 2000). As suggested by Field (2007), Social Workers and Probation Officers can be considered as traditional professional backgrounds and, significantly, according to a seconded Probation Officer at Research Site A, "have a strong union who have always supported us" (Interview 1) in terms of pay and conditions at a national, industry wide, level. As a result, pay for these professions are independent of the pay structures of the seconded agency. Explaining this further, the seconded Probation Officer stated:

"You see I'm in NAPO and I go to NAPO meetings, but it has nothing to do with here (Research Site A). Most of them here, they're in UNISON, and UNISON has had a lot to do here recently about grading and that, job grading and stuff. There has been a lot of activity about grading here; you have got us, Social Worker Case Managers and what they call YOTOs (YOT Officers) who are a lower grade in terms of pay and responsibility. There have been a few tensions around that because they're still Case Managers and the unions have been there, but whether the unions have influenced policy, I don't know." (Interview 1, Research Site A, Case Manager and Seconded Probation Officer)

The notion of the lower grade being representative in terms of lessened responsibility, in actual front-line practice, was all but discounted by a YOT Officer at Research Site A. It was her belief that, in reality, the lower grade was only reflected in pay:

"Less responsibility, no, we have the same responsibility and accountability as they do. What that means is that we take the new entrants (young people) who aren't considered as high risk or vulnerable, they take the more risky ones. But what happens is we work with these kids, often find there's much more going on than we first thought and they can be the most high risk or vulnerable one's out there. But they don't get reallocated, they stay on our caseload. Then if they come back to the service it's like '*** worked with him before, she built up a rapport, she can have him back'. Our kids can be just as bad as theirs, so am not having that, but we still get paid less." (Interview 2, Research Site A, Case Manager and YOT Officer)

Such a statement can easily be interpreted as an indicator of powerlessness in this mode, lacking "control over conditions of employment" (Blauner, 1964: 18), as any input from trade unions has seemingly not addressed this pay issue. However, although this matter was echoed in responses to interview questions and follow-up questions from YOT Officers, at both Research Sites, and potentially encouraging alienation in this form, the effects were dampened by the prior-mentioned pragmatism in terms of comparing their pay to previous jobs or friends in other professions. Reasons for this can be argued to reflect the lessened power in the labour market YOT Officers possess, as those employed in this role are not required to hold the same level of qualifications and professional accreditation as Social Workers and Probation Officers. Additionally, and, perhaps, more importantly, manifestations of this dissatisfaction into overt feelings of alienation were curbed by the apparent greater worry of job insecurity.

As mentioned in Chapter 2, the State as a 'model employer' has long been a source of controversy. Argued by Coffey and Thornley (2009: 109) as a concept shrouded by rhetoric, as "an obvious legitimizing prop for governments seeking to restrain costs at the expense of public sector employees" (ibid: 109), economic pragmatism has existed as a historical feature in public sector employment. As a result there has been clear and consistent implementation of hard-nosed, New Public Management regimes which sought to uphold the virtue of "financial discipline" (Massey and Pyper, 2005: 65). A theme attributed to past-governments, in the historical context, and expected to transcend future governments alike (Coffey and Thornley, 2009: 109), it has become an underlying feature of work arrangement in the public sector. In the current context of the Coalition government and the high profile notion of "austerity", which has been spread

through media (The Telegraph, 2014), leading to a decline in perceived economic solidity in the public services, with noted heavy funding cuts in YOTs (CYPN, 2011), many practitioners expressed a clear concern over their job security.

The importance of profile, in terms of austerity, became apparent as many YOT practitioners recited rhetoric, which they believed emanated from central government, in a disdainful and sceptical manner. This strength of feeling was, however, less apparent with management at both Research Sites. A notable exception to this was the Courts and Report Team Manager at Research Site A, who articulated his feeling in an emotional fashion, a response also indicative of an experienced professional having worked in child welfare services for an extensive period of time. During interview he touched upon the role of previous governments, dating back to Thatcher's Conservative government, in his perceived decline of welfare in general terms:

> *"… and when the likes of Cameron robs phrases like 'we're all in it together', hold on, you weren't all in it together, you've never been all in it together, working class communities tend to be all in it together… they have to put up with the bad situation that they're in, and together they deal with it. Are we all in together now? No, but the public sector workers are, we're losing our jobs all over the place, we're certainly in it. He (David Cameron) uses phrases like the 'broken society', well he broke it and I'm not giving Blair any credit here because he managed to do a lot of breaking too. Thatcher, then Major, then Blair tried to make the public sector like the private sector markets, but the public sector isn't a market. Then this lot came in and decided we should all be losing our jobs. Why? Because we're*

in it together, I don't think so… But that may be a rant." *(Interview 10,*

Research Site A, Courts and Reports Team Manager)

From this it is clear that alienation, in this form of powerlessness, may be heightened by an eminent dislike of those at the highest point of the authority structure influencing public sector employment, and the policies for which they are responsible. Accordingly, it suggests that key themes have intertwined in contributing to the encouragement of powerlessness in YOT workers through the different theoretical forms. As explored in the previous section, the "inability to influence general management policies", it is evident that this notion of powerlessness (Blauner, 1964: 16), in the context of central government policy, has played out alongside a lack of control over conditions of employment regarding job insecurity, to magnify feelings of powerlessness. It is also clear that the temporal realm of an individual's personal experiences can affect the dislocation between one's subjective expectancies and the objective conditions which dictate their work, not to eliminate alienation but to heighten the cynicism to the political economic structures that influence their job and potentially intensify such feelings of alienation. As will now be discussed, such feelings of powerlessness, associated with job insecurity, proliferated throughout front-line practitioners at each Research Site, whose working lives and workplace interactions have been degenerated by the perceived climate of job insecurity.

As argued by Massey and Piper (2005), the context of managerialism in the public sector was underlined by a policy of marketisation. Not only did this include a political motivation to privatise public assets, but also led to a re-structuring of public sector employment. As a result, a shift to market-orientated management

agenda occurred in the public sector resembling a capitalist, private sector model (Chaston, 2011: 32). According to Hyman (1975: 20), in capitalist industries workers are "treated less as men and women with distinctive needs and aspirations than as dehumanised 'factors of production'" (ibid: 20). Hyman's (1975) argument suggests that in absence of perceived need or usefulness to an employer, as is the context of their working experience, they are declared redundant. The dehumanisation factor has clear implications for alienation when considering powerlessness as "the lack of control over conditions of employment" (Blauner, 1964: 18), particularly prevalent in current climate of austerity. As will be discussed further, the Coalition government, incumbent at the time of research, continued the re-structuring of the public sector, building on and redirecting the modernisation agenda of New Labour as associated with scientific management. However, running alongside this, in the context of austerity measures, the main focus became "quantitative reductions in employment and wages" (Bach and Stroleny, 2013: 4). This resulted in powerlessness, encouraged by job insecurity, expressed in definite terms at both Research Site areas as it was heightened by the financial constraints imposed on YOTs. Significantly, as will now be discussed, job insecurity remained a great concern and very real threat to practitioners despite management's general acclaim of each service's efficiency. Thus highlighting Blyton and Turnbull's (2004) argument, that organisations show willingness to discard labour despite relatively successful performance.

Admitting that *"nobody's got any real job security"*, as further redundancies are planned across the local council, the acting Deputy Head of Service at Research Site B (Interview 20) continued to reveal a high number of staff had been referred to Occupational Health teams in the council as a result of the poor working

conditions. This was also noted as a theme at Research Site A which, having given prior mention of the YOT Officer stating a "high rate of attrition" due to stress and people "dropping like flies" (Interview 12). As alienation can be argued to have been manifested in detriment to workers' mental health in such a way, due to the current conditions of employment, there was also evidence of 'dehumanisation' of workers in the process of redundancies. For example, many workers on fixed term contracts were forced to re-apply for their own jobs each year, which was considered "degrading" and also resulted in colleagues competing for a fewer number of available jobs. This was a complaint of the Substance Misuse Worker at Research Site B who explained that the diminution of resources had resulted in a reduction of Substance Misuse Workers from initially two at the service to just a single worker: The length of time taken by the service to complete the process being highly detrimental to the worker's personal and job satisfaction:

> *"We had to go up for our jobs and I was the one that got it… I was up against my best mate, that day when we had to go in for interviews was awful, and whole process took so long". (Interview 18, Research Site B, Substance Misuse Worker)*

A further concern from practitioners, resulting from the ongoing threat posed by austerity, was increased workloads generated from the loss of previous employees through redundancy. Job cuts in the public sector are argued to have created managerial pressure to increase the labour of their workers, thus a process of work intensification has occurred to compensate for the lessened staff levels (Williams and Adam-Smith, 2006: 259). According to Burchill et al. (1999) the pressures associated with increasing workloads can be potentially distressing to

workers, causing both psychological and physical ailments. Aside from the aforementioned views of the Courts and Reports Team Manager at Research Site A (Interview, 10), managers at both services were distinctly apathetic to this notion, with a greater level of appreciation of a perceived increase in efficiency brought on by the spending cuts. Despite the acting Deputy Head of Service at Research Site B (Interview 20) having admitted there had been a high level of practitioners referred to Occupational Health teams, seemingly supporting the argument of Burchill et al. (1999), both the acting Deputy and acting Head of Service at Research Site B were reluctant to suggest redundancies had been unwelcome. During interview the acting Head of Service quantified the extent to which austerity had impacted on the service, in stating that "we've had major cuts to the service, we've lost 50% of the staff in the last few years". However, in follow-up to this, he claimed:

> *"But I do think we are working so much more efficiently and effectively, there was too much luxury in the past and, actually, in some areas, where a post has gone from two to one, I can see the one person has stepped up, they have widened their scope as they're keen on keeping their jobs… and are now achieving the same as two people were a few years ago, when there was the luxury of money. So there have been some pressures on the service but I think we're running as efficiently as we ever have." (Interview 27, Research Site B, acting Head of Service)*

Aside from the prior-mention exception, the Courts and Reports Team Manager at Research Site A (Interview 10), this view, or similar assertions, were made by all other managers interviewed at each service. Reason for such apathy from

management is largely a result of the discrepancy between the effects of spending cuts on their working lives, which has remained at a strictly management capacity with less employees to supervise, in comparison to front-line practitioners within each service. Along with an intensified workload, Hudson (2002) argued staff reductions can also lead to job enlargement for workers with additional tasks added to their customary role, hence the above quote from the acting Head of Service suggesting the remaining practitioners have "widened their scope". However, Hudson (2002) continued to argue that this enlargement tends to occur "horizontally" rather than "vertically". This is based on the premise that workers would be required to take on extra activities of a similar skill level to which they already possess, rather than boosting their skill acquisition (ibid: 45). This was most notably expressed by Case Managers at both services, as each service had lost the inclusion of Youth Workers, employed at a lower grade than Case Managers from any background. As a result, Case Managers have become required to undertake extra work to ensure post-order support is put in place for young people once their YOT supervision has ceased. Signposting to other agencies and follow-up support for young people had been a large aspect of the role of Youth Workers in each service and, following their removal, Case Managers have had to fulfil this aspect of work in addition to their normal tasks. This was claimed to add additional stress and pressure in relation to their workload. According to a YOT Officer and Case Manager at Research Site A:

> *"We used to have a Youth Worker and he would put things in place for our kids after they finished here. We don't have that anymore; we do it now, on top of everything else we do. I don't have time to do it properly, so I can't do*

it as well as he did." (Interview 12, Research Site A, Case Manager and
YOT Officer)

To this end, alienation in the form of job insecurity has had clear consequence on the working lives of the remaining staff, along with the feeling of powerlessness from the threat of redundancy and the financial instability it may bring. An additional concern raised, which relates directly to the above quote, is the implications on young people given the lack of a dedicated Youth Worker to arrange support on the closure of their court order. The following sub-section will remained focused on the work processes by which practitioners are forced to abide, with the noted problem of 'time' providing a link to a further mode powerlessness that can be encouraged when discussing a "lack of control over conditions of employment" (Blauner, 1964: 18). This context of the discussion will be explored in the following sub-sections which will focus on the "pace of work" (ibid: 20).

7.3.4 The Lack of Control Over the Immediate Work Process

In reference to the previous quote from the YOT Officer at Research Site A, correlation seems evident between Blauner's (1964: 2) example of the 'clerk', as explained in Chapter 4 relating the pace of work, and a Case Manager at the Research Sites, as work pace is influenced by supervisors. This occurred by way of additional tasks imposed upon them, which were previously completed by Youth Workers, combined with their existing workloads and the deadlines to which they must adhere. While a Case Manager or any other practitioner in an office setting may be able to express freedom of movement, slow down, speed up and take beak a from work, considered by Blauner (1964) as features allaying alienation in

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this mode, there are important subsequent distinctions that can be drawn from his argument when applying it to the sector specific context of YOTs. Rather than simply needing to work towards a "minimum production" where they are allowed to "vary the hourly and daily output greatly" (ibid: 21), Case Managers and other practitioners are bound by the timescales set out by statutory standards (YJB, 2013). Similarly, they have no control over the quantity or complexity of their caseload, which dictates their required outputs, as variations in numbers of new entrants to the service from the court process are common. The results of this being that supposed minimum requisite production does not remain stagnant on a weekly basis; it is influenced by new and existing cohorts and the national standards which to which they are bound. Thus required output remains in a constant state of flux with imposed targets varying on a daily basis. According to a YOT Officer and Case Manager at Research Site B:

> *"You see with workload it varies a lot, it depends on how many kids pass through the service at any one time and how high a risk they are. When it's high, caseloads are high and so is the workload. When it's high it does break people, I mean I can't really talk too much about it but there are people in my office who I just think, you need to calm down a little bit. Thing is, you have got to hit the standards that are expected of you, you've got to get your fundamentals right, you've got to get your paperwork right, you've got to get all that. We're told you have to keep this up-to-date, you have to keep that up-to-date, because if you don't and the kid does something, your case is frozen then you're responsible. Then you have got to look at supporting the kid and if the kid makes a disclosure which is worrying, you*

have to cover yourself around that." (Interview 23, Research Site B, Case Manager and YOT Officer)

This depicts a far more complex set of working arrangements than Blauner's (1964) portrayal of the "unskilled clerk", whereby desired output and overall workload is dependent upon numerous factors outside a practitioner's control and of an inherently unpredictable nature. While analysing this mode of powerlessness, as a general observation during research, practitioners at both services were free to leave their workstations, with the exception of desk duty, movement was evidently restricted in a different form. This regards the freedom to leave work at a supposed normal time, as working from home was unpermitted due to the databases and confidential files at the workplace; as a result practitioners were forced to stay late or omit breaks in order to keep pace with outputs required of them. According to the South Team Manager at Research Site A:

"People here don't have a normal working day; they work to the deadlines and standards. They go above and beyond for me, even some people I am not friends with and don't know anything about. Day in, day out, I see excellent practice, especially now because the cases we've got right now are higher risk. I see people working late, through lunch, weekend cover, I see them going above and beyond. If I leave before them I make a point to go to each and every one to thank them for working late. I think it's important to do that as a manager, because the more I'm saying it the more it's expected, which is good." (Interview 9, Research Site A, Area Team Manager)

Case Managers themselves commonly spoke of staying late and early starts at the office during heavy periods of assessment and report writing. However, irrespective of claims made by the South Team Manager at Research Site A, none cited going above and beyond for any particular manager as a motivation for doing so, rather an acknowledgement that it was necessary to meet the required workload given their professional accountability. For example, the following practitioners stated:

