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**Amoral Panic: The Construction of ‘Antisocial Behaviour’ and
the Institutionalisation of Vulnerability**

By

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at the

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in the

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Abstract

Through a re-examination of the issue of moral panics, with particular reference to sociological work around ideas of 'risk' and a 'culture of fear', this thesis attempts to examine the emergence of the social problem 'antisocial behaviour'. Situated in part within the changing political terrain of the 1990s, the emergence of the politics of behaviour is related to the diminution of the human subject and the development of a therapeutic culture – both trends helping to lay the basis for an engagement by the political elite with the 'vulnerable public'. These developments are traced through the 1980s and 1990s to illustrate the construction of the problem of 'antisocial behaviour', with particular reference made to the shift in left-wing thought from radical to 'real'. Using the example of the Hamilton curfew in the west of Scotland, empirical research with adults and young people, and media coverage of this safety initiative, are examined to explore the idea of a 'culture of fear'. The legitimisation of the curfew justified by various claimsmakers is examined to indicate the emergence of the new 'amoral' absolute of safety. The experience of the curfew for the local people is also analysed and the contradictions between local concerns and those of the authority are contrasted. Finally, through exploring the changing meaning of the term 'antisocial behaviour' and its growing politicisation, the emergence of this social problem is related to the deterministic and managerial form of politics that emerged at the end of the 20th century.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The demand for law and order, which at first sight appears to attempt a restoration of moral standards, actually acknowledges and acquiesces in their collapse. Law and order comes to be seen as the only effective deterrent in a society that no longer knows the difference between right and wrong (Lasch 1977: 187).

Initial Concerns

The idea for this thesis originated in 1996 when I was running a youth drop-in centre in Lanarkshire. Following Strathclyde Police's *Operation Spotlight* initiative I discovered that every young person who attended the drop-in centre had been stopped and searched. A colleague giving a talk on children's rights at a nearby school found that all the teenagers in the class had been stopped and searched. And when he discussed this with the teacher of the class, he found that all the young people that went to her Sunday School had also been stopped and searched.

With an existing awareness of works on moral panics by Stanley Cohen (1972) and Geoff Pearson (1983), I started to look into the issue of youth crime, antisocial behaviour and the developing concern with the fear of crime – and to look at this development within the framework of a moral panic.

Following the election of a Labour government in 1997 and what appeared to be, if anything, an acceleration of the focus on youth crime, my interest in the issue of antisocial behaviour was reinforced – most particularly by the *Hamilton Child Safety Initiative* or what became known as the Hamilton curfew.

My concerns were directed initially by a sense that, whatever the problem of youth behaviour, the stopping and searching of all the young people in the area I worked was excessive. But also when looking at the curfew in Hamilton, I was curious to observe not only an element of 'yob' bating, but also a more 'caring' approach and concern about the *safety* of the children and young people in the area.

With this in mind I decided to study the Hamilton curfew in an attempt to understand how, if at all, this initiative could be understood in terms of a modern day moral panic.

The problem of antisocial behaviour

In October 1997 the Hamilton curfew was launched. Intended to create 'safer communities' the curfew, officially named the Child Safety Initiative (CSI), was targeted at young people under the age of 16 who were to be moved off the street if they did not have a 'good reason to be out after dark'. This initiative was one of the first significant attempts by a local Labour council to deal with the 'social problem' of antisocial behaviour following the election of the Labour government in 1997. With the backing of the government, the 'success' of the curfew was used to justify the extension of these police powers in 1998 with the passing of the Crime and Disorder Act. The Hamilton curfew has subsequently and repeatedly been discussed as a key example of Labour's new approach to crime and disorder.¹

By 2002, the issue of antisocial behaviour had become so central to British politics under Labour that prime minister Tony Blair used the Queen's Speech to attack what he saw as the main social problems facing British society: - graffiti, vandalism and fly-tipping - : while the Labour MP Frank Field described the antisocial behaviour of young people on estates as a form of terrorism (Field 2003).

This thesis attempts to explain why the use of curfews and antisocial behaviour initiatives has developed. What is at the heart of these initiatives and new laws? Who has helped to construct the 'social problem' of antisocial behaviour? Ultimately, what does the issue of 'antisocial behaviour' tell us, not about the behaviour of young people, but about society itself?

The 'reality' of crime

The trend within social science research – and to a degree within criminology – over the last decade or so, has been to recognise, rather than reject, the reality of crime as a social problem. This is a major shift from the radical days of the late 1960s and 70s,

when Marxist and labelling perspectives were developed², and even from the 1980s when 'crime panics' continued to be understood as part of a moral backlash (Pearson 1983). Today, feminist (Pain 1995, Kersten 1996, Smith and Torstensson 1997) and new realist perspectives (Lea and Young 1984 and Young 1988)³ line up alongside child and social psychology (Farrington 1997 and Rutter 1998), to expose the 'real' and growing problems of crime and antisocial behaviour of young people.

However, the 'epidemic of crime and disorder' (Labour 1996) remains open to question. How society experiences crime and antisocial behaviour is related to the objective existence of the problem, but this can never be the whole story. Individuals and organisations have a significant impact upon the promotion of certain social problems, while the way in which a problem is experienced by the public will always depend in part upon the political and cultural framework within which it occurs. Understanding these 'subjective' factors is perhaps more important than ever today, when there is no systematic opposition to the idea that crime and antisocial behaviour are serious social problems.

The concern about antisocial behaviour has grown alongside the fear of crime and remains closely associated with the issue of crime. However, even when studying the 'objective' nature of crime, this social problem is far from clear-cut. The 'reality' of the rise in crime can be seen in the offences recorded by the police. Here crime is shown to have been increasing slowly from the 1930s and accelerating from the mid-1950s and late 1980s before declining from the mid 1990s. A similar trend is also indicated by the British Crime Survey (Maguire et al 2002).⁴ However, there remains some questioning of these crime statistics, both from conservative critics like Simon Jenkins⁵ and from those on the left, including John Muncie (1999), who argues that crime statistics are both partial and socially constructed.⁶

Examining conviction statistics for the 1980s and early 1990s, when reported and recorded crime figures were reaching an all-time high within both the police and the British Crime Survey reports, we find that convictions of burglary, for example, fell by one third (Rose 1996a: 102-3). Looking at youth crime during this period, a Barnardos survey concluded: 'Even taking account of the number of unrecorded

offences, demographic changes and the growth of strategies to divert young people from prosecution, there is little evidence that youth crime has actually increased' (Roberts and Sachdev 1996). Similarly, research published by the Trust for the Study of Adolescence concluded that, 'there is little evidence of any great increase in the level of crime committed by young people during the last decade' (Coleman 1999: 81). Even Michael Rutter, whose book *Antisocial Behaviour by Young People*, is predicated on the notion that the problem of crime and antisocial behaviour amongst young people is on the increase, recognised that, 'the number of juveniles found guilty or cautioned for indictable offences per 100,000 of the population fell, between 1984 and 1994, by 44% for males aged 10-13 and by 19% for males aged 14-17' (Rutter et al 1998: 70).⁷

With the shift in focus of once radical criminologists, backed up by the development of the British Crime Survey, there is a greater acceptance of crime as a 'real' problem. However, the myth and reality of crime remains a contested area. This thesis does not propose to disprove the 'reality' of crime. But the question of, when and why crime, and more particularly antisocial behaviour, became a 'social problem', in part depends on it being defined as such by significant groups and individuals who act as claimsmakers for this particular problem (Spector and Kitsuse 2001). In this respect, it is interesting to note that one of the reasons for the development of the British Crime Survey in the early eighties was not to prove the high level of crime, but rather the opposite – to show that the fear of crime was an exaggerated concern (Hough and Mayhew 1988).

The rise and rise of crime over the last fifty years, at least as far as statistics are concerned, could have led to conservative and radical thinkers to have highlighted the 'problem' of crime at almost any point within this time period. But it was not until the 1970s and then the 1990s that political parties associated with the right and then the left adopted the posture of the party of law and order, and not until the mid-1980s that some radical criminologists became 'realists'.