> *"I am really tired, I am really, really stressed but I'm getting to work at 7am every day at the moment and I'm staying till whenever everything's done and I'm on top of everything. My husband thinks I'm mad but it's what I have to do. You're lucky I am talking to you really." (Interview 12, Research Site A, Case Manager and YOT Officer)*

> *"I have to consciously say enough is enough, I'm going home now. However, I do often stay late, I often get in very early, because if you know that you're not on top of your workload, you go home but it's still there when you …. And you are thinking 'Oh I haven't done that today and I need to do that, I should have done this'. It's like you can't get away from the pressure of targets even when we are at home" (Interview 30, Research Site A, Case Manager and Social Worker)*

> *"It is an extremely stressful job but I suppose it's about how you feel about stress and I know that people do get very stressed about it. This is a very high pressure workplace, it's a very high pressure job and it's just how you internalise that, you see with some people it can create more stress in them than it does in me. Being a psychologist myself might help me deal with it*

internally, but people do struggle, you see it often." (Interview 17, Research

Site B, Clinical Psychologist)

Another aspect of work for front-line practitioners at YOTs, which limits freedom of movement, is that of actual face-to-face work with young people and their families. Despite the noted complaints of Case Managers that their job was too "office based", face-to-face work was still considered as part of their role. Additionally, specialist intervention staff would regularly be in direct contact with young people as per the requirements of the court orders of each case. Freedom of movement is, on occasion, greatly restricted during these encounters. This is largely due to the unpredictable nature of the young people in question and the physical environment around them, leading to situations where a practitioner is required to remain present. As stated by an Education Worker at Research Site A:

"We're working with some of the most disengaged, high risk young

people… and the fact that I have been in the custody setting, I've had the

awful home visit, I've had the kid kick off in the car, I've been sworn at, I've

had all this. You learn how to deal with these things, stay with the kid until

he's calmed down, or left the house, so you know there's no longer an

immediate threat to whoever else is in the house. When they're in your car

you have to make sure you calm them down, you can't just abandon your

car and leave them in there. God knows what they'd do to it." (Interview 6,

Research Site A, Education Worker)

Practitioners at both Research Sites admitted that home visits or other face-to-face work could lead to, what were described as "scary" encounters which they felt obliged to deal with, particularly regarding home visits when other members of a

household may be, according to interview respondents, "substance abusers" or have "violent" tendencies of which they were unaware. However, it should be noted, that despite these feelings they were obliged to remain in such situations, as per the welfare needs of the young person or associated people, which would limit their freedom of movement, comments were not reflective of such scenarios encouraging feelings of powerlessness. Although, in these instances the worker did not control the pace of work, acting in a purely responsive manner to external influences, there is a distinct difference to Blauner's (1964) discovery of this mode of powerlessness for automotive assembly line production. Whereas in assembly line production, the rhythm of pace is dictated by instruments such as a conveyer belt, with "little variety… in the work of the automobile assembler, because most of the majority of jobs involve only a few operations" (ibid: 98), in an apparent deskilling of work, this was not the case for YOT practitioners. Indeed, interview data suggested a contrary perspective from YOT practitioners. Far from a context of their lack of freedom of movement being grounds for deskilling, as associated with scientific management (Braverman, 1998: 59) and therefore public service modernisation reforms (Bach and Kessler, 2012: 165), face-to-face work was considered the most skilled aspect of their labour.

In returning to earlier discussion exploring powerlessness as "the separation from the ownership of the means of production and the finished product" (ibid: 16), it was clear that practitioners perceived their interpersonal skills and ability to engage with people in difficult settings as the salient tools of their job. As discussed, practitioners felt undermined in the integrity of their actions as their professional discretion had been corroded by a reliance on management approval of their decisions, as in keeping with shifts towards a unified 'best practice' in the

youth justice system (Field, 2007: 13). However, at times when the pace of work was dictated by external factors in this context, be it a young person or associated others, creating a high intensity and possibly daunting work situation, the lack of freedom for physical movement and the imposed pace of work left any notion of seeking management approval for decisions unrealistic. Thus, rather than experiencing symptoms of powerlessness on such occasions, these highly responsive encounters were perceived as, potentially, the most empowering aspects of their labour and the most rewarding part of their work, should the outcomes be successful. According to a Substance Misuse Officer at Research Site A:

> *"I'm thinking of the times you go in there and it's chaotic, they could be bouncing off the walls, you have to deal with that. But it's what we're here for, if you can't go into a house and deal with a young person or his family, you shouldn't be working for a YOT. Sometimes it leads to the best times you have here, if it goes well, you build up a trust you can maybe help them, you know, make a difference down the line. I'm not saying it happens often, it doesn't really, but when you take a kid like that, work with him, help him get on track and see him come through the other side - it's why most of us do the job." (Interview 13, Research Site A, Substance Misuse Worker)*

From this it is evident that the least alienating parts of a front-line practitioners job within the Research Sites are those which take place outside the office setting, or when making direct contact with young people. Theoretically, Blauner (1964) considered that not owning the pace of work was linked to an underpinning notion of powerlessness, as discussed in the literature review, as the person's ability to

"remove himself from those dominating situations that make him simply a reacting object" (ibid: 16). In the case of YOT practitioners during these occasions, powerlessness encouraged by their inability to remove themselves from such situations was curbed as interviewees generally saw these as the most memorable times at work and, when leading to successful outcomes, the most rewarding facets of their labour. However, such occurrences can have a snowball effect in terms of future work actions, escalating the amount the amount of administration tasks a practitioner is required to perform. Henceforth, despite prior liberation from feelings of powerlessness, the impending work resulting in longer office stays can, again, encourage powerlessness through a lack of freedom of movement by adding to office based workload.

The reason for this can be found in the resultant use of technology when completing office based activities. As Blauner (1964) found, the dominance of technology was a source of resentment in assembly line production, which encouraged powerlessness. While having established that standardised assessments, which restrict discretion, have led to powerlessness amongst YOT practitioners, the use of standardised assessments and computer databases will now be explored as means of performance monitoring; a prevalent strand of literature running through this thesis. As established above, it is the interactions with young people which practitioners find most rewarding, as the interpersonal tools of their trade are used. The knock-on effect of this, as mentioned, is in an increase in office-based administrative work. According to a seconded Probation Officer at Research Site A (Interview 1), the actions taken with young people, in potentially demanding situations, are not reflected in filling in assessments of performance monitoring systems, which he decried as "bureaucratic" by nature. As

argued in Chapter 4, bureaucratic work organisation is a constituent feature in the historical development of the capitalist labour process (Braverman 1998). Elaborating on this further, the Probation Officer stated:

"You see, when you're dealing with human beings and then they apply American business techniques to monitor performance, when you're dealing human beings, you see they're already barking up the wrong tree. I may say that because maybe I'm an antediluvian and not on the ball, but I don't think it's that. It's a fact that people don't fit into nice little boxes and that's what we're trying to do all the time. All the systems of determining success in my experience I guess, is all about auditing – auditing performance, but what are they measuring? The measurements they use, well who do they help? I think they help auditors. They're a very blunt instrument, they don't show what happens to people as human beings, it's just a record for the organisation. I'm not a big fan of standardised electronic assessments… because the actual work with young people isn't really measured. I may do work with a young person which may not exactly be structured. Then I have to go through motions of trying to fit the work I've done with the young person in to neat little boxes. I suppose the whole question is how do you measure it? They do try to measure it, and I think they measure on very simplistic terms." (Interview 1, Research Site A, Probation Officer and Case Manager)

This supports Braverman's (1998) argument that the labour process is controlled by modern management techniques where pre-devised activities are monitored and recorded during and after their completion, which results in a scenario in

which "the process of production is replicated in paper form, and, after it takes place, in physical form" (ibid: 86). Braverman (1998) argued this to be a cause of antagonistic social relations and alienated labour which, in the Case of YOTs, has been compounded by their unrealistic replication of the actual work which has taken place. A sentiment echoed in the following quotes:

"This is a problem, rather than observing people in practice to judge us, they haven't found the time to do that, they can't let go of the assessments. They won't monitor us for our creativity at work, there's no box for that on the assessment forms. They have kind of over-extended the role of trying to control the professional at work." (Interview 21, Research in Site B, Case Manager and YOT Officer)

"They have always been very statistics based, which is one of my main criticisms, then they brought in Quality Assurance as well on top of that… I think you just get drawn into the day-to-day mechanics of the job and when you fill out the admin you don't give a seconds thought to be honest. You're just focused on what's asked from you in the job, do this performance tool, okay that's finished, when's our next PSR coming in tonight? You're just on autopilot when you do it." (Interview 8, Research Site A, Social Worker and Case Manager)

In addition, the above quotes reflect what Gintis (1976) described as the neoclassical description of production, whereby strongly centralised control mechanisms are used for work coordination. It has been apparent, as a common theme throughout discussions of the various forms of powerlessness, that when these centralised mechanisms of control, along with growing funding restrictions in

the public services, are applied to the work processes of YOT practitioners in daily practice, alienating tendencies become most frequent.

7.4 Conclusion

In summary, it is evident that the individual values of practitioners in YOTs informs and shapes their responses to workplace activities. The role of the state, as an employer, has been a pivotal factor in constructing the organisation of work and the orientation of the youth justice sector in terms of welfarism and punitive practices. As argued in the literature review, the history of the sector displays many shifts in the political ideology attached to the delivery of this service, leading to a muddled array of policy decisions (Garland, 2001: 103) which have led to complexities in the employment relationship specific to the industry. These complexities are exposed by the perspectives of practitioners at YOTs as to the intricacies of the labour process, which, as Braverman (1998) argued, is rooted in capitalist production modes. Yet in the youth justice system it has been moulded and adapted to reflect a highly politicised area of public sector employment, historically subjected to fluctuating policy goals (Garland, 2001: 103).

The noted conflict between welfarism and punitive practice was a clear concern for practitioners at each Research Site. Broadly supporting Field's (2007) claim, interview data indicated that those of a social work background endorsed ideals of liberal welfarism and, with the exception of Police Officers, this was largely true of other practitioners from various backgrounds in the multi-agency teams. The juxtaposition between welfarism and punitive processes played out as a theme of alienation manifesting in its encouragement of powerlessness. This occurred through the "inability to influence general management policies" (Blauner, 1964:

16) in terms of punishments associated with court orders and the strong professional values of practitioners, as associated with Field's (2007) argument, could be seen to heighten these strands of alienation in the context of YOT practitioners. Similarly, there was the recurring theme of standardised assessments and prescriptive practice. Not only did this manifest in the dissatisfaction of practitioners due to their noted punitive nature (Goldson, 2005: 34), but also in their restrictive tendencies by which professional discretion is constrained by management regulation (Muncie, 2005: 54). This referenced practitioners thematically stating their belief that the interpersonal skills they possess are under-represented in the labour process and their actions are too heavily reliant on control mechanisms emanating from management, the YJB and central government.

As a result, there was evidence of feelings of detachment to the products of their labour, with a perceived deskilling of the labour process. This was due to the outcomes they worked towards being, at times, conflicting with their own personal goals. Additionally, work degradation was evident though the Taylorised control techniques applied to work structures, which displayed task routinisation and fragmentation (Ironside and Seifert, 2004: 68) as reflected in the case management model (Muncie, 2005: 54). This theme was seen to span across the various modes of powerlessness, yet encouraged a "lack of control over the immediate work process" (Blauner, 1964: 20), with practitioners stating that, despite the often chaotic and unpredictable pace of work, face-to-face work with young people was considered most skilled and, thus, least alienating part of their job. By contrast, the more repetitive and heavily regulated processes of data input,

report writing and the completion of standardised assessments were considered the least fulfilling.

It should be noted that indicators of such forms of alienation varied in strength between the two services, based on the notably higher levels of animosity displayed by practitioners at Research Site A to YOT Managers in comparison to those interviewed at Research Site B. This was particularly evident where professional discretion was constrained by notions of accountability and when management approval was required for key decision-making. However, it should also be considered that while practitioners at Research Site B displayed less antipathy towards management for their involvement in the appliance of their labour, there was still evidence of dissatisfaction as to the processes which caused this to occur.

Whereas the prescriptive work practices, standardised assessments and increased management control have been widely attributed to managerialism in the sector (Smith, 2006: 80), and are also associated with the wider public services (Massey and Piper, 2005), a more recent governmental development affecting the service was that of austerity (CYPN, 2011). This created a context of unrest at both services, in a climate whereby powerlessness was encouraged through the "lack of control over conditions of employment" (Blauner, 1964: 18), a sense of dehumanisation was arguably present with practitioners being treated as mere 'factors of production' (Hyman, 1975: 20). Job insecurity at the Research Sites not only had alienating effects, indicated in fashion of stress, but it was also believed, by the trade union official at Research Site A (Interview 16), to moderate

challenges to management, as workers were in genuine fear for their jobs. Thus, management control of the labour process was increased.

The thesis will now explore meaninglessness, normlessness and self-estrangement in the following chapter, when appropriate forming links with key themes that have run through debates of powerlessness to provide a holistic examination of how alienation is indicated in the variant of the labour process applied to YOT practitioners. Again this will take into account larger factors which affect the organisation and nature of work at each service to expand on the theoretical frameworks used in previous studies of alienation to support the more inclusive model used in this thesis.

Chapter 8

Meaninglessness, Normlessness and Self-Estrangement

8.1 Introduction

This chapter will develop themes highlighted in the previous chapter, expanding the analysis of alienated labour using employee interview data from each Research Site, it continues the adaptation of Blauner's (1964) framework with discussions surrounding meaninglessness, normlessness and self-estrangement.

As with the prior findings chapter, the role of the state as an employer in a capitalist democracy (Miliband, 1982; Gough, 1979) will be considered from an occupational perspective, set against the discourse of the interview respondents, with themes surrounding the state's role in social planning also emerging from the interview data. This will refer to the nature of monopoly capitalism (Braverman, 1998) and arguments that the system in place creates cycles of deprivation which afflict communities (Hyman, 1975: 22), while the state fails to represent the collective interests of society equally (Arthur, 1974). Firstly, attention will focus on the concept of meaninglessness whereby structural bureaucracy will be analysed in greater detail to assess how particular divisions of labour may result in feelings of disconnection (Blauner, 1964: 22) between interview respondents and organisational bureaucracies.