Particularly for radical criminologists and sociologists, the 'problem' of crime was questioned to a far greater extent in the past than it is today – despite the constantly

rising crime figures (Cohen 1972, Hall 1978, Pearson 1983).⁸ The justifications for the growing acceptance of crime as a social problem are wide and varied, often referring to economic and social changes (Lea and Young 1984, Campbell 1993). This thesis, in contrast, will attempt to locate the concern about crime and particularly antisocial behaviour within the changing ideological and political outlooks of those who have helped elevate these concerns.

Whereas studies in the past have explored conservative reactions to societal changes in formulating what were defined as moral panics, few British studies have been carried out to look at the more radically-based 'panics' of the 1980s and 1990s. With the emergence of the Labour party as a party of law and order,⁹ and the increasing importance being given by the government to issues of crime, the fear of crime and antisocial behaviour, the emphasis of this thesis will be on uncovering the strands of thought and the active claimsmakers who have helped to situate concerns about 'behaviour' at the centre of much social policy.¹⁰

It is worth pointing out at this stage that what is under study here, and what is defined as antisocial behaviour, is not what would traditionally have been understood as crime – theft or burglary, crimes often associated with economic gain, and seen as being an affront by the 'crook' to the state. Rather, with the elevation of the problem of antisocial behaviour, it is the 'petty' incivilities of noise, rowdy behaviour and dropping litter, or petty crime like graffiti and vandalism, that are understood to be a problem for the individual and ultimately for society.

Unlike crime, which has had a relatively long shelf-life as a perceived social problem, the issue of antisocial behaviour has only emerged and become understood as a serious problem in the last decade, and particularly since the election of the Labour government in 1997. Many of these 'antisocial' acts create 'victims' not in a physical or economic sense; rather, it is the perceived 'emotional victimisation' and a sense of fear and anxiety that is being addressed. For example, if the presence of a group of young people is creating fear within a community, regardless of their activities, this very presence can be interpreted and labelled as being antisocial behaviour.

At a time when crime figures are shown to be falling, with a, '25 per cent fall in crime measured by the BCS in the five years between 1997 and 2002/03', it is still the case that 'three quarters of the public still believe that the national crime rate has been rising' (Home Office 2002/2003). This anomaly is explained by some as being caused by the day-to-day incivility of antisocial, sexist, racist and ageist behaviour, often by young people, which undermines the sense of wellbeing of both the individual and the community (Field 2003, Young 1999, Smith and Torestensson 1997, Pain 1995 Junger 1987, Lea and Young 1984). Here the high level of fear of crime is explained in relation to various forms of harassment that do not show up on the crime statistics.

The understanding of these problems, and the impact that they have on individuals, have been influenced by claimsmakers who help formulate the problems within certain parameters: parameters that have increasingly been set by what Joel Best describes as the 'victim industry', and which have a particular ontology (Best 1999). Equally, and more generally, the understanding of these problems and the impact they have on individuals and society will be influenced by the specific political and cultural climate of the day – a cultural climate that Furedi has labelled a 'culture of fear' (Furedi 1997).

Antisocial behaviour of adults and especially young people is generally understood to be the cause of much of the fear in society. However, following the work of Best and Furedi, the fear of disorder is examined as part of a cultural process based on a more generalised sense of risk and insecurity, a social and political process that has helped create a sense of *vulnerability* amongst the public. How this sense of vulnerability has been encouraged and institutionalised is examined through the case-study of the Hamilton curfew.

The politics of 'safe' behaviour

From the early 1990s onwards, law and order has become a key issue for all political parties. More specifically, the 'non-criminal' behaviour of antisocial youth - behaviour that in the recent past would have been described as 'mischievous'¹¹ - has become one of, if not *the*, major concern in law and order policies and debates.¹² In

Scotland for example, part of the Strathclyde Police's, 'Operation Spotlight Initiative', launched exactly one year before the introduction of the Hamilton curfew, targeted young people causing a public nuisance, which included dropping litter outside schools and being noisy (*The Scotsman* 2 October 1996).

'Nuisance behaviour' has also become a concern for the public, and in the same year that Operation Spotlight was launched in Scotland, the Audit Commission in England and Wales noted that between 10 and 20 per cent of phone calls to the police were for nuisance behaviour. This definition of 'nuisance behaviour' specifically relates to non-criminal activities - shouting, swearing, hanging around and fooling around in groups, sometimes outside other people's homes (Audit Commission Report 1996:13).

Other types of behaviour have also been criminalised. For example in 1996, Glasgow City Council introduced a street drinking ban covering the whole of the council area. Anyone found drinking outside now risked being fined and labelled as antisocial.

Today, local authorities have defined 'community safety' as one of the core strategic objectives that directs council activities. The antisocial behaviour of young people is one of the main concerns raised within this community safety framework, and local initiatives costing hundreds of millions of pounds aimed at tackling the behaviour of antisocial youth, have been set up across the UK,¹³ with the involvement of almost every council department, education department and voluntary organisation (Waiton 2001: 31). Even trade unions have developed their own policies to deal with the antisocial behaviour of the public, with monitoring and research being produced annually to assess the 'growing problem' of this behaviour (Waiton 2001: 39).

The assumption that the preoccupation with antisocial behaviour simply reflects the real changes in behaviour, and particularly that of young people, is challenged in this thesis. This is not to argue that there is no problem, or even to reject the idea that some problems of behaviour may have got worse. But, to understand the significance of 'antisocial behaviour' to political and public life, an examination must be made of the changing nature of politics itself: the loss of any opposition to the politicisation of crime; the emergence of 'micro-politics' that has transformed social issues into

problems of individual behaviour; and the changing relationship between the state, other institutions like the trade unions, and a fragmented and more insecure public.

Safety and the desire to be safe is not a new concern for individuals or for society. What is new is the extent to which being safe has become an all-encompassing organisational principle for society. This is often seen most clearly in relation to children and young people, where the prefix of 'safe' is now automatically added to any activity that involves youngsters. How this focus upon safety has come about is examined below, as is the impact that this has had upon social policy and the regulation of young people's lives.

From moral panics to amoral anxieties

Beginning from an understanding of the moral panic studies of the past, this thesis attempts to modernise the concept of 'moral panic', a concept that was developed at a time of conflicting beliefs and visions of society by those generally labelled as 'left and right'. Today, when society is understood by some to have moved *beyond left and right* (Giddens 1994, Furedi 2005), the following question is posed: What impact has this had on moral panics in society, and how are these changes to be conceptualised?

Much of the key critical work examining crime panics in the UK, particularly work carried out prior to the 1990s, was done within the broad framework of moral panic studies (Young 1971, Cohen 1972, Hall 1978, Pearson 1983). In this framework, fears about Mods and Rockers, or muggers, was understood to be generated by a conservative reaction to cultural and economic changes from the 1960s onwards. However, whereas these studies were examining occasional 'panics' within a society that was generally 'calm', today a growing body of social science research has attempted to describe and understand society with reference to a more permanent sense of risk (Simon 1987, O'Malley 1991, Feeley and Simon 1992, O'Malley 1992, Beck 1992, Furedi 1997, Glassner 1999).¹⁴

Rather than panics occasionally erupting within a society that is otherwise at ease, government policies and institutional arrangements appear to be both initiating panics

and institutionalising practices based upon a cultural sense of anxiety (Fitzpatrick 2001, Burgess 2004). Concerns about the 'behaviour of youth', for example, are no longer the preserve of conservative groups and 'outsiders',¹⁵ but involve a wide spectrum of opinion, institutional practices, and every political party, focusing on issues related to drugs, drink, sex, smoking, bullying, peer pressure, antisocial behaviour and so on. Concerns about 'youth' are not new, but rarely in the past were they so widely felt, and they did not take such a central place within society. Panics continue to erupt in society, but it will be argued here that it is more accurate to classify society as being in a *constant state of anxiety*.

Where panics once took the form of a conservative reaction to changes in society, expressed through the promotion of moral values, more recently panics have been generated by more 'radical' thinkers, around such issues as the environment, child abuse and AIDS (Cohen 1988: 260-3, Jenkins 1992, Fitzpatrick 2001). Indeed the basis of many of today's panics and anxieties are more commonly formulated through the morally neutral, 'scientific', or *amoral* language of risk and safety. Previously panics took place within a contested political context, within which traditionalists would promote the ideal of the past – of the family and the 'British way of life' – while radicals would challenge these panics, embracing changes in society within a more positive vision of the future. Today neither traditional conservative moral values appear to be central to the promotion of many panics, and nor is there a radical opposition to them. However, moral panic research is still often framed within this paradigm (Thompson 1998), and as such remains somewhat one-sided. Rather than attempting to understand contemporary anxieties as an expression of traditional moralising, this thesis will endeavour to formulate an explanation for the rise of *amoral anxieties* that cut across the political spectrum.

With the introduction of the Hamilton curfew by the newly-elected Labour government in 1997, the issue of *child safety* merged with the *fears* about young people who hang about the streets. Here the development of a curfew was largely understood, not as a panic reaction, but as a necessary initiative to protect the public from perceived risks – and more specifically to protect them from this fear. This

safety-based initiative is understood and discussed within this thesis as an example of the institutionalisation of amoral anxieties.

Anxious Authoritarianism

The Hamilton curfew, like many crime and safety initiatives, should be understood, not simply as a police initiative to deal with crime and disorder, but also as a relatively new form of state legitimation predicated upon the political elite's attempt to reengage with an anxious public.

How the Hamilton curfew became an acceptable, indeed celebrated, initiative can only be understood with reference to the emerging culture of control that is identified as developing most systematically from around 1993. This trend towards directly regulating public space and ever-more areas of life is situated within the loss of direction of both left and right, and with the growing disengagement of the public from politics. How the political elite reacted to these developments and attempted to reengage a more fragmented public is of central importance here in attempting to understand the preoccupation with crime and antisocial behaviour.

Within the discussion about antisocial behaviour, there are differing explanations of the cause of this problem. In political writings, for example, Labour MP Frank Field (2003) has described the significance of the declining influence of evangelical Christianity that framed the actions and civility of everyday life within the working class. The Conservative Alexander Deane (2005) has examined the 'great abdication' of the middle class who, he argues, have given up on the standards of good behaviour, that influenced the whole of society. Both of these perspectives accept that antisocial behaviour is a major – indeed *the* major problem facing society; a contention that is questioned within this thesis.

Rather, this thesis argues that the central development in the last two decades in understanding the significance of antisocial behaviour as a social problem is the 'collapse' of politics, which reflects the loss of belief by the political elites in their own capacity to direct social changes. Lacking a political dynamic and an ability to

engage the public, the result is a political elite with an exaggerated sense of society being out of control. This is coupled with a profound sense of pessimism amongst the public about not only political life, but about public life and ultimately about other people. In this respect, rather than antisocial behaviour being understood as a major social problem, the rise of the concern with this problem is seen here as a reflection of a widespread sense of society being out of control, and a more pessimistic, indeed fearful, perception of the actions of others.

C. Wright Mills has described, what he considered to be the emergence of a 'mass' society, where there is a loss of an active *public* and a resulting preoccupation with personal *troubles* rather than public *issues*. Following this idea, this thesis argues that the concern about antisocial behaviour – or indeed of incivility (Deane 2005) - is a reflection not of a loss of concern about 'politeness' by the public, but the opposite: a more exaggerated preoccupation with personal behaviour. If politics really has all but 'collapsed' - if we are living in an age where we face the 'end of ideology' (Bell 1962), the 'end of utopia' (Jacoby 1999), or what Rose has described as the 'death of the social' (Rose 1996) - then the intense concern about antisocial behaviour is perhaps less to do with the behaviour itself than due to the fact that polite contact with other individuals is all we have left?

Therapeutic vulnerability

The development of a 'culture of control', and of authoritarian initiatives like curfews, has been understood as part of a neo-liberal agenda that engages with the 'individualistic morality of our consumer culture' (Garland 2002: 198). However, while accepting the significance of the 'individual' to social policy developments, the nature of this individual does not appear to be the 'individualistic' or 'greedy' character that is often portrayed as having emerged out of 'Thatcher's Britain'. Rather, the contemporary human condition can more accurately be described, and is addressed within this thesis, as being founded upon a fragile sense of *vulnerability*.

Throughout this thesis an attempt is made to identify the nature of the subject being engaged with and promoted within society. In so doing, the broader moral system of

belief underpinning state actions is examined (Beetham 1991: 11), and the basis of modern day claims-making is explored. Where previously individuals were understood in relation to the Enlightenment vision of the active and rational 'man', today the relationship being developed between the individual and society is predicated upon the cultural sense of diminished subjectivity (Heartfield 2002). This cultural sense has led to the emergence of 'safety' as the new 'morality' for an anxious age. As Furedi notes:

Today, the fear of taking risks is creating a society that celebrates victim-hood rather than heroism...The virtues held up to be followed are passivity rather than activism, safety rather than boldness. The rather diminished individual that emerges is indulged on the grounds that, in a world awash with conditions and crises and impending catastrophe, he or she is doing a good job just by surviving (Furedi 1997: 12).

The new basis for state legitimation that developed systematically towards the end of the 20th century, both Nolan (1998) and Furedi (2004) argue, was a form of therapeutic legitimacy.¹⁶ Rather than engaging the *public* with a political or moral programme - an outlook that connected the individual to society and its values - government instead attempted to relate directly to the individual and the emotional self - an emotional self that was understood as being profoundly vulnerable.

The most recent example of the government's 'respect agenda' is significant in this regard. This agenda, which at first sight appears to resemble a more traditional demand for morality and decency, when examined further exposes the more vulnerable and therapeutic nature of government interventions today. For example, what are the moral standards underpinning this idea of respect? Few if any institutions have been held up as deserving of respect, nor indeed has the old adage of 'respect for the elderly' been seriously promoted. Rather it seems that respect is something that everybody - adults and children alike - should be given or perhaps more importantly should *feel*.¹⁷ Where previously the idea of respect was in some way associated with adult society, its values and institutions, today it appears to relate more to the vulnerability of individuals and their interactions with other people. Respect is now

demanding by the government as a form of protection of the emotionally-constituted public.

The significance of the understanding of the public as being fundamentally vulnerable is explored in the thesis with reference to the changing nature of claims-making, and the formation of social problems predicated upon what Garland has correctly described as the universalised notion of victimhood (Garland 2002: 11). How this sense of vulnerability that has emerged is explored, in order to understand the cultural framework within which the Hamilton curfew was established. This engagement in society with the public, through the prism of vulnerability, will be shown not simply to be a reactive process that connects to a more fragmented individual, but a 'creative' one that helps to form and inform the nature of individual subjectivity, people's actions and expectations of themselves.

The Hamilton Curfew

The case study of the Hamilton curfew is used to explore the themes discussed above and to examine how the cultural and political trends identified impacted upon a working-class estate in Scotland. This is done through the use of semi-structured interviews with young people affected by the curfew, and by examining the representation of the problems being addressed by the key claimsmakers within the media.

The semi-structured interviews with children and young people in the targeted area are used to help explore how the curfew impacted upon these young people. More broadly, these interviews help us to examine the broader concerns and fears held by young people and adults alike. Rather than simply reflecting 'real' dangers experienced by local people, the fear within the curfew-targeted areas is also studied as part of a broader culture of fear - a culture of fear that has arguably been encouraged with the criminalisation and politicisation of antisocial behaviour. Much of what is being examined is the justificatory process of the curfew, the central themes that were used to give legitimacy to the police and council's actions and the 'warrants' or values that underpinned the arguments used.

Through this research, a number of themes are uncovered: the centrality of the idea of the 'vulnerable public' and the 'victim' of both crime and antisocial behaviour; the emergence of the 'amoral absolute' of safety and particularly child safety, which dominated the discourse of those both for and against the curfew; and, in relation to the above, the promotion of 'rights' as a form of protection of the vulnerable adult, child and young person.