8.2 Meaninglessness

In front-line practice, both YOTs displayed clear divisions of labour in their work arrangements. As mentioned in the previous chapter, work arrangements were moulded by the Case Management model. Within this mode of operation work

tasks are compartmentalised to ensure practice adheres to imposed procedures and targets, consequently the prescribed work functions of the various practitioners, in their respective professional capacities, are the areas of work where divisions of labour can be seen to become most striking. The notion that standardised work practices contributes towards a worker's sense of meaninglessness, to a similarly profound feeling of powerlessness and the inability to influence practice, is somewhat problematic. In this respect, it is evident that despite the bureaucratic labour process attached to completing the requirements of standardised assessment forms, which is seen as being at odds with YOT workers' preferred goals of face-to-face consultations with young offenders, the intended reasoning for their existence was generally understood. In Israel's (1971) interpretation of this form of alienation, the key factor is the loss of understanding as to the social system in which a person operates due to the involvement of externally imposed complex processes. The concept of meaninglessness can be argued to have a potential significance when applied to the job function in which interventions are set up in abidance with the requirements of a young person's court order. Described by one interviewee as causing their job to take the form of "a broker, with overall responsibility of a case" (Interview 1, Research Site A, Probation Officer and Case Manager); from the perspective of Case Managers, the overriding theme of the model suggested it is overly reliant on referring out to different practitioners in their service. This argument suggests a tendency "to lack organic connection with the whole structure of roles" (Blauner, 1964: 22) in terms of the work delivered to the young people which they supervise. This can be seen in the following quotes:

"The Case Management model is, you're the Case Manager and you refer out. I just think with the Case Managers the kids aren't getting as a good a service as what they should be getting, because the Case Managers should be doing proper face-to-face work with the kids. Then it would be a bit more than just 'see these people to get through your order'. But that's not the approach in practice, that's not the Case Management model. We're expected to stick to the Case Management model to a tee, which is like a consultant when you refer them out, I don't think it works though. I will be honest with you; you have no idea what the work is that's being delivered to your young people. We only really see them at the start and end of their order." (Interview 2, Research Site A, Case Manager and YOT Officer)

"So I think twenty odd years ago in youth justice it was different, it was a more welfare based hands-on approach, now it's more around the Case Management Model running alongside safeguarding issues. I mean people use the tools but if you're going to be in the office most of the time you're not really doing good interaction with the families or kids. That's left to the other staff and we don't really know what's going with the interventions they do". (Interview 8, Research Site A, Case Manager and Social Worker)

Additionally, the notion of meaninglessness can also be associated with specialist intervention workers to whom the YOT Officer refers. A common theme emerging from interviews with specialist intervention workers was that liaisons with other young people's agencies, external to the YOT, can be problematic and, according to an Education Officer at Research Site A, "there is a lack of communication and integration between different agencies, I don't get to see the big picture" (Interview

6). This statement was in reference to the local education structures in place in the area which have, in recent years, complicated the process of placing students into school environments. The reason offered for the added complexities in education provision was considered partly because of government initiatives such as replacing traditional state schools with academies, which have a different set of operational practices (Gov.uk, 2015). As a result, these schools have greater discretion in selecting students which has impacted on the options available to Education Workers at YOTs, who, as a result, now largely rely on alternative provisions. The perceived effect this has had on Education Workers, according to the interviewee, is to limit their role in education placements, which are dependent on processes in which they have little or no part once the referral has been made:

> *"If somebody's out of provision we can't magic something up straight away, our role is dependent on the local authority. But sadly the local authority doesn't move quickly and the processes are very lethargic, the processes in terms of placing young people in alternative schools and alternative placements are very slow and we're not involved. I don't know why it takes them so long and how they make their decisions". (Interview 6, Research Site A, Education Worker)*

The problems facing the Education Worker in this manner again reflect how central government policy can create objective conditions which drive inequality and affect welfare provision at ground level. As argued by Gough (1979: 4), local authorities are reliant on state provisions in their delivery of welfare services. As a result, this centralises control of the welfare services to state level, a factor that gives the incumbent government, at any given time, the ability to manipulate

service delivery to fall in-line with their political ideology. This has impacted on education provisions for young people supervised by YOTs through the introduction of the aforementioned academies. For example, the Education Worker believed "with the greatest respect to our young people, they're not the type of kid these schools want and the local authority doesn't hold sway with them like they once did" (Interview 6). When asked if he felt this system restricted his ability to achieve his aims in the job, the Education Worker replied:

> *"I think the actual job itself has potential to do that yes, but if you think about my job at the moment I'm an Education Worker and my job is to get kids into schools and the government are introducing academies and free schools. Which are totally autonomous and can do what the hell they like and can take who they like, get rid of who they like and they don't want our kids. It's a real problem for me, it's frustrating." (Interview 6, Research Site A, Education Worker)*

The Education Worker in question did not agree with the principles of academies, suggesting they were inherently discriminatory towards young people from certain backgrounds claiming:

> *"I know these kids have offended, but they still deserve to be given a chance, so now more than ever the provisions they end up with aren't really suitable but there's not much I can do about it." (Interview 6, Research Site A, Education Worker)*

The acceptance of the Education Worker that he has very little control of the process and can do little to influence its outcome, suggests a lack of identification with the organisational goals and the mechanisms available for him to achieve

them. This theme will now become the focus for further discussion relating to practitioners across both research sites.

8.3 Normlessness

This section will analyse the extent to which indications of Normlessness became a theme of the interview responses at each Research Site. As noted in Chapter 4, Blauner (1964) maintained links to the notion of an industrial community within his analytical framework, using the term "Isolation", which incorporates themes of normlessness with those of social isolation and cultural estrangement (Blauner, 1964: 24). Regarding Durkheim (1893) and Merton's (1959) concepts of normlessness, as noted in Chapter 4, Israel (1971: 11) explained how normlessness affected members of society and its links to criminological discussion. This argument suggested that an individual's personality traits, or structural inequalities within society, could render a person's attempts to reach normative goals as futile and thus encourage criminal behaviour. While these arguments might be applied to statements made by interview respondents, it was argued that as a derivative of anomie this notion is incompatible with a Marxist interpretation of alienation, analysis will therefore focus on worker perceptions and consider normlessness from the reference point of an industrial community. Hence, delineating it by Blauner's (1964: 24) aforementioned definition which, from the context a YOT practitioner, will be evidenced by feeling "no sense of belonging to and be unable to identify or uninterested in identifying with the organization and its goals" (Blauner, 1964: 24), which itself has been adapted to meet the aims of the thesis.

As noted in Chapter 2, Gough (1979: 3), when defining the role of the welfare state in the context of a capitalist democracy, highlighted state activities as twofold; the first of which cited the "provision of social services" (ibid: 3). In this context it encompasses the role of YOTs as a statutory service potentially imparted onto users potentially against their desire. Having noted that the State, through the incumbent government controls policy affecting front-line practice, being located at the top of the organisational pyramid of public sector services (Salaman, 2000: 300), the normative values to which the service operates are thus open to political debate and persuasion. In relation to this, Smith (2000: 2-3) argues that many criminal justice policies have been motivated by attracting the 'floating voter' and gaining political favour in the run-up to elections. Whilst Garland (2001: 18) suggests political opinion developed an emphasis on managerialist policies promoting low-cost, community-based, punishments which focus on offender monitoring and risk management. As these policies were seen as a substitute for the more traditional social work ethos (ibid: 18), those from a welfarist background would argue that such policies detract from the human needs of our most deprived groups, citing a lack of resources and opportunity as the primary factors which cause crime (White and Cunneen, 2006: 17).

The second of Gough's (1979) documented role of the welfare state, that of the "regulation of private activities" (Gough, 1979: 4), regarded activities which directly influenced daily living conditions of individuals or the general populous of social groups. As stated in Chapter 2, this may alter people's lives "for 'better' or 'worse' according to some measure of human need" (ibid: 4). Again, these measures of need and the modes by which the state acts to regulate the lives of people or groups of society may be driven by political agendas, with the more powerful

actors of society being better placed to adjust policy to their cause (Arthur, 1974: 10). Therefore, the political institutions controlling legislation do not adequately represent the most vulnerable and least powerful people against whom this human need may be calculated.

It will be argued how these aspects of the welfare state, as features of the political economy controlling the organisational goals of YOTs and large-scale social policy affecting the young people under YOT supervision, intensifies feeling of alienation within individual practitioners at each research site. As argued by Blauner (1964), Marxian text placed emphasis on "the powerlessness of workers in modern industry and saw the solution to the modern social problem in 'restoring' control to workers over their conditions of work" (Blauner, 1964: 24). As a result, analysing normlessness through themes of discipline, job security and relative wage rates to the earnings of others, which, in line with the former emphasis on social problems attributed to Marx (ibid: 24), have been comprehensively discussed in modes of industrial powerlessness, the following section will be examined in workers' identification with the organisation and its goals. Given the political nature of the welfare state and its two characteristic activities (Gough, 1979: 3-4) which filter down to front-line practice in YOTs and affect the lives of those under YOT supervision, the above notion of normlessness will, in an analytical sense, be applied to interview data from YOT workers. This will be evidenced by identifying a sense of dislocation in the values of practitioners from the structures of the political economy which govern their work and directly affect young people under their supervision, along with a displacement of values to the prescribed practices which are imposed on their labour process.

8.3.1 Perspective on Social Inequality

Having discussed how youth justice policy is derived from the State, the responsibility to oversee the youth justice system falls with the YJB. The declared aim of the YJB is to "prevent children and young people under 18 from offending or re-offending" and to "ensure custody is safe and secure, and addresses the causes of their offending behaviour" (Gov.uk, 2015). When asked if their roles could adequately address such an overall goal, the theme of response from practitioners was that YOTs, in isolation, were constrained by broader social structures which made it impossible to fully address the causes of youth crime and thus prevent offending and re-offending. For example, a Social Worker and Case Manager at Research Site B stated:

> *"I would say 99% that social structures lead to youth crime and there are very few people I have met over time that are evil or dangerous young people. It's no coincidence that most offenders come from poor backgrounds. You know we have an underclass in society and it's inevitable that social deprivation manifests itself in crime and social problems. You treat people like animals and put them in concrete jungles and they react accordingly, I think." (Interview 30, Research Site B, Case Manager and Social Worker)*

Commonly speaking from a welfarist perspective, the prevalent view of practitioners across both research sites supported Schiamberg's (1973: 6) notion that juvenile delinquency was characterised by "poverty and low socio-economic status" (ibid: 6) and upheld Young's (2001) argument of relative deprivation, as a source of discontent, to be an inherent cause of youth crime. As a result, when

viewing YOT workers as an industrial community within the welfare state, evidence from interview data suggested practitioners felt their roles to be dislocated from the aims of large-scale state-led policy which was neither in the interests of the young people whom they supervised, nor in the specified work aims of preventing offending and reoffending in young people. When articulating this, practitioners repeatedly cited ingrained inequalities within society as the main driver of youth crime. In particular, the lack of personal ambition of most young people in deprived areas coupled with their resignation that any likelihood of future success was at best dubious, not only directed many to engage in criminal behaviour but, furthermore, presented YOT practitioners with a clear barrier to them achieving their professional goals. According to a seconded Probation Officer at Research Site A:

> *"I mean are people born bad? I suspect not, I think a lot is to do with circumstance and environment and educational opportunities. I mean people are very adept at making excuses as well, and you have to work round that… Again, I know from doing welfare rights in this city that, like a lot of cities in the 80s and 90s, it was hammered and, without being all political about it, there are generations of people who have had so little, there's no hope. It can be a bit depressing really. I suppose you have to remember now that, for years, in welfare rights, probation and here, the people I tend to work with are on the bones of their arse. They're people who have got the least and the poverty of ambition is what gets me, there's so little ambition, it's so fucking sad." (Interview 1, Research Site A, Case Manager and seconded Probation Officer)*

While this quote does not exonerate the young people in its entirety, as the Probation Officer at Research Site A acknowledges their proficiency in "making excuses", overall it supports Hyman's (1975) argument suggesting deprivation to be a cyclical phenomenon with societal barriers inherited generationally in impoverished communities. In relation to Gough's (1979: 4) noted activity of the welfare state, that of the "regulation private activities" (ibid: 4) for better or worse, the above mentioned Probation Officer at Research Site A, in response to a follow-up question proceeded to cite poor social planning in urbanised developments as a catalyst for problematic communities. While Gough (1979: 92) noted "victims of urban development" as an example of those afflicted by the development of capitalist economies and welfare planning, this was a feature of economic development which predated the timescale given by the above mentioned Probation Officer. Gough (1979) did, however, argue that this led to areas of various social problems becoming established within many cities as their population grew (ibid: 92). Practitioners largely cited these areas of varying social problems as those which tended to precipitate youth crime, as portrayed by the following quotes:

"If you look at our cohort, about 90% of them are from the big estates. You don't get many that are from, I don't know, trying to think of where's posh round here, there aren't many places – somewhere like ***, I think it's about one or two young people I've had from there in five and a half years. Whereas, if you look at the big estates, they are the basis of our workload really." (Interview 18, Research Site B, Substance Misuse Worker)

"Loads of our kids are from areas where there is deprivation, unemployment, not a lot to do. There's such little routine for some people – it's get up, have a spliff, go and sit off with my mates. Which sounds great, but it's not, is it? It's not good for your life, for a future, for having some ambition." (Interview 5, Research Site A, Case Manager and Social Worker)

"I think if you were to do an analysis on the post-codes in ***, from the affluent areas and those which are severely deprived, it would be quite telling with the number of kids we get." (Interview 8, Research Site A, Case Manager and Social Worker)

From the perspective of practitioners these statements, in reference to social problems in certain urban areas, wider economic and political powers which are out of a practitioner's control are dislocated from the profession's goals that they associate with job. Consequently, this renders the stated goal of the job and the personal aims of practitioners seemingly impossible to fulfil when considering the resources available to them. Further to this, industrial change bringing about connotations to labour markets was also cited as a larger social factor affecting their work; an aspect which will now be evaluated.

8.3.2 Perspectives on Employment Opportunities

Geographically, both services are located in cities with strong historical links to traditional industries and the noted changes to "the UK industrial structure and general economic environment" (Burchill, 2008: 20) were perceived to have amplified social problems in deprived areas of each city. The decline of these industries was considered a factor in lowering aspirations of young people in both areas as it was believed that alternative employment opportunities were

insufficient or unsuitable in nature. This was most strongly articulated by an Education Officer at Research Site A, who described prior generations of his family having previously worked in a traditionally strong industry within the city which is now in decline. This theme was also conveyed by other practitioners as described in the following quotes:

> *"My dad was a dock worker. I'm very working class; we might not have been rich but I wasn't underprivileged. I think undoubtedly, the employment market has changed. With traditional industry going and you only have service industries, young people are going 'you know what, it's not worth me going to work in McDonald's, or wherever, when I can go on the dole'. What it has created is an acceptance of indolence and I don't blame them."* (Interview 4, Research Site A, Education Worker)

> *"You know, de-motivated communities or homes, you may interview families who say 'you know, there's no jobs out there. There's nothing for them to do, what future have these kids got?' To some extent, it's hard to argue against it because, from my own personal political point of view, I see their point." (*Interview 30, *Research Site B,* Case Manager and Social Worker)

The nature of the UK's industrial decline has also been argued to change the nature of work, as touched on in the above quotes, with higher levels of part-time and low-paid work (Blyton and Turnbull, 2004: 66). As argued by Hancock (2005: 218), this is due to regeneration initiatives, intended to stimulate employment growth in urban areas since the decline of traditional industries, providing a far less bountiful array of jobs both in numbers and pay as their claims had originally

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purported. Additionally, also associated with management control and monitoring, more powerful information systems have become incorporated into the workplace (Blyton and Turnbull, 2004: 84). This has been considered to have elevated inequalities afflicting young people in deprived communities, who tend to have lessened access to home computers and lack literacy due to disengagement with school. As highlighted in the following quotes:

"With our kids I am absolutely amazed, well I am not amazed; that's a stupid thing to say, about their literacy levels. So many of them don't go to school, haven't been to school for years and the concept of getting up before midday is alien to so many people and I find that really strange." *(Interview 1, Research Site A, Case Manager and seconded Probation Officer)*

"I think the strong emphasis on IT skills in employment has a very negative impact on the young people we deal with. Their literacy skills are very limited. I think the scope for the manual labour outlet, like the building industries, has been reduced over time. Surprisingly we find a lot of people who are ostracised, if you like, from the education system who have got real potential, when you do interact with them you realise they've got the potential here, but they haven't got the literacy skills to work in an office. So I'd probably say yes, there are elements of young people who are disenfranchised." (Interview 4, Research Site A, Education Worker)

As mentioned, the views of the Education Officer (Interview 4) were particularly strong, not only did he feel helpless in his ability to overcome the scale of the barriers to employment facing young people in his area, he felt a disconnect to the

structural workings of the education system in which he operated. Combined with his family history of strong links with traditional industry, this was a very strong aspect of dissatisfaction and will be touched upon again in the following sub-section.

8.3.3 Perspectives on Policy and Practice

Having previously argued the incoherency of youth justice policy, in its historical development (Garland, 2001: 103), due to fluctuating political and ideological agendas (Muncie and Hughes, 2002: 1), the effect of this, in practice, will now be explored by applying the perceptions of interview respondents as a basis for discussion. Referring to the notion of an "underclass" (Interview 30, Case Manager and Social Worker) as mentioned during the analysis of powerlessness, this term has been argued by Downes and Morgan (1994) as a media construct gaining popularity from the 1960s onwards. Despite this, the term has had a perceptible influence in youth justice policy, considered by Garland (2001: 101-102) to be a means to cloak the most likely causes of crime through rhetoric, shifting the blame away from social structures and onto young and underprivileged members of society themselves. Resulting from this, policy responses have been seen as a means of placating public perception and media sources (ibid: 101-102) and not adequately addressing the needs of young people which they concern. Described by a YOT Officer at Research Site A as "flavour of the month policies" (Interview 12), such policies were perceived to have had an adverse effect on communities with funding attached to political agendas which further disadvantage young people, at times manipulating the portrayal of a problem which they wish to

remedy. This perception is highlighted in the following quote from a manager at Research Site A:

"Throughout the Blair years there was always a scare… sometimes the news story was going to be youth crime, that would be the scare, but then police forces will go 'well then, give us more money, give us more resources'. So some of this social policy was always driven by fear, so they big it up as a problem and then decide they have the solution. Gangs, don't get me wrong, every child that has been affected by them, either injured or murdered that's a tragedy. But for politicians to jump on the bandwagon by way of that, that just doubles that tragedy. What happened was the media got involved and you had idiots, they had no credence or authority to be speaking on the matter and it becomes a self-fulfilling prophesy. When there were pots of money about if you have a gang problem. The police think, we haven't got a gang problem but there's a group of kids down there, why don't we label them as a gang and get our money?" (Interview 10, Research Site A, Courts and Reports Team Manager)

As this is related to larger state-led policy and responses to it, there are clear implications of such political agendas for the youth justice system as a whole. The policies in question are driven by ideology, media and public influence, therefore the aims attached to them are not solely focussed on the stated goal to "prevent children and young people under 18 from offending or re-offending" (Gov.uk, 2015). As noted in discussions of powerlessness, centralised government control infiltrates front-line practice through management regulation and performance monitoring. Relating to Field's (2007) argument of associated YOT practitioners

displaying strong professional values with their discretion limited by the notion of a best practice unifying the youth justice system, practitioners portrayed a sense of divorce from the organisation and a digression of organisational values owing to the external influences instructing their practice. In the above quote, the Courts and Reports Team Manager cited "pots of money" (Interview 10) attached to the political fervour at the time and shaping the organisational goals of YOTs and other agency with which they had contact. The channels by which this seeps down to ground-level and, thus shapes the normative practice of YOTs, is based on management-led performance indicators which are geared towards the targets compelled by funding streams. As a UNISON Convenor covering Research Site B notes:

> *"There's a lot of funding streams now where they are performance-related. It's about meeting the criteria to access the money… The Troubled Families initiative, it is payment by results. So there's Troubled Families money, but they have to have a certain group of people that tick these of little boxes. So they make sure they do, then have to tick more boxes to prove they've got the families onto a certain point, when they get onto that certain point then they get the money… Whereas before they just got the money, people aren't employed as such on contracts to do with performance, but the money is performance related… So yes, the funding stream is performance related and, also, management are looking at ways of how they make sure that those targets are met. They want to prove they have these families and make sure they're ticking the necessary boxes when they have, practitioners have to work around that." (Interview 28, Research Site B, UNISON Convenor)*

These two quotes suggest a belief that core to the aims of agencies within a youth justice setting underlies the quantitative accumulation of money, via funding streams, while intimating that this may take precedent over qualitative improvements to young people and their well-being. These quotes can be linked to the concept of misrecognition which, as discussed in the literature review, occurs when policy, rather than promoting social inclusion in deprived communities, contrives to construct "the problem to be fixed" (Morrison, 2003: 140). According to Hancock (2006), localities are therefore stigmatised by local and national discourses while local authorities seek to demonstrate how their communities are the "worst off" based on the mandatory indicators entrenched within the bidding procedures for funding initiatives. As a result, far from a process of inclusivity, communities become contextualised as victims living in problematic areas. Thus young people are symbolised as "threatening and potentially dangerous" (Morrison, 2003: 152).

The extent to which these arguments were apparent to those engaged in front-line practice and whether it constrained their willingness, or ability, to engage with organisational values of their YOT, in line with Blauner's (1964) concept of normlessness, will now be discussed further.

8.3.4 The Extent to Which Practitioners Identify with the Organisation and its Goals

Previous discussion reflected on the wider social structures imposed by the political economy, and how they may encourage a dislocation in the means available for practitioners in achieving the YJB goal of youth crime reduction and reduction in re-offending, in terms of the mismatch between   inadequate

professional resources available to practitioners and the goliath structural inequalities within society. Subsequent discussion then addressed how the ideological and political agendas shape policy and influence YOT practice through funding streams, with an argued digression from the stated YJB goals. The chapter will now further discuss how these factors have influenced the perceptions of interviewees.

A clear theme of responses from practitioners across both research sites suggested that policies in the youth justice system were unrepresentative of the problems they associated with youth crime. Evidence indicated that, to a large extent, practitioners were also unreceptive to the aims of these policies in the broadest sense, one of whom claimed "sometimes the Youth Justice Board and YOTs locally target the wrong groups of people" (Interview 4, Research Site A, Education Worker), with various others also disputing their goals. Such quarrels with target groups to whom these policies were aimed on the part of practitioners were twofold. Firstly, as will be examined in greater depth later, helping alleviate the problems of those who suffer from the vulnerabilities which trigger youth crime was not considered adequately addressed in policy. Secondly, supporting the notion of misrecognition (Morrison, 2003: 152), the dangers associated with certain groups of young people were considered greatly exaggerated by policy and fuelled by media constructs. Examples of this are provided in the following quotes:

"A lot of it is blown out of proportion. Like the riots, if it wasn't for the media with the riots it might not have progressed up the country. I think that by reporting a lot of the stuff it's scaremongering isn't it? Young people wear hoodies and hang around in groups so any young people you see in a

hoodie in a group, they are obviously in a gang and they are going to shoot you or rob you or stab you and be up to no good." (Interview 22, Research Site B, Case Manager and seconded Probation Officer)

"Young people get a raw deal, I remember going back to when hoodies were criticised, 'hug a hoody', they're not all bad. Somebody must have created that image in the first place. I know people say if you look at the riots you see people with their hoods up and they did that for a reason, but it's a casual piece of clothing that everybody wears. I bet 90% of people in this building own a hoody. It certainly was used to sell a few newspapers." (Interview 24, Research Site B, Prevention Officer)

"The media, moral panics and all that… I'm going to sound cynical here but if they can keep the focus on youth crime and the public interested, keeping them fearful of it, then everything else that's going on can kind of be masked. The media and government seem to be helping each other in that way." (Interview 5, Research Site A, Case Manager and Social Worker)

It can be argued that the above statements form a narrative which exhibits alienation based on the notion of normlessness with interview respondents showing signs of frustration at the underlying motives of the policies which affect their work, with their subjective beliefs being from the political gesturing that has created objective conditions which govern work regulation. As a social service provider, imparting a statutory service onto users (Gough 1979: 3), not only was there evidence of disenchantment at the government directives aimed at YOTs but also at those which informed other agencies based on media and political influence. For example, the seconded Police Officer at Research Site A lay blame

at her "other place", the police service, but again was critical of the "politicians telling us what to do" rather than "us out on the streets". When asked to add clarity to her dissonance, she added:

"With the stop and search you get the kids all saying… 'We're getting targeted and I'd done nothing'. It's because we (the police) target them on what they're wearing. We always target people who are wearing dark clothes, black clothes, hoods, tracksuits. We're told to, because we're told that's the people who are generally committing crimes. I think it's too arbitrary; it depends on the child, not the clothes, that's just what young people wear round here… Also, there's a class thing definitely, I think if a family name is a criminal name and the child's stopped, they're more likely to be dealt with in a criminal manner than in other cases. It's meant to be assessed as a vulnerability thing but all it was ever going to do in reality is criminalise them further, because they're getting that extra treatment from the police." (Interview 3, Research Site A, seconded Police Officer)

In terms of how young people are treated, through the YOT interventions tailored to meet the requirements of the policies dictated by government agendas and centralised funding streams, there was clear evidence that the associated practices were not identifiable to the personal goals of practitioners. As reflected in the following quote:

"I mean you hope that by the time you'd finished with that kid you'd be providing evidence that they are now motivated, because they've proved it. But you're not really, you're looking at straws, not to clutch so to speak but to say 'look, they've done that, they've showed this, they attended for that

eight weeks of that programme, that shows this, that shows that'… But ultimately does it really show us anything? Are we just measuring based on the fact they've just sat there, they haven't been a nuisance, they've sat there and been told the things we're meant to say to them, but is that actually affecting change? I'd probably say no, because they don't change their opinion at the end of it do they? I mean if it did work, then why do so many of them keep reoffending." (Interview 2, Research Site A, Case Manager and YOT Officer)

The above statement draws into question the supposed overall goal of the YJB to reduce offending and reoffending (Gov.uk, 2015), suggesting that the policies employed are not designed to facilitate this goal such are the external influences which affect them. While this alone, the inability to affect positive change of a young person and their actions, suggests a lack of identification with the organisation and its goals from YOT practitioners, additional statements provided evidence of practitioners believing the practices employed through political persuasion did indeed contribute to offending behaviour. Such statements added to the notion of misrecognition, suggesting that, further than contriving a problem to fix (Morrison, 2003: 140), the implemented practices when permeating down to YOT level instigated offending that may have otherwise been absent. According to a seconded Police Officer at Research Site A:

"I think once they come here and start these programmes some are more likely to reoffend. They mix with people, you have people with low-level crime and high-level crime and they put them in the same knife crime group. Which is ridiculous, I had one eleven year old who had taken

nunchucks (blunt weapon) into school, you know what they are don't you?...
Well he did nothing else, didn't hurt anyone, and he was in the same knife
group, for an hour and a half each week, with somebody who had held up a
newsagents with a knife, a sixteen year old." (Interview 3, Research Site A,
seconded Police Officer)

The prior two interview citations both challenge the use of statistical measurements to monitor success, noted as central to public sector modernisation reforms management (Bach and Kessler, 2012: 49). In these cases it is suggested their aim is to prove that politically motivated policies have been accomplished and they constitute a common feature of dissatisfaction from interviewees when discussing their labour process, particularly in relation to the implementation of group work. The use of statistical measurements which encourage normlessness will be discussed further in the succeeding section and this will also be linked to the practice of group work. As highlighted in the following quote, the use of group work did not reflect the aims of practitioners from, a welfarist perspective, in helping young people address problems which constrain their opportunities and reduce their likelihood of offending. Instead it was seen to be motivated by the goal of efficiency and used as an instrument to show that numerous related activities have taken place with a maximised number of young people, at the expense of effective interventions and useful supervision:

"It's a resource issues isn't it? I do believe they get certain things from
groups, but not these groups, because you're trying to get as many bums
on seats for the one worker really. With group work you're capturing them
(for recording purposes) all at once. I just know that doing that same work

as a one-to-one with a young person is much more impactive. They listen more, they're more focussed, more willing to talk about their own experiences, but in a positive manner rather than being 'yeah, I've done this and I've done that' to impressive young people in the group. There's a lot of bravado in these groups, that's why they've come to us in the first place most of them because they haven't really got that confidence to make the decisions that we want them to make. If we could see them all one-to-one I do believe that would be better, but we haven't got the manpower and management want the targets met, so this is what we do." (Interview 2, Research Site A, Case Manager and YOT Officer)

The use of quantitative measurements to ascertain whether YOTs, as organisations, had successfully reach their stated goals will now be considered further. This will account for the juxtaposition of practitioners aiming towards normative goals for achieving the aims of their job, which prove dislocating and unidentifiable to their own values from a personal standpoint.

8.3.5 Youth Crime Reduction and Prevention

Having discussed the links to deprivation and disaffected young people, which were widely acknowledged by practitioners, there was a general consensus that more could be done to tackle the needs of the young people supervised in each research site. Despite the possible exceptions in some of those from a Police background, most practitioners adopted a welfarist attitude to youth crime prevention, often citing family dynamics as an area of concern. According to a YOT Officer at Research Site A:

"Let's face it a lot of the kids that we're getting on our doorsteps, they're coming with them problems. They're coming from troublesome homes, they're coming from homes where they don't want to be." (Interview 2, Research Site A, Case Manager and YOT Officer)

The prior-discussed argument that imposing political and public ideals onto impoverished communities rather than addressing the inherency of deprivation, became evident here as the notion of stable families and aspirational role models is seen to prevent youth crime (White and Cunneen, 2006: 17), thus supporting the perceived "cultural and moral superiority" of the relatively affluent (Haylett, 2001: 366). For example, the acting Deputy Head of Service at Research Site B addressed parenting and children in care whilst being critical of the state's model for assuming parental responsibility of children in care homes, recently described as inadequate in a Prison Reform Trust (2015) 'Care Review', explained:

"Family life, that has the huge influence when they come to us, but look at care home kids. Children in care for us is a major issue, just the other day we had a 'looked after' young person in the custody suite, social care have to be the appropriate adult because they are the corporate parent, but they just phoned us up and said 'you need to provide an appropriate adult'. They're the parent (the state) and I never get the sense that a young person in care receives the same parenting as a young person who lives in a family home. Corporate parenting should be the model parent, if they're saying you are not a good enough parent so we're going to remove the child and put them into care, that should be the ultimate premium service and myself,

as a parent, should be aspiring to it. It's contradictory" (Interview 20, Research Site B, acting Deputy Head of Service)

Along with addressing current failures in social policy, certain practitioners did express more radical suggestions for youth crime prevention and rates of re-offending, drawing on inequalities brought about through the political economy. However, this was regarded as unrealistic in the current political climate, and beyond the capacity of practitioners to achieve in the context of their jobs. For example, a Case Manager at Research Site A stated:

"Prevent youth crime? How about world-wide revolution and kick-out all the corporations and the psychopaths who run the world?" (Interview 8, Research Site A, Case Manager and Social Worker)

In continuing his response, the Social Worker claimed that the service itself could do more to aid young people and reduce youth crime. Also, he was joined by other practitioners in the perception that the quality of the service provided was constrained by the political economy, and the unrepresentative nature of state policy, as reflected in the following quotes:

"…apart from that, yes more can be done, but I think you have got to look at all the blue- blooded public school boys down in London passing all the laws, the draconian laws, and they've got no empathy for people from working-class or poor communities. I think the YOTs themselves and the social services try to provide equality but I think the structures in society don't promote it." (Interview 8, Research Site A, Case Manager and Social Worker)

There are a lot of problems that we can't do anything about, it's not a you problem as a practitioners, it's not a them problem, to be honest so often it isn't the young person's fault. It's maybe a system problem or because there are limits to what YOTs can offer, I work with so many limitations, like policy, the way we are told to work, resources, society itself limits what we can do. I mean I can't wave a magic wand and offer some poor kid's parent's jobs, I can't provide adequate child care to a kid who really needs it. But these things are lacking in society, there's no doubt about that (Interview 26, Research Site B, Case Manager and YOT Officer).