Discussed with reference to the development of zero tolerance policing in Strathclyde, the dual elements of the criminalisation of young people and the 'victimisation'¹⁸ of adults and young people is explored. In essence it is argued that the increasing understanding of both adults and young people as potential victims has led to the criminalisation of young people in public space. In this respect, the curfew is discussed less as a 'right wing' authoritarian initiative than as a logical progression from the developing relationship between the state and the individual, predicated upon the notion of individual vulnerability, the unquestioned centrality of 'community safety' and, in part, the therapeutically-oriented understanding of the need to protect the emotional well-being of the public.

Following from this, the idea of the diminished subject is explored. Rather than 'risks' being understood as challenges for ordinary people to face, the public were encouraged by those promoting the curfew to have a passive relationship with these 'social problems'. This observation raises the question of what is meant by the notion of 'responsibility' and 'active citizenship', when a more passive relationship is encouraged between members of the public, and fear becomes institutionalised through public safety initiatives.

The process of legitimation adopted by the authorities in their promotion of the curfew raises questions about the basis of government and political legitimation – a form of legitimacy that relates less to social institutions and public morals than to individual safety and feelings of fear. Here the extent to which a therapeutic approach influenced the development of the curfew is explored (Beetham 1991 and Nolan 1999).

Through this research the myth and reality of 'kids running wild' is examined and the impact of the curfew at a time when overprotected, 'cotton wool kids' was becoming recognised as an alternative social problem.¹⁹ Equally, the ideas of safety and risk that were promoted by the authorities are questioned, and the notion of perceived and projected risks are compared to the cultural sense of insecurity in the area. By exploring the use made by the authorities of the issue of safety and fear, the potentially detrimental effect that this had upon individuals and the community is raised.

Finally, the contradictory attitude of young people to the curfew is explored. Often annoyed by their own personal experience of the police, the young people of Hamilton nevertheless were generally supportive of a more policed and regulated environment. In the newspaper coverage, before the Hamilton Child Safety Initiative was launched, the concern was raised about how a curfew would create an 'us against them' mentality amongst angry young people. However, given the 'culture of fear' in society, the question addressed here is to what extent can it be argued that young people have themselves adopted the safety-first mentality often understood to be the preserve of elderly adults. In this respect, again, questions are raised about the detrimental impact that 'risk awareness' has upon young people and upon the interactions between themselves and others within a community.

Conclusion

The research in this thesis looking at the impact of the Hamilton curfew was originally developed in an attempt to examine Furedi's understanding of the emerging 'culture of fear' (Furedi 1997). This remains central to the thesis but has been developed further with reference to the idea of a 'therapeutic state' (Nolan 1998), and through the study of the nature of the individual and the culturally promoted idiom of vulnerability (Furedi 2004).

The emergence of the culture of fear is analysed in Chapter 2 through a study of past moral panic theories, and here the transformation of both the traditional 'moral' framework of these concerns, and also the 'panic' based nature of these now more

generalised public anxieties, is questioned. Rather, it is argued, the recognition of an all-encompassing culture of fear is useful in helping to explain the *amoral* safety-based ‘panics’ that have arisen in the late 20th and early 21st century.

Following this chapter, the thesis develops chronologically by analysing the way crime and the fear of it have changed within politics, social institutions and also within academia. Chapter 3 ultimately attempts to explain the ‘politics of antisocial behaviour’ and the growing centrality across the political spectrum of the idea of the *vulnerable public* that has informed this development and lies at the heart of the emerging preoccupation with antisocial behaviour.

Having established the background to what are described as *amoral anxieties* prior to the introduction of the Hamilton curfew, this ‘Child Safety Initiative’ is explored, with reference to official justifications of it and to the experience of local young people.

Finally the thesis looks more generally at the meaning of the politically-loaded idea of *antisocial behaviour*, and attempts to unearth the essence of this term. This penultimate chapter examines the concern about antisocial behaviour both historically – prior to the introduction of the curfew – and also with reference to its growing significance to society today. Tracing the recent rise in the political and public concern about ‘antisocial behaviour’, this chapter asks: What does it mean to be antisocial at a time when common ‘social’ values are less coherent and society is more individuated? With this in mind, the meaning of being ‘antisocial’ and also of the more psychologically-formed understanding of ‘behaviour’ is explored.

In conclusion, this thesis reinterprets the idea of moral panics and explains how the very basis of the *amoral anxieties* that have been institutionalised today express the problem not of antisocial individuals, but of an anti ‘social’ society.

Chapter 2: From Moral Panics to Amoral Anxieties

It is widely acknowledged that this is the age of the moral panic (Thompson 1998: 1).

Introduction

The concept of the moral panics grew out of the 1960s to explain a conservative reaction to a perceived threat to 'sacred and fundamental' values of society (Cohen 1972). However, what today's fundamental values are is less clear than ever before. The promotion of The Family has become replaced by an acceptance of families, Britishness now embodies the idea of multiculturalism and even the Conservative Party rarely campaigns around traditional moral values. Despite these shifts, we do indeed appear to be living in an age of panics. How do we account for this?

In the 1970s and 1980s moral panics were understood to be a right-wing reaction to economic and social changes at a time when the hegemony of the capitalist elite was breaking down (Hall et al 1978). Moral panics were in part about class and class conflict. Today, however, this conflict is at an all time low. The once powerful British labour movement has all but disappeared from the political stage and a key basis for the moral panics of the past appears to have vanished.

At the same time, panics have emerged in society, generated not by traditional conservatives but by radical thinkers and groups. Child abuse (Jenkins 1992), AIDS (Fitzpatrick and Miligan 1987), and the environment (Cohen 1988: 260-3), for example, are just three areas that have been identified as sites of radical panicking. Concerns about crime and youth disorder, which would historically have been conservative preoccupations that were challenged by radicals, have also become more mainstream. Indeed not only crime, but also the often non-criminal behaviour of young people, has become a significant social problem for conservatives and liberals alike – viewed as the problem of 'antisocial behaviour'.

Also, whereas panics in the past were often occasional, short-lived, focused on specific groups and activities, and generated by conservatives, today almost all

sections of society are involved to some degree in panicking about an ever-wider array of issues, from MMR to bird flu, the millennium bug, paedophiles, binge drinkers, sexually transmitted diseases, passive smoking and global warming. Whatever the myth and reality of these 'panics', the language of 'epidemics' and 'chaos' used to describe them depicts a society that is out of control, and expresses a deep sense of pessimism about the future. Rather than panicking being the preserve of reactionary traditionalists, it seems that to one degree or another we are all in a panic about something.

Today, many panics are not only promoted by less predictable groups and individuals, but, like the MMR panic (Fitzpatrick 2004), have helped to undermine rather than shore up the authority of the political elite (Ungar 2001).

To make sense of these changes, the framework of understanding contemporary panics in relation to conservative moral reactions to societal changes needs to be reassessed. Historical specificity is required to re-conceptualise this 'age of moral panic' and to understand what, if anything, are the sacred and fundamental values of society today that are being defended by those promoting these panics. The following chapter will attempt to do just that, firstly by analysing moral panic literature of the past to ascertain what these theories achieved, and then by studying the social constructionist methodology that will be adopted within the thesis. The chapter as a whole aims to show that the left/right framework within which moral panics have been understood is no longer valid: rather, it is the collapse of this moral and political contestation that helps to explain the more ever present state of anxiety across society. Finally, theories of 'risk' (Beck 1992) and especially 'fear' (Furedi 1997) will be examined to explain the rise not of moral panics but of what is a more accurate concept within today's 'liquid modernity' (Bauman 2000) of *amoral panics and anxieties*.

Introducing moral panics

British moral panic research, beginning with Stanley Cohen (1972) and developing with Stuart Hall (1978), was stimulated by a 'radical' belief that reactions to certain social problems were disproportionate to the reality of them. For Cohen and Hall the attack, by certain conservative groups in society, on sections of British youth was new and told us less about 'the youth of today' than about the conservative elite and British society more generally. The development of moral panic theories is explored below, not only as an approach that explained the moral and class dimension of these panics, but also one that acted as an opposition to them.