This statement refers to the core essence of the welfare state. As discussed in Chapter 3, Gough (1979: 3) argued the welfare state to be "a constituent feature of modern capitalist societies" (ibid: 3) which, according to Miliband (1982), is a tool of capitalist democracy. In its inception, based upon Keynesian economics (Gough, 1973: 70), the welfare state was aligned with welfarist models of youth crime prevention. However, due to the shifts that have occurred in youth crime policy during successive governments, the application of youth justice services have become skewed over time (Muncie and Hughes, 2002: 1). The noted shift towards punitive practice in the youth justice sector (Haydon and Scraton, 2000; Muncie, 2009; Pratt *et al*, 2005; Goldson, 2005; Pitts, 2002), has been perceived by many practitioners as further criminalising young people, thus depleting their access to opportunities. As stated by the following interview respondents:

"Criminalising young people does ruin lives, it does. It ruins further education in some cases, it ruins job prospects, anybody that wants to

teach, be a nurse, that sort of stuff. It could be a barrier to that." (Interview 24, Research Site B, Prevention Officer)

"We have such a clear goal, we work to such a strict offence focus. I am a firm believer in the old maturation process, that a lot of young people grow out of offending and if you diverted them, got them out and didn't stigmatise them, and all those things they would grow out of it. I think that we talked about this earlier, everything's more process driven. I think there are more structures. We are seeing more things more professionalised, we are seeing more risk models which we didn't have before, our role of protecting the public didn't have that before; it was about welfare and young people and protecting them." (Interview 25, Research Site B, Case Manager and Social Worker)

"I see some of the young people coming into this service for committing offences that I know I committed as a child but I was never criminalised for them, because they were dealt with internally by my family and that for me was the difference between me developing a sense of morality, rather than just getting a criminal record." (Interview 17, Research Site B, Clinical Psychologist)

As previously argued in Chapter 5, the youth justice sector policy was not only influenced by public and media perception leading to the notion of punitive techniques dominating practice and the heightened use of custody sentencing (Haydon and Scraton, 2000), but was also affected by wider political agendas in the reorganisation of the public services. As noted, economic pragmatism associated with New Public Management, has led to what Pollit (1993: 112)

argued as a "performance-conscious" and "financially disciplined" (ibid: 112) public sector management agenda. According to Garland (2001: 188-189), this resulted in work practices in the youth justice system designed on the disputed premise that precise economic measurements can be translated into the complex field of criminology. Having expressed the dissatisfaction displayed by practitioners, particularly case managers, at the standardised work models and increased management regulation associated with such work arrangements, there was also a degree of displeasure as to their effect on young people under YOT supervision. Examples of this being highlighted by the following quotes:

"We focus too, spending too much on the admin side, on making sure that all the stuff's on YOIS (computer database), all the ASSETs, all the plans, and it becomes target driven. The way case management is, the young people just become another figure. Also, the YOIS is a load of rubbish and we spend a lot of time there… I don't mind doing report writing but I don't like inputting everything on YOIS eight times over, the same thing over and over again. It's a lot of repetition on the computer system. My job is very admin based" (Interview 5, Research Site A, Case Manager and Social Worker)

"It is a bit frustrating; you actually seem to spend as much time sat behind a desk as you do seeing kids these days… If you're going to be office based most of the time you're not really doing good interaction with the families or kids. That's left to the other staff. The tools we use, because they're bog standard assessments that we go through, it's like one size fits all, but it doesn't really. I think we're stereotyping the people we work with a little bit

sometimes, and other things seem plucked out of the air." *(Interview 24, Research Site B, Prevention Officer)*

The perceived problems associated with the standardisation of work practice were twofold. Firstly, the time spent working in the office, as opposed to frontline face-to-face work with young people, was commonly considered by practitioners as detrimental in achieving their own personal aims. This suggested normlessness, in the context of YOT workers, encouraged by an inability "in identifying with the organization and its goals" (Blauner, 1964: 24), as they felt the young people they supervised were deprived of their expertise and the service they should provide. This is represented in the following quotes:

> *"I used to be a teacher but I didn't like the paperwork of being a teacher. I wanted to work with children but I wanted to be a bit more practice driven rather than process and paperwork driven and so I side-tracked into psychology. So that was why I went into psychology. But funnily enough, no, I haven't got less paperwork because I currently, in my job, I don't have any admin time. So actually they're paying me most of the time to complete admin rather than do the job which I am trained to do, so it restricts the number of young people that I can see and work with because I have to do all the letters and filing and notes and printing and photocopying."* *(Interview 17, Research Site B, Clinical Psychologist)*

> *"I'm a clinician, please don't think I'm being disrespectful, but I am a clinician and I am not an administrator. I accept that we all have to do part of that but if we were actually unpicking what I'm being paid for, I'm not sure*

it adds up. How am I helping people sat behind a desk?" (Interview 31, Research Site B, seconded Nurse and CAHMS Worker)

"Instead of doing effective face to face work, you're on the computer. As a Case Manager, ultimately you're the person who has got to encourage that kid to comply, which is all about motivating change. So I don't know why you can't do face-to-face work with a kid to get that rapport and that relationship going. Who are you to that that kid, when all you're doing is seeing them to give appointment letters and completing assessments on the computer?" (Interview 2, Research Site A, Case Manager and YOT Officer)

The assessments we use, particularly the ASSET, are very bureaucratic and time consuming. The amount of time it actually takes to do an assessment detracts from the amount of time you can spend with a person. I mean I think there should be assessments I don't think you should just work blasé, but it should be simplified, simplified. There is a happy medium somewhere where you can bypass this system and not have to produce so much information about somebody. Because in reality how much of it really helps anyone? How much do you actually need to know about somebody's pet dog? Or how many schools they went to? I don't know. (Interview 22, Research Site B, Probation Officer and Case Manager)

Secondly, the implications of target setting, informing performance monitoring and management regulation were perceived to have connotations for the labour process which, in turn, affected the young people supervised. In support of Braverman's (1998) argument that capitalist production modes have dominated

labour tasks in terms of pre-devised activities being imitated in "paper form", this is also evident in terms of YOTs, using entries on computer databases, whereby performance is measured even when nothing is physically produced. Thus the intangibility of outcomes can be problematic in certain industries. As a result, it was noted that methods of measuring data for management supervision were unreflective of the quality of work which has taken place in reality:

> *"They do try to measure it, and I think they measure on very simplistic terms. Like, well he's reoffended, he's got to be a gobshite. Then they look at me, did I do good work and try my best to prevent him reoffending… Look, I must have, I filled in all my assessments on time and kept the file up-to-date. But what does that really say about the work I've actually done with that kid? How can you measure a positive relationship?" (Interview 1, Research Site A, Probation Officer and Case Manager)*

> *It's a cumbersome assessment form what I use, in the fact that it's a comprehensive assessment document that obviously our primary aim is to use that so we can understand the issues for the young person. I think the reality of using it is sometimes there is an expectation that you will do that comprehensive assessment quickly to meet national standards and move on, but actually I think they forget that we've got to work with the young person and we've got to work with their level of cooperation. So sometimes I guess it's back to that process stuff, comprehensive mental health assessment actually sometimes the young people really, really don't want to talk about their emotional or mental health issues, it's a really difficult subject for them. So it might take me a long time if I am to do it properly,*

after a couple of assessments I'm sure I'll have pockets of information that I can put into that system, but sometimes it will take me five or six contacts before I can actually pull that assessment together to make any sensible kind of formulation about what is going on. The problem is I am not sure how much they care whether it is a purposeful assessment or not, but more how quickly I can do it, it's almost creating a system where it's quantity over quality. (Interview 31, Research Site B, seconded Nurse and CAHMS Worker)

The main disagreement with performance monitoring was attempting to quantify the extent and quality of service delivered to young people, which was considered problematic by nature, as practitioners believed credit for good practice was often overlooked. As represented in the following quotes, this was perceived to create a temptation for practitioners to neglect support for a young person, with regards to helping them overcome barriers to inclusion, in favour of concentrating on prescriptive functions such as data entry and office-based administration to prove the completion of goals. Thus, the connection to the industrial community became fragmented as certain workers believed colleagues had abandoned their personal and professional beliefs in favour of appeasing management prerogatives:

"You can just be very good at doing admin. It depends whether they're doing a performance management tool with a qualitative approach, but if it's just a quantitative approach you're just ticking boxes or meeting targets just to meet a target; it's not quite the same". (Interview 8, Research Site A, Case Manager and Social Worker)

"Inevitably we are working in a real high risk client group and I think you pay the price of excluding people from services. Don't get me wrong. We've all got boundaries to work into and, for me, in obviously mental health. I have a primary care indicator to work with somebody. But for goodness sake, sometimes I think people here are so boundried, that lack of flexibility to actually have a look at a young person, it's more about fitting into our criteria and that really saddens me… I think this is probably quite a bold statement to make, but I think there is a culture of people that they are being indoctrinated in that this is the way that you work. They lose that it, if you like, creativity to look at something differently." (Interview 31, Research Site B, seconded Nurse and CAHMS Worker)

"We have a few members who are on our team who are absolutely fantastic with the kids and I know they are because you see what happens, you see the results in the change by kids when they come in here over time. But the paper file may not be what it should be, the files may not always be pristine, there might be forms missing, there might be forms not where they should be. I won't mention any names here, but what I am basically saying is that their files are a mess. Then, when we have these team development days or whatever, they say this 'this is a lively file', they show you a file which is what we all should be aim towards. It's full of paper but you have no idea what works been with that kid really, it just looks a very nice file, really deep, full file. It's the people who produce those files who get the praise, but as I say, you have no idea what works been done with that kid. So yes, I think the presentation of a file can be misleading sometimes." (Interview 24, Research Site B, Prevention Officer)

This opinion was not, however, shared by YOT Management at either service, with the acting Head of Service at Research Site B stating his "respect for the professionals who have developed these tools for my staff to use" (Interview 20). However, it was a commonly held belief that young people suffered due to the imposition of performance management. As described in the following quotes, the divergent interests of government policy, YOT Management and front-line practitioners was a discernible feature of the employment relationship:

"I think management is a little bit detached from real life. Don't get me wrong many of them used to be if not all of them used to be case managers but then obviously they get put into a different role and they've got different priorities and it's not always the right way." (Interview 30, Research Site B, Case Manager and Social Worker).

"I think my job is around crime reduction, I don't think I do it as effectively as I could with full resources and I don't do it as efficiently as I could. But I do a good enough job within the constraints of what I'm given; I think all of us who work here do. I think all of us do. I don't think any of us go into work and say 'I'm actively going to not reduce crime'. We're all trying and working to the same goal. But as for the government do they? Do they really want us to work for the good of society? They seem to be more concerned with getting the most out of us who work here, target wise, that seems to be their aim. But I think most of us do a good enough job with what we are given to do it." (Interview 17, Research Site B, Clinical Psychologist)

From the interview data, there was evidence of a genuine concern from practitioners that youth justice policy and broader political agendas have not

developed in such a way as to alleviate inequalities which afflict young people in deprived communities. For this to reveal alienation in civil society, specifically for young people, the notion of relative deprivation, as a cause of discontent and misrecognition (Morrison, 2003), becomes detectible. It is argued that stereo-typing of behaviour leads to social isolation of young people from certain communities, who then become cast-adrift from social acceptance and results in their disaffection, which is argued as a pre-cursor to the understanding of youth crime (Hancock, 2006: 183). Urban planning in both areas was cited as problematic, supporting the notion of an unrepresentative state (Arthur, 1974) with the least powerful members of society being marginalised in favour of those with inherent wealth, causing deprivation to occur as a cyclical phenomenon (Hyman, 1975). Adopting a largely welfarist stance, normlessness was indicated by practitioners commonly perceiving that YOTs should embrace methods of reducing the inequalities afflicting young people in deprived communities, though acknowledging there is little they could do to prevent the inherency of deprivation within the framework of their roles. This led to ensuing criticisms that financial and managerial constraints on the labour process, in the context of their employment setting, impeded their ability to adequately address the barriers to inclusion facing young people. Furthermore, the perceived imposition of punitive measures in the youth justice sector, along with a lack of coherence in policy-making, were considered features which potentially led to the further criminalisation of certain young people and, in-turn, embedded the disadvantages to opportunity which confronted them. The final section of discussion will address how the prior-discussed themes of alienation are manifested in the labour process to cause self-estrangement in YOT workers, thus completing the theoretical framework.

8.4 Self-Estrangement

When considering the "unique abilities, potentialities, or personality of the worker" (Blauner, 1964: 26), in terms of YOT practitioners, overlaps with the themes of powerlessness, meaninglessness and normlessness become evident. These will be highlighted as the section proceeds, in analysing indications of self-estrangement in its two main situations. According to Blauner (1964), the two predominant strands of self-estrangement occur in work activity when the needs as for those of "control, meaning, and social connection which is inherently fulfilling in itself" (ibid: 26) are absent; or when the work activity is not "highly integrated into the totality of an individual's social commitments" (ibid: 26).

Traditionally, pre-industrially, the latter aspect of self-estrangement has been less patent. Despite evidence to suggest work has been coercive, punitive and uninteresting in pre-industrial societies, it was integrated in other societal aspects, "ritual, religion, family and community for example. Therefore it could not be seen simply as a means to life, because it was an immediate part of life's concerns" (ibid: 26). According to Braverman (1998) the universal market and monopoly capitalism have had the greatest effects in compartmentalising work, encouraged by technological developments and divisions of labour, as associated with Taylorism (ibid: 118). It is this compartmentalisation and rigidity of work structures that can be argued to form self-estranged labour at the research sites, under the same conditions that encouraged meaninglessness, reflected by a lack of "organic connection with the whole structure of roles" (Blauner, 1964: 22), which was evident through highlighted interviews with the Education Worker and those occupying Case Management roles.