Since Jock Young (1971) coined the term 'moral panic', and Stanley Cohen (1972) developed the concept in his work on Mods and Rockers, the term has become one of the few sociological concepts to become part of modern political language. General explanations of who causes moral panics and why have been developed by a number of researchers. For Cohen the main promoters of the moral panic around Mods and Rockers were 'interest groups' - middle class professional groups - and the media, although the role of the police and politicians and other 'right thinking' individuals was also explored. Hall (1978), in his work on 'muggers' in the 1970s, developed a critique of the 'elite' interest group – although a key focus was again on the media and their role, something that has become an increasing focus for more recent writers (McRobbie 1995, Thompson 1998). Pearson's work looked largely at the anxiety of the elite in times of national and democratic crisis (Pearson 1983); while others on the left have identified a similar emergence of moral panics at times when 'society has not been able to adapt to dramatic changes, such as the Industrial Revolution or the modernising trends of the 1960s (Furedi 1992). Social problem theorists, particularly those from the US, have also focused upon 'interest groups' as the key to moral panics (Jenkins 1992, Best 1993 and 1999), but they have also examined the role of those at the 'grassroots' of society, examining the role of 'the public' in generating moral panics (Best 1993, Goode and Ben-Yehuda 1994).

Class conflict and the interests of the elite in relation to the working class has been a major factor in British moral panic research. From Pearson, who studied panics in

Victorian England onwards, to Hall, who looked at the emerging class conflict in the 1970s, moral panics were often understood as an expression of a conservative reaction to the perceived threat from sections of the working class. For most writers on moral panics – UK writers more than those from the US – part of the motivation for this work, and part of the explanation for the rise of moral panics, has been a questioning of traditional conservative values and more recently a challenge to the rise of the new right.

Cohen and Hall

Stanley Cohen carried out the first major work on moral panics in Britain in 1972.²⁰ Cohen's analyses of the scare surrounding the Mods and Rockers fights in the early 1960s looked at moral panics in terms of what the Mods and Rockers *represented* in society. Rather than their actions being significant in themselves, Cohen argued that the Mods and Rockers were seen and treated as a symbol of Americanised affluence and youthful hedonism. Developed from an understanding of disaster research, Cohen saw moral panics as an expression of social anxiety, brought to the surface by a particular event or action. For a once 'great nation' such as Britain, this influence of the USA upon young people, Cohen argued, was seen as problematic - both in the values they were seen to uphold, or those they were seen to reject, like the ethics of sobriety and hard work (Cohen 1972).

Cohen not only launched the term moral panic, but also was the first to recognise the spontaneous collective behaviour involved in these panics, which were short-lived and developed outside of societies' key institutions (Goode and Ben-Yehuda 1994). The media exaggerated the problem (Cohen 1972: 32-3); the police and courts were activated and pushed for more powers to deal with the problem, thus escalating the issue (Cohen 1972: 88-91); politicians denounced the fighting as 'evil' and called for new laws (Cohen 1972: 138); local action groups emerged – a 'germinal social movement' (Cohen 1972: 120) – to demand tougher remedies (Cohen 1972: 125); and the public reacted to all of the above developments. The result: a fully-fledged moral panic.

Stuart Hall's examination of the panic surrounding 'muggers' in the 1970s suggested that news about crime was becoming a moral tale reinforcing what is right and wrong (Hall et al 1978). Hall's analysis adopted and developed elements of Cohen's work on moral panics, analysing key concerns about affluence and changes to the 'traditional' ways of life.²¹ Elements of social change and changes in attitudes amongst the young, took on a 'folk devilish' form in the black mugger – a reflection of an alien who has no sense of respect, hard work, morals or family values and who is making the streets into a no-go area. The mugger, Hall explained, was a symbol of social decay that was first imagined and then discovered (1978: 161).

Hall's analysis both looked at structural reasons for the rise of the mugging panic and also adopted Gramsci's concept of hegemony: the birth of the 'law and order society' in the 1970s being an expression of the inability of the state to win the hearts and minds of society, reflected in the more overt use of power to control sections of the population. As Hall explained, 'A crisis of hegemony marks a moment of profound rupture in the political and economic life of a society, an accumulation of contradictions' (1978: 217).

The development of this panic and a more openly coercive state occurred at 'exceptional' moments, triggered in the late 1960s by the 'exhaustion of consent' in society (1978: 219). Here the 'control culture' and the media, followed by the police and courts, reacted more quickly, without much pressure from below, to events in society, creating a 'general panic' about social order (1978: 222).²²

The media coverage of mugging, Hall believed, reflected firstly a sense of social loss, concern about family breakdown and moral decline; and secondly an image of the decaying inner city as a 'ghetto'. Here, the concern about social decay was mixed with a sense of loss in the family and was expressed in relation to not only youth, but an alien body of youth. Black youth.

A key focus within Cohen and Hall's moral panic research was not so much the problem raised by these panics, but the reaction to them. As Stuart Hall explains in *Policing the Crisis*:

We want to know what the social causes of ‘mugging’ are. But we argue that this is only half – *less than half* [my italics] – of the mugging story. More important is why British society *reacts to mugging* [original emphasis], in the extreme way it does, at that precise historical conjunction – the early 1970’s (Hall et al 1978: vii).

American social constructionists

As Cohen was developing his work on moral panics in the UK, in the USA similar work was being carried out by sociologists looking at the issue of deviance from a ‘labelling’ perspective (Best 2004). This work took as its starting point a questioning of the accepted, official, objective description of crime and deviant behaviour. Rather than drug-takers and other deviants being simply deviant by nature of their behaviour, it was argued that they were deviant because their behaviour was labelled so by others, especially those in authority. Therefore rather than viewing deviant behaviour as an objective activity or fact, as positivists had done, the labelling of deviant behaviour was investigated.

For constructionists, subjectivists or relativists, social problems and therefore moral panics are seen as problems that have been identified and collectively defined. These social problems and panics are therefore not objective realities in and of themselves, but rather are constructed (Becker 1991, Best 1993, Jenkins 1992, 1998 and Spector and Kitsuse 2001).²³ Indeed, Cohen himself also believed that ‘it is the perception of threat and not its actual existence that is important’ (Cohen 1972: 22).

American social constructionist Philip Jenkins argues: ‘It is impossible to define a problem in an objective or value-free way, since talking about a “problem” or a “crisis” ipso facto implies that there is a solution, that change of some kind is necessary and desirable’ (Jenkins 1998: 4). For Jenkins, the very way a problem is discussed, and solutions developed, implies a certain value-laden view of the problem and of society. However, while maintaining a critical approach to ‘objective’ social problems, Jenkins and most social problem researchers also attempt to examine the

strengths and weaknesses of objective evidence – rather than seeing the objective world as purely a subjective construction.

The approach adopted by American sociologists Philip Jenkins (1992; 1998) and Joel Best (1993; 1999) grew out of Social Problem Theory in the 1970s.²⁴ This approach, known as contextual constructionism is more flexible methodologically than the strict constructionism of Spector and Kitsuse (2001) as it allows for the usefulness and examination of objective 'facts' and statistics, while retaining a critical understanding of them (Best 2001a).

In this way these contextual constructionists are able to explain in more depth why certain social problems or moral panics emerge when they do by examining in more detail the values and rhetoric used by certain groups and situating them within broader patterns of social problem construction.

Social problem or moral panic?

Social problem theory is raised here because it is a more flexible methodology than that associated with moral panics, in terms of examining social problems, and will be adopted in examining the construction of issues associated with antisocial behaviour later in the thesis. Indeed as Cohen himself notes:

Folk Devils and Moral Panics was informed by the sixties fusion of labelling theory, cultural politics and critical sociology. Today's students of moral panics do not have to engage with this theoretical mix-up. They can go straight into the literature on social constructionism and claimsmaking. This is a well developed model for studying the contested claims that are made – by victims, interest groups, social movements, professionals and politicians - the construction of new social problem categories (Cohen 2002: xxii).

Goode and Ben-Yehuda, while recognising much overlapping in moral panic theory and social problem theory, also point out that there are 'at least three' basic differences between them. Social problem theory, unlike moral panic theory, need not

have a 'folk devil', in that it need not show a discrepancy between the degree of concern and the actual problem. Disproportionality is not necessarily relevant, and while 'moral panics' imply a substantial change in the mood of a group or groups in society towards a particular issue, social problem theory can study any problem regardless of the 'panic' surrounding it (Goode and Ben-Yehuda 1994).