The formation of self-estranged labour, in this context, is noticeable in its effects to cause a breakdown of a YOT practitioner's social commitments. Furthermore, drawing on discussions of powerlessness, the inability to influence management and central government policy, which is intent on standardising work processes as argued, has led to work activities in which spontaneity has been eroded and has become "compulsive and driven by necessity" (ibid: 27). In the context of YOTs, this stems from management and legislative regulation informed by the requirements based on policies driven political agendas, along with larger-scale media and public influence, which are misaligned with practitioners' personal goals. In relation to this, Braverman's (1998) argument describing the presence of capitalist production modes within the context of service-based industries, supports the assertion that performance measurements, commonly associated with private enterprise, have infiltrated criminal justice settings (Garland, 2001: 188-189). This highlights the problematic nature of attempting to apply objective targets and performance criterion to an area of employment with a wide array of perspectives as to what signifies best practice (Pitts, 2001: 41). With the reforms that underpinned the formation of multi-agency teams, as in current YOT formats, constituting a shift to punitive practices as associated with risk management models (Goldson, 2005: 34). As discussed, interview data suggests these practices to be alien to the principles of the majority of Case Managers interviewed, supporting Field's (2007) claim that certain YOT practitioners support strong professional values of liberal welfarism. Potentially, this is an important factor in undermining a practitioner's "self-approved occupational identity" (Blauner, 1964: 26), as punitive practices are incompatible with the integration of

their social commitments to their work activities. Evidence of this was presented in the following statements:

"Everything we do should be based on relationships and yet everything we are required to do seems to compound us not having the time to establish effective working relationships. And yet that's the corner stone in my view of everything that we do. It's important that we assess and quantify and measure and record, I haven't really got a major issue with that however boring and repetitive it may be, but we also need time to be human with young people. We don't just don't get enough of that". (Interview 33, Research Site B, Courts and Reports Team Officer and Social Worker)

"It was the same when I worked with kids in care. That's why I came into this line of work, because I was sick to death of thinking 'you know what, these kids are already on the crap pile and we just keep throwing them back on it'. For throwing an iron at a wall (in one case), that was the final straw for me. So I came here, but the stuff we do, the stuff we have to do, honestly so often we're not helping, we further criminalise these kids. Dyslexia and literacy is all still linked to offending. I can't believe that we're still not tackling it. You can have a kid coming and going from the age of 11 to 18 and they still can't read and write by the time they've finished with us. That's 7 years of engagement coming backwards and forwards, it doesn't make sense. You know, they won't have engaged with school all the way through them years, when actually we've got them on an order, we've sometimes got them for 25 hours a week, doing the pointless things we have to do, which they have no interest in doing, so when they miss

appointments we send them back to court. We could get them educated in

that 25 hours a week." (Interview 2, Research Site A, Case Manager and

YOT Officer)

Such feelings of dissatisfaction and a lack of integration with the perceived social responsibilities of their role radiated from many practitioners during interview, as was their strength of feeling. This was in contrast to Blauner's (1964) research which suggested, that despite being self-estranged, the factory workers he researched were not overly dissatisfied, even if their jobs were "largely instrumental". Further to this, he argued that dissatisfaction would only occur when people "have developed the needs for control, initiative, and meaning in work" (ibid: 29). This was not concordant with the views of practitioners at the research sites, to whom control, meaning and initiative at work was portrayed as important, with the constraints to this eroding the social connection to their role. As was highlighted by an Education Worker at Research Site A (Interview 4), further to his own personal attachment to the city and traditional industry of which it is associated, his level of disassociation to organisational goals as described in context of normlessness caused a clear loss of social connection to his work through the erosion of control over his labour processes and, thus, encouraged self-estrangement. This, he believed caused workers in the YOT to work outside their normative processes, however he also conceded people would reach a limit to which they were willing to work outside of a normal working day:

"Obviously there are world issues as well in terms of the world economy,

everybody's suffering, but I also think we have to be a bit more creative

about we're doing. Sadly, as workers in the local authority, you deal with

what you've got… You've got an assessment to focus on whatever area needs attention, the actual physical resource we have here is not the best system in the world. Any database is in some respects going to be standardised, it's a mechanical thing, and it's not organic… despite the fact that many people are disgruntled and unhappy with their lot, local authorities I think know that people are going beyond what's expected of them still. That can happen for a number of reasons, partly because people are scared of losing their job, but also they want to do a good job. I think local authorities used to rely on that an awful lot but rely on it even more now. In fact, without that they would crumble, but there comes a point with individuals and with certain departments it seems that they think 'that's enough, I've had enough'. Me as the Education Worker trying to sort out provision, well what can I do? It's pretty toothless. So, in answer, in my lowest moments, and some of my older colleagues would agree with me entirely, that what we do here in the broadest terms has little or no effect. I know that sounds really negative but if you look at the stats, you look at the reoffending figures, I often think that we don't have an awful lot of influence on these young people and, again, a lot of that is out of our hands."
(Interview 4, Research Site A, Education Worker)

Practitioners at both Research Sites also provided evidence of taking on extra work in what can be argued as an attempt to retain a "social connection" (ibid: 26) to their role. Often this work was undertaken informally and under the radar of management, such as the experienced social worker, who claimed to do "what I think is best" (Interview 25, Case Manager and Social Worker), but also, in some cases, practitioners took on voluntary work or work through extra channels to

combat the effects of this form of self-estrangement. For example, a Substance Misuse worker at Research Site B stated:

"I have being doing drug work for almost ten years, normally they tell me to refer on and fill out the reports and paperwork. I constantly want to do more, so I thought 'what else can I do?' I heard of an opportunity to work on a programme at *** Prison that would meant I would spend one day a week there, rather than the YOT. I took this to (acting Deputy Head of Service) and managed to convince her to approve my request". (Interview 18, Research Site B, Substance Misuse Worker)

When asked on his motivations for seeking to work at the prison and spend time away from his normal working environment, the Substance Misuse Officer replied:

"It's just making me feel as though I am making a difference. At the prison I work on a programme where I see up to twelve young people each day, and work with them as regularly as I can over a certain period, I get to know them. That's compared with here, where I meet with a young person once a fortnight and we do a standard worksheet together, which we have to do, and it takes twenty minutes, then I'm back at the office doing paperwork". (Interview 18, Research Site B, Substance Misuse Worker)

In addition, certain practitioners actively sought to return to YOTs after spells in other services. This was illustrated by a qualified Social Worker and seconded Probation Officer at Research Site B, whose first role after accreditation as a social worker was in a different YOT during the first year of its formation, before moving to the Probation Service a year later. When asked on his motivation for returning to a Youth Offending Service by way of secondment, the interviewee

stated his belief that "if you help young people, stop them getting into further patterns of reoffending, you can really make a difference. It was that reward aspect" (Interview 22). Despite showing a clear intent to regain control of the social integrity of his labour, the seconded Probation Officer, although "not necessarily regretting his decision", admitted work practices at the YOT have constrained him fulfilling the rewarding aspect he sought, thus the subjective expectancies leading him to join the YOT were constrained by the objective conditions leading to a loss of control of his labour process. In comparison to his experiences in the "early days of YOTs" he believed, as suggested by Pratt *et al* (2005), that YOTs have taken a distinctly bureaucratic, financially pragmatic and punitive turn.

8.5 Conclusion

Throughout the chapter, it has been observed that key narratives run through themes of alienation. The imposition of employment structures, through youth justice policy and management regulation, constrain the discretion and creativity of practitioners in the service, causing dissatisfaction amongst workers, which supports Field's (2007) argument of strong professional values associated within the employment make-up of YOT staff. Compounded by a limited ability to influence management and state employment policy, as explained in the previous chapter, practitioners displayed a sense of detachment from the labour process. This became apparent in terms of meaninglessness as a result of the divisions of labour constructing their workplace operations. By way of lacking an "organic connection with the whole structure of roles" (Blauner, 1964: 22), divisions of labour in YOTs which assigned the majority of face-to-face interventions with young people to specialist staff, meant Case Managers jobs were heavily reliant

on outward referrals to other colleagues. The foremost, subsequent complaint of this being that they had no practical insight into work carried out with the young people on their caseload, thus bureaucratic structures caused a noted disconnection between Case Managers and, actual service delivery.

In a similar vein, an Education Worker at Research Site A (Interview 6), found the process to which the Local Authority made school placements for young people out of education abstruse and long-winded, admitting he had no real control or influence over the procedure. Further to the indication of self-estrangement, from the intimation that the use of his labour was not representative to his "unique abilities, potentialities, or personality" (Blauner, 1964: 26), due to his inability to preside over school placements, the Education Worker believed the young people often ended up in unsuitable environments. This gave an insight into how young people, from deprived and stigmatised backgrounds, were misrepresented in social policy and this became the focus of subsequent discussion.

Supporting traditional criminological arguments suggesting juvenile delinquency to be linked to those of "poverty and low-socio economic status" (Schiamberg, 1973: 6), most practitioners highlighted poverty and deprivation as fundamental causes of youth crime. Additionally, interview respondents widely upheld the notion of poverty being cyclical, with deprived communities reflected in having little access to opportunities relative to their richer counterparts, and thus low-economic status is inherited to span generations (Hyman, 1975). The historical development of urban planning, leading to problematic social structures, argued by Braverman (1998) as a ramification of "monopoly capitalism", resulting in a degradation in the standard of living in many urban communities (Gough, 1979: 92), was considered

symptomatic of young offenders, commonly described as concentrated within certain "estates". Social isolation is argued to occur through youth justice policy, as young people from such deprived areas were perceived to be further marginalised by the concept of 'misrecognition' infiltrating funding streams (Hancock, 2006), symbolically referring to young people in deprived communities as "threatening and potentially dangerous" and, subsequently, contriving the problems it means to resolve (Morrison, 2003: 152).

The aforementioned lack of face-to-face work, due to the prescribed practices employed by each service, and the noted reductions in staffing, led to a common belief that service quality delivered to young people was compromised. This in itself was a source of dissatisfaction amongst practitioners, most of whom suggested their key motivation at work was to "effect change" in a positive way in young people's lives. With their professional discretion constrained, these personal goals were thought less likely to be achieved successfully. As a result, there was a belief that the quality of provision delivered to young people in receipt of the services was lowered. The "inability to influence general management policies", noted as a mode of powerlessness (Blauner, 1964: 16) reflected their belief of having little scope to challenge imposed procedures and standardised work practices, owing to wider management and wider political agendas, which were considered to negate the benefits of their work. As a result, links were formed to the encouragement of meaninglessness, normlessness and self-estrangement in practitioners as the normative processes available were perceived insufficient to effectively cause a reduction in youth crime, with practitioners tending to display an inability to identify with organisational goals and exhibit a resultant loss of social connection to their role.

Chapter 9

Conclusion

9.1 Introduction

This chapter closes the thesis by drawing on discussions made throughout the document to present a final judgement based on theoretical reasoning and the evidence accumulated by the researcher. The central aim of the thesis is an investigation of alienated labour. It asses the ways in which the capitalist labour process is applied to the work of YOT practitioners and the effect this has, not only in terms of the practitioners themselves, but also in the wider application of service delivery. Stemming from this, perceptions of practitioners as to how they believe their job should be performed compared to the objective conditions of employment which dictate their work functions provided an insight into the dislocation of ideals between the stated goals of the organisation, which are often argued to be political rhetoric, and those tasked with front-line delivery. A loss of control of the labour they perform, due to political intervention and management regulation, limited their discretion and constrained the use of their own perceived unique abilities and talents to engage in their preferred manner with the young people they supervised. This was seen by practitioners to stifle the quality of the service provided, and indicated intensified effects of alienation as the merits of their personal skills and experiences in providing a valuable service to society were perceived to be under-valued in the labour process in favour of unilaterally imposed, standardised work practices.

The interview respondents enabled the researcher to collect a significantly rich breadth of empirical data to act as a narrative for discussion in analysing

manifestations of alienation resulting from the capitalist labour process when applied to YOT practice. Many of the interviewees demonstrated a great willingness to openly engage in dialogue about their work, displaying a clear passion for providing a service to vulnerable young people and, at times, talking emotively about aspects of their job which limited their effectiveness. Equally, they were willing to talk about the personal effects of workplace issues, often linked to work degradation, and their coping mechanisms for these. Therefore, the thesis was able to overcome some of the criticisms of past studies into alienation by ascertaining not only the employees' responses to the work they perform but also the wider socio-political factors influencing the workplace which, in turn, was further aided by access to management and trade union officials. This facilitated the researcher in gaining a richer narrative from the overall interview process and so helped to minimise superficial findings.

The researcher would not, however, contend the study was free from research constraints due to factors such as inherent time and resource constraints limiting the extent to which such a broad theoretical concept could be analysed in its entirety. These constraints are acknowledged throughout the thesis and touched upon again in this chapter. In some circumstances positives are drawn from accepting limitations to this thesis, pointing towards avenues for future research to investigate certain themes in greater depth. The chapter now discusses the contribution of the thesis to the study of alienation and the youth justice system, explaining how it differs from past research publications and how it augments and enriches existing knowledge. Potential opportunities for future research are also considered suggesting how they may overcome some of the limitations acknowledged within this study.

9.2 Contribution of the Thesis

Public sector reform, as argued by Eliassen and Sitter (2008), has taken a high place in the priorities of policy makers in recent decades. The effects of the reforms have resulted in a large-scale restructuring of the public services as a whole, with an illusion of devolved power with rhetoric suggesting local solutions to service delivery, but with a reality of continued central government control (Bach and Winchester, 2003: 290). The outcome of the reforms has led to a heightening of management authority with the application of individualised employee relations and performance management techniques designed to increase work effort (Martinez Lucio and Mackenzie, 1999: 166). These are argued to have been set out in the conceptual framework of scientific management, a technique designed to elicit surplus labour by strengthening management control of the labour process (Braverman, 1998: 62). The implications of this have manifested as a degradation of work for public sector professionals who are required to deliver services, which has led to intensified feelings of alienation (Worrall *et al*, 2009: 118).

As reflected in the literature review chapters, there has been a raft of research from labour process theorists on the working lives of public service professionals with, however, little or no mention of YOTs or general youth justice practice. That is not to suggest that research relating to YOTs and the youth justice system is in any sense sparse, but it is largely focussed on the criminological aspects regarding the effects of reforms in application to young offenders. Also, without discounting the extent or quality of organisational studies in YOTs, previous research has a tendency to be based on the internal conflicts between professionals from different occupational backgrounds which make up the multi-

agency workforce in response to a unified working culture (Ellis and Boden, 2005; Field, 2007; Muncie, 2005).

This thesis differs to previous research into YOTs by taking a labour process analysis on the work performed, and gaining insight into the responses of professionals from all backgrounds with respect to the work they perform, while providing the perspectives of management and trade union officials for a wider analytical framework. The thesis also differs from studies of labour process theorists and their research into the public services as it sets about to ascertain the ways in which alienated labour is presented in the perceptions of front-line YOT practitioners, and to question the factors which have contributed to them. The researcher acknowledges this is a challenging aim given that alienation is an objective outcome of the capitalist labour process (Braverman, 1998; Marx, 1976). Inspiration was taken from Braverman's (1998) seminal work in which he highlighted the potential importance in studying indications of alienated labour as opposed to subjective attempts at measurement. Therefore, the thesis examines expressions of dissatisfaction from practitioners as indications of alienation and assesses the impact that wider political and economic structures have had on causing this dissatisfaction, and the implications it may have on the quality of service imparted onto society.

The study did not make efforts to quantify alienation per se, but sought to analyse how it is manifested in the perceptions of practitioners and the links that can be drawn from this to the wider structures of a capitalist democracy and management control tactics. This approach differed to previous studies into alienation, commonly from a social psychological perspective (Seeman, 1975: 93), to provide for a much broader framework for investigation into the political economy of a

capitalist system. In terms of policy, insight was given to the concerns of front-line practitioners who voiced opinion that the degradation of their work through the limited professional discretion caused by Taylorist prescribed work processes affected the quality of service delivery they gave to young people. Therefore, wider social connotations became apparent. Blauner's (1964) framework was used for analytical purposes and, despite noted constraints to his model, it was adapted to broaden its scope and account for the criticisms of it.

This thesis cannot claim to provide a definitive, substantive conclusion as to how alienation affects workers on a personal level, either in the public services or YOT workers as a whole, as the time constraints associated with the research limited the number of research sites which could be studied. This presents an avenue for future research opportunities for a wider geographical study to assess the impact of regional economic structures on the manifestations of alienation in YOT practitioners, such as differentials in labour markets, local industries, regional deprivation levels and educational achievements of the regional populations. Further temporal constraints in terms of interview responses related to fully investigating the longer range historical conditions of capitalism in causing alienation from a practitioner's perspective, this was due to interviewees speaking mainly about the factors they believed affected their work, which, by necessity, are limited to their length of service in YOTs. While this temporal constraint is difficult to overcome in a relatively short term study, future research could further increase the scope of this thesis in investigating how the length of service of practitioners affects or intensifies alienation. Access to additional research sites would provide engagement with a greater number of respondents with varying levels of

experience and length of service in youth justice to enable a more comprehensive comparative analysis to take place.

Overall, this thesis offers a labour process analysis of YOTs to contribute to the field of research in the youth justice sector, which has predominantly been dominated by criminological studies. In terms of the study of alienation, the thesis primarily attempts to reinvigorate research into alienated labour by adapting Blauner's (1964) formative model to provide a broader, Marxist analysis of alienation within the context of a modern day welfare service provider, rather than traditional industrial capitalism in which Blauner's (1964) research was based.

The chapter now provides an overview of the key theoretical arguments presented throughout the thesis along with the most prominent themes observed in the research findings, before the thesis closes with a final note regarding the alienation of YOT practitioners.

9.3 Key arguments and findings

The thesis started with discussion about the nature of the state in a capitalist democracy (Miliband, 1982), presenting a broad overview of the legislative powers which control public sector organisations and their underpinning interests. This enabled consideration to be given to historical factors of the political economy which have shaped the labour process and the organisation of work. The importance of this was to provide scope for a broader analytical framework into what causes indications of alienation in workers rather than simply appraising a worker's reaction to the work performed; a chief criticism aimed at previous studies into alienation (Braverman, 1998: 20).

From a Marxist perspective, it was argued that the underlying goal of the state is to promote private enterprise and preserve capitalist interests (Miliband, 1982: 34) with the creation of the welfare state being a tactic of political expediency rather than an ideological re-alignment towards a better, fairer, democratic system (ibid: 34). This provided an early research theme in that, despite the rhetoric, the organisational goals of the public services are often divergent from, or even contrasting to, those engaged in service delivery who are argued to potentially have strong professionally-determined values (Worrall *et al*, 2009: 127). As the thesis progressed this theme became focussed onto the occupational context of the youth justice sector within which multi-agency YOTs consist of practitioners from "distinct practice cultures" (Muncie, 2005: 54). Subsequently, this formed a substantial part of the findings analysed in Chapter 8, particularly when set against the research frameworks of normlessness and self-estrangement.

The demand for public services in the UK was argued to swell following the formation of the welfare state, augmented by an amplified social need of a growing population (Gough, 1979: 92). As the public services are generally labour intensive and although technology did impact in the public services by way of job regulation and communication purposes, labour intensive industries give less scope to substitute human labour with technology (ibid: 92). As a result, social expenditure rose with increasing numbers of workers becoming employed in public services and the welfare state, in what have historically been highly unionised sectors of employment. Hence the rising labour costs, with strong trade unions protecting pay structures, caused a greater level of spending to be required each successive year "just to maintain standards" (ibid: 85). As defined in Chapter 2, many welfare services have been termed as "non-marketed" sectors of the public services. For

this reason they are unprofitable by nature and, from a capitalist perspective, many of such services are a "social expense borne by capital or labour" for the purpose of maintaining social harmony (ibid: 122). This premise can arguably leave them open to ideological attacks.

Although local governments have traditionally been an important player in certain aspects of welfare service provision, the increased use of hierarchical planning systems has left managerial control firmly at a centralised, state level (Glennerster, 1975: 153). In the post-World War II era, the government's strategy for capital accumulation was based on the Keynesian economic model (Gough, 1979: 103), meaning that state spending was used as a means to boost demand for goods and services in the private sector (Burchill, 2008: 18). However, this came to change in favour of a more pragmatic model (Massey and Pyper, 2005: 83); indeed as early as the 1950s and 1960s governments were displaying monetarist policies along with Keynesian economics (Hay, 2010: 463). Although Coffey and Thornley (2009) explain that there was no radical dislocation in overall state employment ideology in which concessions tend to only be given in response to cyclical "pressures from below" (Coffey and Thornley, 2009: 82), certain reforms are argued to have augmented the use of monetarist public sector policy in the 1980s which undermined public service professionals (Corby and White, 2005: 9).

Under the Conservative government, New Public Management reforms were said to incorporate a "neo-liberal ideological dimension" (Bach and Kessler, 2012: 25), rather than the Keynesian economics informing the expansion of the welfare state and public services (Gough, 1979: 103). Initially, based on market principles to attain "value-for-money" through mechanisms of financial constraints and managerial control (Garland, 2001: 88), the reforms are argued to have taken

inspiration from TQM techniques as an engagement with private sector management techniques (Martinez Lucio and Mackenzie, 1999: 158). Such techniques are argued to provide rhetoric suggesting they uphold the needs of the customer but, in reality, are based on management control and restrictive work processes (ibid: 158). Tellingly, at the onset of New Labour's regime, Martinez Lucio and Mackenzie (1999) observed the continued blame culture, intensive performance management and use of performance indicators to intensify "work related effort levels" (ibid: 166). Indeed, performance management and a "target culture" have come to be regarded as a defining feature of New Labour's public sector modernisation reforms (Bach and Kessler, 2012: 48).

The "culture of blame" (Martinez Lucio and Mackenzie, 1999: 158) attributed to public sector reforms was presented in the interview data and, as described in Chapter 7, was openly referenced by an interviewee and was considered to be promoted by management. While showing a clear link to the encouragement of powerlessness in the way of "the inability to influence general management policies" (Blauner, 1964: 16), it could be argued that from a wider political economy perspective, the 'blame culture' emanated from the noted centralisation of state control in the public services (Worrall *et al*, 2009: 123). The perception of blame can be explicitly linked to the central government policy of accountability in reference to "safeguarding children" (HM Government, 2015: 63).

As noted in Chapter 3, accountability has been commonly utilised coercively to impair "team centered solidarity" (Gintis, 1976: 47), thereby reducing worker control over the labour process through a fear of challenging workplace policy. In addition, a common strand of the literature review pointed to target-driven public services which often led management to overlook potentially important care

provisions in favour of the labour-time that practitioners spent on meeting performance indicators (Worrall *et al*, 2009: 123). This feature of public sector organisations is highly correlated to YOTs through the stringent target-setting determined by government enforced national standards (Muncie, 2009: 256-257) which are regulated by the YJB (Smith, 2006: 80). This thesis argues that the highly politicised nature of youth justice (Garland, 2001: 103) coupled with the traditionally strong and distinct professional values of YOT practitioners (Field, 2007: 320) indicated that prioritising practice to meet targets can compound the aforementioned theme of normlessness. This returns to the theme of divergent aims of organisations and their workers with the underpinning theme of fiscal pragmatism constraining the delivery of welfare provisions (Muncie and Goldson, 2006: 36) and, arguably, pushing practice toward punitive measures (Goldson, 2006: 142).

Closely associated to the use of performance indicators are the prescriptive work practices they promote. Both of these factors are heavily linked to the application of Taylorism in the public services to which Ironside and Seifert (2004: 68) argue that New Labour's modernisation reforms lead "directly towards" (ibid: 68). This was presented as a central premise encouraging indications of powerlessness supporting Braverman's (1998: 62) description of scientific management as having the primary goal of best controlling alienated labour; that which is "bought and sold" (ibid: 62). Such was its prominence as a means of dissatisfaction portrayed by interview respondents regarding this theme of alienation that, as a topic of discourse, Taylorist management techniques traversed all modes of powerlessness examined in Chapter 7.

Initially the application of scientific management in YOTs was argued to intensify "separation from the ownership of the means of production and the finished product" (Blauner, 1964: 16). As argued in the literature, the "target-happy", "outcome-led" bureaucratised practices (Pitts, 2001: 7) which the application of Taylorism promoted in youth justice sector, resulted in an increasing dominance of standardised assessments which practitioners are prescribed to use when meeting young people under court orders (Garland, 2001: 188). As practitioners overwhelmingly expressed the belief that their main tool in working with young people was their interpersonal skills and the ability to engage in constructive conversations, the lack of ownership of the standardised assessments they were forced to use, and the lack of scope to adapt them at their own discretion, had alienating affects.

With an underpinning ideology of scientific management (Worrall *et al,* 2009: 124), managerialist policies were not developed in consultation with, nor did they share a consensus with, the professionals who were tasked with undertaking the imposed practices (ibid: 127). This unilateral factor of policy formation was linked to powerlessness through "the inability to influence general management policies" (Blauner, 1964: 16). As this mode of powerlessness was most salient to the interview data, three distinct sub-sections were used in this thesis to extract opinions from respondents for the analytical purpose of adapting and expanding upon Blauner's (1964) frame of reference. This allowed for a wider perspective on the effects the capitalist labour process inflicted on YOT practitioners and their responses to it, these sub-sections consisted of 'trade union influence', 'management regulation and consultation' and 'accountability and discretion'. Blauner's (1964) framework was adapted to enable discussion to draw upon the

perspectives of three key stakeholders associated with YOTs, those being, trade union officials, practitioners themselves and management, set against the backdrop of how central government policy directly shapes the organisation's aims and type of work performed.

When analysing the influence of trade unions at each research site, it was striking to note that Research Site B had no shopfloor representative. This supports the suggested difficulty facing trade unions in securing sufficient representatives in the public services to collectively organise workers and pose a genuine challenge to, or indeed, against employers in the context of the austerity measures (Bach and Stroleny, 2013: 12), and realistically contest the Taylorist management tactics introduced under previous governments. UNISON at Research Site A did, however, operate a shopfloor representative, yet organising collective action was again cited by the representative as problematic in the climate of austerity as practitioners were fearful for their jobs. Therefore, the interview data supported the argument that in the contextual climate of austerity trade union influence was constrained at each Research Site, thus encouraging powlessness as "the inability to influence general management policies" (Blauner, 1964: 16).The UNISON Convenor covering Research Site B and the UNISON Branch Secretary covering Research Site A also agreed that there was little scope for their members to influence work policy, which included the imposed use of standardised assessments.

Having argued that overall power of employment policy in the public services lay with central government, the ability to influence policy at this level was considered for a wider outlook on the political economy (Worrall *et al*, 2009: 123). It was found, from a trade union perspective, that the measures and procedures available

for trade unions to influence central government were insufficient and ineffective. This sentiment was also echoed in the context of the shopfloor management consultations with practitioners. While modes of consultation did take place between management and practitioners, the overriding sense of feeling from practitioners was that decisions were top-down by nature and, despite modes of employee involvement taking place, their voice was not heard. Primarily, this reflected individualised HRM based consultation techniques, which might imply "some influence on the decision-making process, which is not necessarily the case" (Burchill, 2008: 172). Powerlessness in this form was intensified at Research Site A where antagonism was commonplace in the employment relationship and the UNISON Representative believed management actively opposed and attempted to undermine his presence on the shopfloor.

As previously stated, the evidence, which suggested a blame culture at both Research Sites, largely emanated from levels of accountability generated by central government policy with particular reference to the "safeguarding children" agenda (HM Government, 2015: 63). However, management at Research Site A were accused of using draconian means to regulate work related tasks with reference to internal policy on accountability. This shows that factors, both external and internal, can affect an individual's response to the labour process, proving that different complexities between separate YOTs play out to form differing intensities of this form of powerlessness felt by practitioners, and can affect their responses to it. This strand can be further developed by expanding future research to include multiple centres in different geographic and socio-economic regions as well as in other areas of public sector employment. Research Site A, directly supported Bach and Kessler's (2012) argument of low morale in the public services with high

degrees of stress and increased levels of absence commonly mentioned by both practitioners and management. At Research Site B, evidence was provided to suggest "the inability to influence general management policies" (Blauner, 1964: 16) resulted in responses of noncompliance by experienced practitioners. Rather than being noncompliance collectively organised by a trade union movement, this was evidenced to occur at the level at which Thomas and Davies (2005: 686) refer to as the individual.

A further mode of powerlessness in which trade union influence was examined was in the "lack of control over conditions of employment" (Blauner, 1964: 18). As mentioned, this had context in terms of widespread funding to cuts to YOTs in England and Wales (CYPN, 2011) due to austerity measures, but also in pay disparity between practitioners. Having referred to Thornley's (2000: 457) analysis of the nursing auxiliary and healthcare assistants in the public service context of the NHS, concluding that "managers… 'undercut' existing registered staff with their 'cheaper' non-registered nursing team colleague" (ibid: 457), this issue was evidenced in the interview data regarding case managers. Pitt's (2001: 8) argument of a de-professionalization of youth justice was supported by the inclusion of YOT Officers at each research site, these being employed by the local authority with fewer formal qualifications than Social Workers and Probation Officers and receiving lower pay. According to one interviewee, this had been a source of tension and UNISON had been involved in pay structure issues, acting on behalf of YOT Officers.

Despite supporting Pitts' (2001) notion of the de-professionalization of the justice practice, the advent of YOT Officers may not have played out in the employment relationship as he predicted it would in the succeeding years. Evidence suggested

the noncompliance at individual level at Research Site B was mostly impelled by experience based on years of service in criminal justice practice or front-line work with children and young people, rather than Pitts' (2001) argument that suggested the level and quality of training associated with social workers would be the main instigator of non-compliance. At Research Site A, despite very little noncompliance with management regulation due to fear of reprisals, strength of dissatisfaction with management was high from practitioners and showed no discrepancy between YOT Officers and their more 'highly trained' counterparts. One theme was clear regarding the dissatisfaction expressed by YOT Officers in reference to their lower pay grade while essentially doing the same job as other case managers, was that they viewed themselves, seemingly, as a cheaper supply of labour utilised by management. This provides deductive reasoning to argue that powerlessness was encouraged in the form of a "lack of control over conditions of employment" (Blauner, 1964: 18).

Braverman (1998) argues that the "dissociation of the labour process from the skills of the workers" (Braverman, 1998: 78) is a principle outcome of management imposing Taylorisic work practices in order to control the pace in which work is performed (ibid: 78). Chapter 7 stated clear links between Taylorism and New Public Management and was described in terms of conflictual relations, whereby the locus of control as to "pace, volume and quality of tasks are determined" has shifted from professionals to managers (Worrall *et al*, 2009: 126). In relation to youth justice sector managerialism, this revealed a greater standardisation in policies and practices to curb the autonomy of the professionals (Raine and Willson, 1996: 20-21) and a unified work culture in the delivery of youth justice practice (Ellis and Boden, 2005). Substantively, this was explored in the theme of

powerlessness through the contextual mode of a "lack of control over the immediate work process" (Blauner, 1964: 20).

However, Blauner's (1964) interpretation of the effects of an individual's control over the pace of work was argued not to apply in the non-factory based setting of YOT practice. Blauner's (1964) frame of reference for this mode of powerlessness was derived from the notion of "machine-paced" and "man-paced" actions (ibid: 21). He considered "machine-paced" actions as most likely to be alienating to workers by restricting a person's action. It was suggested that such a worker would possess virtually no control over the pace of work since it is determined an external force and can, therefore, only respond (ibid: 21). In contrast "man-paced" actions were likened to those of an "unskilled clerk" who would have considerable control of the work pace, often being able slow down, speed up, or take a break at his or her discretion as long as a minimum daily output is reached (ibid: 21). A criticism of this portrayal of "man-paced" actions is that Blauner (1964: 21) only gave a cursory mention to the likelihood that supervisors might have influence over work pace in this context.