For social problem theory, issues that become institutionalised are in fact perhaps more important to study than those that erupt and then disappear. This is of particular relevance today, as we shall see, with the emergence of a 'risk society' or 'culture of fear' within which anxiety about social problems appear to be a permanent rather than a fleeting phenomenon.

Moral panic theory generally starts from a belief that an issue is being exaggerated, that Mods and Rockers are not such a threat, that mugging is not as widespread as assumed, or that the concern about antisocial behaviour is unjustified and not based on a 'real' increase in this problem. For social problem writers, the myth or reality of a social problem is not necessarily important. Crime may be high but this doesn't explain why it has become a 'social problem' in and of itself. For a social problem to be constructed someone must raise it as a problem and campaign around this issue, and politicians and key social institutions must pick up on this issue and help promote it. Social issues like crime, even when on the increase, need not become 'social problems' around which campaigns are built.

Another difference between moral panic theory and social problem theory is the political nature of moral panic theory. Jenkins has noted that the vast majority of moral panic research has been developed within a left/liberal framework (Jenkins 1992: 145), a framework within which outbursts of traditional conservative morality and issues associated with the new right are challenged.

However, moral panic work is not, argue Goode and Ben-Yehuda, inherently political and ideological. Jenkins (1992: 173) has used moral panic theory to explore the work of 'radical' feminists in the UK and the USA who helped to create and promote a moral panic around child abuse. Similarly, Cohen has argued that the methods used in

the 1960s and 1970s to explore the crusades against marijuana and homosexuality could equally be used today to examine modern-day moral panics that have been promoted by left/liberal activists around issues concerning industrial pollution, smoking and pornography (Cohen 1988: 260-3).

It is true that moral panic theory could be used to examine panics on the left and the right. However in practice – especially in the UK – this has not materialised. Rather moral panic research has tended to remain within an ‘anti-new right’ framework.²⁵ This has been less the case in the USA, where moral panic work has also examined radical and feminist panics, for example over the issue of child abuse (Jenkins 1992 and 1998). The British research, by focusing on ‘right-wing’ panics that often take a traditional moral form, is unable to examine more recent panics that take a non-moral or amoral form. The oxymoron of ‘value free’ moral-panics or the idea of ‘amoral’ panics can perhaps help examine these modern panics and will be explored later.

In general it is still true to argue that moral panics emerge and are generated at times of social change by conservative elements in society made insecure by this social change. However, one explanation for the rise of the ‘age of moral panic’ today may be that there are simply more groups and strands of thought that have become ‘conservative’, even while they appear to be situated on the liberal left.

Who makes moral panics?

The question of *who* makes moral panics or social problems has been contested over the years and has often been connected to issues and questions of morality and ideology, material interest, and status interest (Goode and Ben-Yehuda 1994: 124-143).

The Marxist approach adopted by Hall (1978) locates the rise of moral panics with the *elite*. Other researchers, especially those from the USA, identify *interest groups* as being central to the claimsmaking process.²⁶ Alternatively, others argue that moral panics emanate from the public themselves, or from the *grassroots* of society (Goode and Ben-Yehuda 1994).

Most studies of moral panics incorporate elements of all three theories, related to the *elite*, *interest groups*, and the *grassroots*. For example, moral panics cannot exist without an element of grassroots support; however, these panics, even if originating within the public, only become defined as social problems when interest groups or elite groups take up the issue. In the end, the study of moral panics must recognise that: 'No moral panic is complete without an examination of all societal levels, from elites to the grassroots, and the full spectrum from ideology and the morality at one pole to crass status and material interests at the other' (Goode and Ben-Yehuda 1994: 143).

Within this thesis, this combined approach is adopted, although the central role of the *elite* is identified, particularly in the role they have played in institutionalising panics and anxieties through new laws and social policies associated with youth crime and antisocial behaviour.

The question of who makes moral panics and social problems has recently become more difficult to answer. Not only because the traditional conservative basis for panics no longer appears to be central to many of them, but also because radicals who in the past denounced panics are now more inclined to support panics and policies based on what would previously have been seen as conservative concerns. Below the explanation for the emerging age of panics is connected to the collapse and convergence of left and right wing thought.

The changing face of contemporary panics

Both the rise of moral panics within conservative sections of society, and the interpretation of them by radical thinkers as moral panics, emerged at a specific moment in history and reflected a certain clash between the 'left and right'. However, by the early 1990s the conflicting understanding and approach to moral panics was becoming confused. At this time of political change, the left appeared to accept more readily the 'reality' of certain 'panics', while at the same time the right began to question the traditional moralising that had once been the bedrock of these panics.

Rather than this development simply reflecting objective changes in society - it reflected more significantly a change in the outlook of both the left and right.

Analysing the 'language' of moral panics Hunt, in his study of broadsheet newspapers, identified a number of developments in the use and understanding of the term 'moral panic'. A term that had previously been used by the left to challenge the exaggerated reactions of conservatives was, by the end of the 1980s, being questioned by liberal and left-wing individuals and newspapers: for example the *Guardian* in 1989 challenged the idea that concerns about crime were a form of moral panic (*Guardian* 28 August 1989). Crime, it was argued, needed to be accepted as a 'real' problem, and as Hunt noted: 'A succession of similar articles appeared in both left-wing and right-wing papers throughout 1993, attacking 'progressive criminologists' for dismissing the crime epidemic and crisis in values as "moral panic"' (Hunt 1997: 642).

At the same time, the term 'moral panic' was being embraced by some more radical voices to support the condemnation of certain groups, like 'feckless fathers', while alternatively articles in the right wing press emerged where the term moral panic was used to attack radical panics around issues of satanic abuse and smoking (Hunt 1997).

Finally, while there was a trend amongst liberal and left-wing thinkers to accept rather than challenge what would previously have been seen as panics, simultaneously many of those on the right were becoming uncomfortable with the use of morality to attack groups in society. Questioning moralistic reactions by the Conservative government under John Major to the killing of toddler James Bulger by two 10-year-old boys, and also challenging the moral campaign to get 'back to basics', both the *Times* and *Sunday Times* expressed a concern that the government 'was losing sight of reality'. 'The ambivalence about moral panic,' Hunt noted, 'illustrates the writers' doubts about the popular credibility of moral language' (Hunt 1997: 642).

A new 'language' was needed at this point in time: a language that could endorse panics as real, but without the traditional moral framework of previous panics. As part of this linguistic project, Hunt observed, 'the term 'moral panic' itself had to be

redefined as a form of civic consciousness, an expression of public anxiety rather than a conspiracy of elites and interest groups' (Hunt 1997: 646).

What would previously have been seen by radicals as a panic was now more readily seen as being 'real' – an objectively legitimate social problem that needed to be addressed. However, at the same time the moral basis for panicking was becoming problematic.

Loss of moral authority

A central element to moral panic studies has, as the name suggests, been focused on the *morality* of those panicking and promoting these panics. However, when looking at the construction of social problems in the 1990s, the question of what moral values were being defended is less clear. The 'class war' may have been won, but as American conservatives quickly recognised, the 'culture war' was being lost and traditional conservative values that had been the basis of moral panics up to this point were in decline.

Part of the 'tradition' of moral panics has been the concern about nationhood and national decline. In Pearson's book, *Hooligan*, he explains how crime and violence in Britain has often been portrayed as un-British and a threat to the 'British way of life'. Even the word 'hooligan' developed from an Irish name and has been counterposed to the 'English national character'.²⁷ The 'Victorian values' espoused by the Conservative Party in the 1980s were a high point in post-war Britain for the politicisation of, and moralising about, traditional Britishness. Similar values had been expressed in a more embryonic form in the early 1960s and laid the basis for the panic over Mods and Rockers and the subsequent work by Cohen.