Furthermore, the nature of front-line service delivery in YOTs differs greatly from Blauner's (1964) stated narrative; therefore it would be a generalisation to presuppose his argument as indisputable across all sectors of employment. When considering the "professionally-determined standards, behavioural norms, judgements and value systems" (Worrall *et al*, 2009: 127) of public sector professionals and the interview data at each research site suggesting practitioners had a genuine drive to help young people, nuances of the labour process in YOTs provided a differing occupational setting in which to explore this concept. The lack of freedom to control one's pace of pace of work, as associated with "machine-

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paced" (Blauner, 1964: 21), was best equated to face-to-face work with young people, as these were most likely to create chaotic scenarios which a practitioner could not control but only respond to. Within the factory setting of his research Blauner (1964) cited conveyor belts as restricting pace of work in this reference, which he eluded to an apparent de-skilling of work tasks. However for front-line YOT practitioners, face-to-face work with young people showed a clear contrast as the lack of freedom of movement in this context, far from encouraging the alienating effects of de-skilling, was considered the most skilled aspect of the job. Indeed, as discussed in Chapter 7, it was the office based activities, most akin to the stated work of Blauner's (1964: 21) "clerk", where practitioners indicated they felt their freedom of movement and lack of control of their work pace created a process of de-skilling, insinuating job degradation and its alienating affects.

Having mentioned the theme of normlessness earlier in this chapter in terms of divergent aims of organisations and their workers, the thesis argues that scientific management techniques imposed on practitioners contributed to this divergence. Criticisms that financial and managerial constraints on the labour process, in the context of their employment setting, impeded practitioners' ability to adequately address the barriers to inclusion facing young people were commonplace. This supported the notion that central government imposed fiscal pragmatism constrained the delivery of welfare-based practice (Muncie and Goldson, 2006: 36) and amplified the sense of normlessness in YOT practitioners. In addition, the task fragmentation (Rose, 1988: 26) of Taylorist principles evident in the case management model was argued to encourage meaninglessness, as practitioners revealed a discernible "lack of organic connection with the whole structure of roles" (Blauner, 1964: 22). This was not only presented through case managers, but also

by specialist intervention workers, particularly when explaining complexities in the process of placing students into school environments.

Again the effects of Taylorism were seen to encourage self-estrangement in practitioners, whereby central government imposed standardised work process and stringent management control (Smith, 2006: 80) leading to spontaneity being eroded and work becoming "compulsive and driven by necessity" (Blauner, 1964: 27), with the 'necessity' element being determined by performance management. As a result, it was argued that the "unique abilities, potentialities, or personality" (ibid: 26) of YOT practitioners were constrained in expression due to practitioners lacking control of the labour process, a common theme which has run throughout the thesis.

9.4 Conclusion

It is clear from the perspectives of front-line practitioners, managers and trade union officials that continued spending cuts are likely to affect the service. As a statutory body imparting a service onto users with the conceptual intention of "maintaining social harmony" (Gough, 1979: 122), YOTs may not be at risk of dissolution. However, the quantitative reduction in resources and staffing, which has affected both the service delivery of YOTs and the working lives of practitioners, shows no signs of ceasing. This aspect of the service was acknowledged by management with a belief that the multi-agency structure of YOTs was seen to make spending cuts more pronounced as each parent agency of seconded workers was looking to pull back their seconded staff. Despite both services having endured significant reductions in the numbers of front-line practitioners in recent years, there was a perception that more cuts would follow.

Furthermore, at the time of the research the Probation Service was perceived as being under threat of privatisation and many interviewees articulated worries regarding the privatisation of their own job roles emanating from a belief that government policies imposed on the Probation Service were customarily applied to YOTs in the succeeding years; this had clearly become a cause for concern.

As a result, powerlessness through a "lack of control over conditions of employment" (Blauner, 1964: 18) shows no signs of diminishing; neither has work intensification to which the staffing cuts have contributed. The barriers that austerity measures are argued to create for trade union organisations and their subsequent ability to challenge management authority (Bach and Stroleny, 2013: 12) look set to endure. Evidence of this can be seen in the lack of shopfloor trade union representation at Research Site B, and from the dejection of the current UNISON Representative at Research Site A in terms of raising a collective challenge from co-workers due to fears of job insecurity and a glum prediction that his own time left under employment at the service is numbered. Based on this, one can surmise that the modernisation reforms which have featured so prominently in the restructuring of the public services (Eliassen and Sitter, 2008) and have been built upon following the election of the Coalition and subsequent Conservative government will continue into the near future. Therefore, the Taylorist policies of performance management and task routinisation will continue to aid management and central government control of the labour process, magnifying indications of work degradation and modes of alienation discussed in this thesis (Worrall, et al, 2009: 127). The "culture of blame" established by successive Conservative governments at the outset of New Public Management, in line with Martinez Lucio and Mackenzie's (1999: 166) prediction, and continued throughout New Labour's

time in office is showing no sign of easing under the current incumbency based on the perceptions of YOT practitioners. In a service with such onerous levels of accountability as YOTs, the issues of constrained professional discretion will persist to blight the experience of work for front-line practitioners until there is a political, ideological shift in government philosophy.

The thesis accepts that underlying social and economic structures exist which contribute to the causes of youth crime which transcend the reach of practitioners within the YOT services and about which they can realistically attain little influence within the context of their job. This relates to the basic, long running dilemma over the way in which capitalist states treat the 'problem' of youth offending and what causes it and the ways in which practitioners view this. However, by providing a more inclusive workplace system to embrace the skills and individual qualities which practitioners see as key to effective front-line practice, and minimising the imposition of standardised work practices thereby empowering them to more frequently use their own discretion, may go some way to lessen the loss of control many practitioners experience in the labour process and to reduce the intensity of alienation which results from it. The researcher would argue that this would improve the chances of YOTs more effectively achieving their aim of reducing youth crime.

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Appendix One

List of Interviews Used in Analysis

Interview Number	Research Site	Job
1	A	Probation Officer and Case Manager
2	A	Case Manager and YOT Officer
3	A	Police Officer
4	A	Education Worker
5	A	Social Worker and Case Manager
6	A	Education Worker
7	A	Senior Practitioner
8	A	Social Worker and Case Manager
9	A	Area Team Manager
10	A	Courts and Reports Team Manager
11	A	Restorative Justice Worker
12	A	Case Manager and YOT Officer
13	A	Substance Misuse Worker
14	A	Social Worker and Case Manager
15	A	UNISON Branch Secretary
16	A	UNISON Representative
17	B	Clinical Psychologist
18	B	Substance Misuse Worker
19	B	Restorative Justice Worker

20	B	acting Deputy Head of Service
21	B	Case Manager and YOT Officer
22	B	Probation Officer and Case Manager
23	B	Case Manager and YOT Officer
24	B	Prevention Officer
25	B	Social Worker and Case Manager
26	B	Case Manager and YOT Officer
27	B	acting Head of Service
28	B	UNISON Convenor
29	B	Police Officer
30	B	Social Worker and Case Manager
31	B	Nurse and CAHMS Worker
32	B	Case Manager and YOT Officer
33	B	Social Worker and Case Manager

Appendix Two

Indicative Interview Schedule

1. How long have you worked in the youth justice system or with young offenders?

   - What does your current job entail?

   - What is previous employment background, including any jobs prior to working with young offenders?

2. Why did you go into this career?

3. What are your views on youth crime?

   - Is it a problem?

   - Is it correct for people as young as ten years old to be held criminally accountable for their actions?

   - Is the social, media and political perception of youth crime a true reflection of young offenders and their activities?

4. Why do you think young people commit crime?

   - For example: Social structures, deprivation, individual choice/deviance, policing and sentencing issues.

5. Do you believe young people living in certain communities are disenfranchised?

   - For example: Not adequately provided for by the state.

   - Could more be done to ensure equality?

6. How do you believe young offenders are treated by the state?

- Do you think they are treated fairly in pre-court procedures, in terms of sentencing, while under custodial or YOT supervision and following the cessation of their order?

- Do you think the severity of sentencing for young offenders is generally reflective of the severity of crime committed?

7. Do you think your job allows you to achieve the aims of crime reduction effectively?

- Do you have adequate scope for professional discretion or are constrained by procedure?

- Do you think standardised assessment practices identify the prevalent causes of youth crime in most cases?

- Do you think notion of financial efficiency and cost-minimisation is hindering the benefit of your work?

- Do you think performance management, in terms of supervision and target setting, realistically reflects the performance of individual workers and their teams?

- Do you believe your job could be improved in terms of better addressing the causes of youth crime?
    - If so how?

8. In terms of the cost implications of YOTs, do you think they bring value for money?

- In terms of money filtering back into the economy through young people gaining employment.

- The social gain, reduction of crime bringing about social harmony.

- Or not at all – do you believe the possible ways you mentioned to improve your job would help achieve this?

9. What are your views on how your job is regulated?

- Too much or too little management regulation or the right amount?

- Does state policy hinder or improve practice?

- Have recent changes in policy or practice affected your job?

10. Do you believe your 'voice' as a front-line practitioner is heard in government policy and in management decision-making?

- Trade union representation.

- Modes of employee consultation.

- If 'voiceless', what impact do you believe this has had on your work and perceptions of it?

11. Do you feel distanced from the output of your work?

- For example: Do you lack a degree of control over the way you perform your job?

- How do you exert your own autonomy and discretion at work?

Information Sheet

Information Sheet

Study Title: **Perceptions of work and policy: A case study of Youth Offending Teams (YOTs) in England and Wales**

Aims of the Research

This project aims to assess the views of workers in the youth system and those who work with young offenders regarding the work perform in practice, in light of political, public and media pressures. This will explore the nature of youth crime, its causes and their views as to how their work helps achieve the objective of youth crime reduction.

Invitation

You are being invited to consider taking part in the research study *"Perceptions of work and policy: A case study of Youth Offending Teams (YOTs) in England and Wales"*. This project is being undertaken by Trevor de Middelaer.

Before you decide whether or not you wish to take part, it is important for you to understand why this research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read this information carefully and discuss it with friends and relatives if you wish. Ask us if there is anything that is unclear or if you would like more information.

Why have I been chosen?

You have been chosen to take part in the study because your employment involves working within the youth justice or work in some capacity with young offenders. Your experiences will therefore provide a great level of insight into the nature of youth crime and the methods we use to tackle it.

Do I have to take part?

You are free to decide whether you wish to take part or not. If you do decide to take part you will be asked to sign two consent forms, one is for you to keep and the other is for our records. You are free to withdraw from this study at any time and without giving reasons.

What will happen if I take part?

If you agree to take part you will agreeing to an interview which should take around 90 minutes to complete. Your anonymity will, of course, be guaranteed.

If I take part, what do I have to do?

If you take you will be asked to sign a consent form before the interview commences. The interview will allow you to give your opinion on various aspects of youth crime and your role working with young offenders. You will be free to stop the interview at any time should you be called to more pressing matters or simply wish the interview to cease.

What are the benefits (if any) of taking part?

You will be informing a piece of research which will prevent the issues of youth crime from the perspectives of those who work with young offenders.

What are the risks (if any) of taking part?

There are no risks to those agreeing to interviews.

How will information about me be used?

The data will be collected and presented qualitatively, interviews will be used to help inform a PhD thesis and will not be used for any subsequent research projects without due consent. The interview will only be recorded if this agreed by the interviewee and the recording will be destroyed following completion of the PhD thesis.

Who will have access to information about me?

- The data collected for this study will only be accessed by the researcher Trevor de Middelaer and his supervisor Professor Carole Thornley.
- Information on you will be kept confidential and anonymous. This means that the researcher will protect your identity as a participant by ensuring that you remain unidentifiable in the research. As stated above, the only people who will have access to the personal information you discuss in this study, is Trevor de Middelaer and his supervisor Professor Carole Thornley. The information you provide will not be disclosed to any third party. When discussed in the research you will be given a pseudonym (a false name) so that you remain unidentifiable.
- In accordance with Keele University guidelines, the data from this study will be retained and securely stored by the principal investigator – Trevor de Middelaer until completion of the PhD. After this period of storage, the data will be securely destroyed.

Who is funding and organising the research?

This research is independent and has no third party funding other than Keele University.

What if there is a problem?

If you have a concern about any aspect of this study, you may wish to speak to the researcher(s) who will do their best to answer your questions. You should contact Trevor de Middelaer on t.a.de.middelaer@keele.ac.uk.

Alternatively, if you do not wish to contact the researcher(s) you may contact: Professor Carole Thornley, Keele Management School, Darwin Building, Keele University, Staffordshire, ST5 5BG.

Or via email at: c.r.thornley@keele.ac.uk

If you remain unhappy about the research and/or wish to raise a complaint about any aspect of the way that you have been approached or treated during the course of the study please write to Nicola Leighton who is the University's contact for complaints regarding research at the following address:-

Nicola Leighton

Research Governance Officer

Research & Enterprise Services

Dorothy Hodgkin Building

Keele University

ST5 5BG

E-mail: n.leighton@uso.keele.ac.uk

Tel: 01782 733306

Contact for further information

Normally only Keele telephone numbers and e-mail addresses should be used in all study documentation. If there are reasons to depart from this then these must be explained in your Ethical Review Panel documentation.

Consent Form

CONSENT FORM

Title of Project: Perceptions of work and policy: A case study of Youth Offending Teams (YOTs) in England and Wales

Name and contact details of Principal Investigator: Trevor de Middelaer, Keele Management School, Darwin Building, Keele University, Staffordshire, ST5 5BG

Tel: 01782 737816

Email: t.a.de.middelaer@keele.ac.uk

**Please tick box if you
agree with the statement**

1   I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

☐

2   I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time.

☐

3   I agree to take part in this study.

☐

4   I understand that data collected about me during this study will be anonymised before it is submitted for publication.

☐

5   I agree to the interview group being video recorded.

☐

6   I agree to allow the dataset collected to be used for future research projects.

☐

7   I agree to be contacted about possible participation in future research projects.

☐

_____   _____   _____

Name of participant   Date   Signature

_____   _____   _____

Researcher   Date   Signature

Appendix Five

Consent Form (for use of quotes)

CONSENT FORM (for use of quotes)

Title of Project: Perceptions of work and policy: A case study of Youth Offending Teams (YOTs) in England and Wales

Name and contact details of Principal Investigator: Trevor de Middelaer, Keele Management School, Darwin Building, Keele University, Staffordshire, ST5 5BG

Tel: 01782 737816

Email: t.a.de.middelaer@keele.ac.uk

**Please tick box if you
agree with the statement**

1   I agree for any quotes to be used ☐

2   I do not agree for any quotes to be used ☐

_____   _____   _____
Name of participant   Date   Signature

_____   _____   _____
Researcher   Date   Signature

Appendix Six

Research Ethics Approval Letter

19th February 2013

Mr Trevor de Middelaer

Z11 Horwood,

Keele University

Dear Mr de Middelaer

Re: 'Perceptions of work and policy: A case study of youth offending teams in England and Wales'

Thank you for submitting your revised project for review.

I am pleased to inform you that your project has been approved by the Ethics Review Panel.

The following documents have been reviewed and approved by the panel as follows:

Document(s)	Version Number	Date
Application Form	2	14/02/2013
Project Proposal	2	14/02/2013
Letter of Invitation	2	14/02/2013
Information Sheet	2	14/02/2013
Interview Schedule	2	14/02/2013
Consent Form	2	14/02/2013
Consent Form (for use of quotes)	2	14/02/2013
Invitation Letter (Team Meetings)	2	14/02/2013
Consent Form (Team Meetings)	2	14/02/2013

If the fieldwork goes beyond the date stated in your application (July 2014), you must notify the Ethical Review Panel via Elizabeth Cameron

If there are any other amendments to your study you must submit an 'application to amend study' form to Elizabeth Cameron. This form is available through the following link, http://www.keele.ac.uk/researchsupport/researchethics/

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact Elizabeth Cameron in writing to uso.erps@uso.keele.ac.uk

Yours sincerely

Elizabeth Cameron

ERP1 Administrator

Dr Jackie Waterfield

Chair – Ethical Review Panel

CC Supervisor: Prof Carole Thornley