As well as a concern about nation, the family has also been a core concern within moral panics. Britishness was seen as being under threat from 'muggers' in the 1970s, for example, and here black youth symbolised not only a racial threat but also a threat to the family. As Hunt (1999) explains, the main anxieties over youth and crime were linked by the mugging panic to a deeper layer of anxieties about parental relations,

fragmenting communities and the end of neighbourliness. Many of these concerns can still be seen today when issues to do with youth antisocial behaviour are raised. However key differences exist in the moral language that would be seen as acceptable today. The use of 'racial language', for example, and the traditional defence of Britishness and the British way of life, are more problematic, while even the defence of 'family values' is more difficult than previously.

A significant moment in the declining usefulness of 'moral' panics can be seen in 1993, when John Major's 'Back to Basics' speech was widely ridiculed. This reflected not the end of moralising, but rather the growing difficulty that even a Conservative Prime Minister had in using traditional morals for political purposes. Following this moral campaign, *The Independent* condemned Major's attack on single mothers, noting that: 'Conservative politicians are subjecting them to a vilification that would be illegal if addressed to racial minorities' (Cohen 2002: xxviii).

The loss of faith in the moralising of the elite was clearly expressed by Roy Chapman, chairman of the Headmasters' Conference, who in attacking Major's campaign against 'yobs' stated that:

The family no longer provides either the cohesive force or the base line in standard behaviour. The church seems prepared to accept anything except intolerance, while the government seems to operate on the basis of political expediency, rather than on coherent policies, much less principles (Calcutt 1996: 33).

In the USA a similar trend was in evidence, as traditional morality was seen to decline as a source for cohering the elites and for gaining public support. As Goode and Ben-Yehuda noted, in 1992 the Republican presidential campaign in the United States was initially and substantially based on 'family values' – with its attendant attacks on homosexuality, abortion, divorce and other presumed Democratic-tolerated vices – 'a theme which failed to catch fire with the American voter' (Goode and Ben-Yehuda 1994: 35).

The reason for this ‘failed campaign’ is partly due to the confusion of moral absolutes – even amongst traditionally conservative elites in society, as American writer Katie Roiphe points out in her book *Last Night in Paradise: Sex and Morals at the Century’s End*:

In the fifties, there were curfews on college campuses and social taboos against getting a “bad reputation” or losing your virginity before you got married. But now we have no popularly accepted moral attitude about sexuality that can be passed down from one generation to the next. Is it all right for teenagers to have sex, or isn’t it? Is it morally wrong or just physically dangerous? We don’t have answers. It’s not just that different people have different answers, but that, for the first time in recent memory, we don’t have an official answer, an answer that extends from *Oprah* to Hollywood to the editorial pages of the *New York Times* (Roiphe 1997: 163).

Traditional morals, based on conservative notions of the nation and the family, which had been the basis of most moral panics up to this point, were becoming more problematic by the early 1990s. Problematic not only in terms of their relevance to the public, but even in terms of the cohesion and coherence they generated within the elite itself. Crucially, this loss of moral certainty or absolutes helped to exaggerate the sense of panic amongst the elite. The decline in the capacity of traditional morality to promote absolute values against perceived threats did not, however, result in the reduction of panics in society. Rather, panics escalated and were increasingly engaged with and even promoted by government – in part because of its own loss of moral authority. Conservative moralising remained, but was becoming less significant as a basis for anxieties and panics that from this point on were taking a less moral form.

The convergence of left and right

The desire to control, regulate and limit individual behaviour has historically been a preoccupation associated with conservative thinkers and groups. However over the last few decades, social problems that focus upon problematic behaviour and explicitly or implicitly promote the need for more regulations in society have

increasingly come from 'radical' individuals. Within a critical understanding of society, but with a focus on individual's 'abusive' behaviour, this radical approach often portrays the problem as being far more serious and widespread than previous conservatives ever did.

Writing in *The Sunday Times* in 1994, Gertrude Himmelfarb bemoaned the decline in morality associated with *the* family, while perceptively recognising that the new moral – or amoral – absolute of the late twentieth century was developing around the issue of child abuse.

As deviancy is normalised, so the normal becomes deviant. The kind of family that has been regarded for centuries as natural and moral is now seen as pathological, concealing behind the façade of respectability the new 'original sin', child abuse (*The Sunday Times* 11 September 1994).

The above quote is used by Kenneth Thompson in his study of *Moral Panics* (1998: 92), in which he discusses panics in the 1990s that he believes were generally articulated around 'neo-liberal individualism and neo-conservative nostalgia for a moral golden age – an imagined national community unified by common values' (Thompson 1998: 141). However, while this was true to some degree, the panics being generated by radicals, like that of child abuse (Jenkins 1992; 1998), are not seen by Thompson within the framework of moral panic studies. By focusing on the traditional *moral* basis of panics, the new trend for individuals and groups on the left to pathologise relationships and to generate panics themselves is lost.

In reality, the tendency to panic in the 1990s was becoming more general across the political spectrum, reflected in the move by those on the left to become more preoccupied with issues of crime, violence and abuse, within a broader sense that humanity and human relationships and actions were destructive and needed to be regulated.

As Fitzpatrick observed in relation to the AIDS panic, the anxiety and fear about AIDS did not erupt through the moral promotion of the idea of a 'gay plague'. Rather,

this panic only captured the public imagination once the moral campaign was overtaken by the new 'secular' campaign for 'safe sex'. Fitzpatrick accurately describes how, in the late 1980s and early 1990s, new social problems related to atomised individuals, not through traditional morality but through the new language of risk and safety. Moralising, he argued, no longer needed a 'dog collar' (Fitzpatrick 2001).

For Furedi, the AIDS panic was a key moment in moral panics, one where the traditional moralists merged with a new 'radical' sense of anxiety:

The high point of the unexpected synthesis between conventional moralizers and proponents of the new etiquette was over the issue of AIDS...Initially, it was the right-wing moralists who sought to take the initiative...In the AIDS literature, this attempt to create an anti-gay moral panic is still presented as the dominant theme around the issue. But in reality, the anti-gay presentation of AIDS soon ran out of steam. Proponents of the new etiquette succeeded in redefining AIDS...[into a disease where] 'everyone was *at risk*' [my italics] (Furedi 1997: 166).

A concern raised by Furedi (1997) is that whereas radical thinkers continue to challenge old-fashioned moral panics by the right, another panic is often put in their place. Cohen, in his introduction to the third edition of *Folk Devils and Moral Panics*, similarly hints at this problem, noting with reference to comments made by American experts challenging the idea that schools are dangerous places:

As these stories unfold, experts such as sociologists, psychologists and criminologists are wheeled in to comment, react and supply causal narrative. Their ritual opening move – 'putting things in perspective' – is not usually very helpful: 'School Still Safest Place For Children; Many More Dead at Home Than in Classroom'. (Cohen 2002: xiii)

Here, the traditional panic about violence and a need for law and order in public, or within institutions like schools, is replaced by a panic about violence in the home.

From a certain feminist perspective, the concern about a 'violent society' has been turned inwards, into the home. Viewed through the prism of patriarchy, as Victor argues, male dominance in society and its exploitation of women and children has become the essential underlying threat to the moral order of society (Victor 1998).

Similarly, US sociologist Donna Killingbeck, after exposing the 'construction of school violence as a "moral panic"', goes on to argue that the problem with this right-wing moral panic is that it misses the many and varied ways that violence occurs within schools that make it almost endemic. The elements of harm in schools can only be understood, she argues, once the following have been recognised:

(1) the emotional and psychological pain that results from the domination of some over others, (2) the focus on interpersonal relationships that ignore the violence of social processes which produce systematic social injury, such as that perpetuated through institutionalised racism, sexism, and classism, and (3) the symbolic violence of domination, or the subtle form of violence that brings coercion through power exercised in hierarchical relationships (Killingbeck 2001: 10).

Unlike past writing on moral panics that emphasised the disproportionate concern about violence emanating from conservative elites or interest groups, here one concern about violence is simply replaced by another, more radical, Foucauldian concern about the centrality of power and violence to the experience of children in school. Issues like 'racism, sexism and classism' are here challenged within the framework of a concern about violence. Violence becomes THE issue, and alternative approaches to dealing with and regulating this 'problem' are constructed.

Interestingly, even in Pearson's recent retrospective article examining his past work in *Hooligan*, he notes that, while there are panics about young people and drugs and drink, 'drug-taking is a problem among young people today' (*Young People Now* 21-27 January 2004). This rather sweeping statement could easily fit into what would have been seen until relatively recently as a moral panic itself. Linked to Pearson's

article, the same magazine, *Young People Now*, had a retrospective review of *Hooligan* by Rob Allen, the director of Rethinking Crime and Punishment and a member of the Youth Justice Board. Noting the central argument in *Hooligan*, Allen stated that ‘the last 10 years have seen plenty more media moral panics: about persistent young offenders, paedophiles, drugs and street crime’. However he goes on:

Rereading *Hooligan*, I took a different message than first time round. *It is the continuity of hooliganism makes it more, not less, of a social problem.* In policy terms it boils down to whether we take the American route of dealing with the poorest through prison, or a more European approach of building up economic, social and educational responses [my italics] (*Young People Now* 21-27 January 2004).

Whereas Allen had understood Pearson’s work in the early 1980s as a correct challenge to the moral panics surrounding youth crime, by the beginning of the twenty-first century his view had been transformed into an acceptance of the problem of hooliganism. What is interesting in this review is that Allen does not try and argue that things are worse and society has changed, but simply states that his understanding of youth crime has changed. Allen had previously understood *Hooligan* as a book that challenged the anxieties of the elite – now Allen has come to endorse these anxieties.

A similar trend to interpret social problems from a more negative perspective and to focus upon the need to regulate groups in society also developed in criminology in the 1980s. In the radical criminologist Jock Young, who first used the term moral panic in 1971, we see another example of a socialist who shifted his emphasis from the ‘social control agents’ and the exaggerated nature of crime panics, onto the criminal – and in particular the working-class criminal. The consequence of this shift is that it moves from a critical focus on the elite, towards an emphasis on social control. Arguing for a kind of politics of regulation, Young states that:

Such politics of crime control are part of the wide sweep of grass-roots politics: the control of pollution, industrial safety, traffic control, environmental improvements – representing, in fact, the united interest of a

divided community. In this process of seeking out a common political interest and exerting public control, we will recreate a sense of community both in consciousness and in muscle, rather than resurrect a mythical entity, which has long since disappeared (Lea and Young 1984: 272).

Previously, we noted how Cohen (1988) believed that radicals in the 1980s could be seen as encouraging moral panics over issues like pollution. In Lea and Young we see regulation and social control in many areas of life being seen in terms of recreating community and recreating community without resorting to past myths.

This growing move away from questioning elite panics and a similarly growing desire for social control felt by 'radical' thinkers is expressed in one form or another in all of the aforementioned issues or panics, from AIDS to child abuse and onto youth crime and antisocial behaviour. This shift in radical thought from the late 1980s onwards competed with traditional conservative panics about crime and disorder, and changed the political framework within which moral or 'amoral' panics were generated. The question of who now encouraged these panics became more confused as various radicals who identified the moral right as the cause for panics in the past now become moral - or amoral - claimsmakers in their own right.

As the moral right stuttered and the ideas of the left became discredited, left-wing and right-wing campaigners converged more systematically around the core value of the 1990s – safety. Unlike a number of conservative panics that tended to target the immoral minority,²⁸ the new safety panics generalised a number of problems. Now everyone could die of AIDS, while child abuse was portrayed as being endemic to society. Where the moral right had hoped to restore society to a golden past, the new amoral panics had no idealised vision of society: the aim for individuals was simply to be safe. With many of the new safety campaigns being generated by radical thinkers, opposition to these panics remained limited, and in the case of the AIDS panic, this new *amoral* approach was adopted by the Conservative government under the leadership of Margaret Thatcher, with the support of almost all radical groups and thinkers. Consequently, the anxieties within society expressed through this and many

other panics were increasingly becoming institutionalised and helped to forge the new social and personal 'moral' norm of safety.

The new 'moral' icon – the victim

Traditional moral panics upheld a set of values that were felt to be under threat. As such, despite the conservative nature of them, an attempt was being made to reengage individuals with society and with a wider set of beliefs. *The new safety-based panics, in contrast, have no belief system associated with them and relate to the fragmented and fearful individual directly.* Where traditionalists wanted to uphold nationalistic and family values, the new 'safe sex' or 'community safety' campaigners simply wanted to modify people's behaviour to keep them safe. The moral image promoted by these old moralists was of a strong family man who worked hard and would fight for his country. In contrast the moral icon of the new safety campaigns is the victim.

In *Moral Panic*, Jenkins points out that in the 1980s a whole new branch of the legal profession developed in relation to lawsuits undertaken on behalf of victims (Jenkins 1998: 219). This, rather than being a peculiarity of law, reflected what Jenkins describes as the new child protection movement's emphasis on the experience of the victim:

For the first time in history, perhaps millions of people, mainly but not exclusively women have constructed their self-identity in terms of the experience of sexual victimization. Networks of survivors became a powerful interest group, protesting any weakening in societies vigilance against abuse and launching virulent attacks on therapists or writers who dared to speak of "false memory" (Jenkins 1998: 234).

Rather than victimhood being merely an objective existence or experience, here it is understood as, in part, an identity developed and indeed promoted at a particular time.

Joel Best has traced the historical emergence of 'victimhood' within the USA, identifying this understanding of the individual as a central tenant of claimsmaking in

the modern period. This is something that has similarly developed in the UK and more generally within Western culture. In *Random Violence* Best highlights a cultural trend that has influenced the way in which individuals and issues are understood and the subsequent impact that this has had on laws and policy developments.

Tracing the emergence of 'victim rights' advocates in conservative claims for 'victims of crime' in the sixties, and within the women's movement who campaigned for laws against various forms of abuse in the seventies, Best points out that the concept of victims often accepted uncritically today is not simply an objective term but has developed over time with the help of victim centred claimsmakers (Best 1999: 94).

A significant development identified by Best is the growing use of and strength gained by those using the 'victim' framework to present their case. Victims of crime, for example, may be labelled as victims by conservative groups campaigning on their behalf, while those attempting to defend the 'underclass' that are blamed for these crimes similarly use the language of victimhood to develop counter-claims. As Lee also notes, the framework within which the 'religious right' now opposes abortion is less in relation to morality and religion itself than with reference to the woman as a victim of post abortion syndrome (Lee 2001).

Discussing the convergence of left and right in their campaigning on behalf of the victim, Best argues that:

Both the right and the left now portrayed the victim as a sympathetic figure, using victim imagery to promote crackdowns on crime or calls for social reform, respectively. Both conservatives and liberals treated victims as powerless unfortunates, blameless for their circumstances and suffering at the hands of powerful exploiters (Best 1999: 100).

Social problems analysed by various professions within the sciences and therapeutic field expanded at this time and overall, 'a broad range of authorities – including social movement activists, political conservatives and liberals, therapists, scientists, and lawyers – became more likely to talk about victimization in society' (Best 1999: 102).

This framework of understanding social problems, the language and the rhetoric, has, Best argues, now become dominant in the development of how new crimes such as stalking are discussed and made into social problems. The degree to which this has developed in the UK will be studied later in relation to the concern about antisocial behaviour.

One significant aspect of these developments in the US, with reference to the changing form of morality and moral panics, is the extent to which a claim about victimisation 'stakes out the moral high ground' (Best 1999: 109). As Sykes argues, 'the route to moral superiority...can be gained most efficiently through being a victim' (Best 1999: 138).

The 'ideology of victimization', Best illustrates, has been taken up within academia – in lectures and education – with teachers looking out for child victims, the law – giving increasing priority to the victim, the mass media – talk shows, and even in religion – where concern for victims is expressed as a moral good (Best 1999: 117).

One consequence of this focus upon victimisation is that 'new crimes' are understood within this framework, more people have become seen as 'victims' and more laws have developed to protect the victimisation of one individual from another. Within this framework of understanding society and social problems, there is, argues Best, a more generalised sense of anxiety that, in relation to crime, has helped create a 'sense that contemporary society is plagued by random violence' (Best 1999: 5).

For Best, the idea of random violence did not represent the real world, as relatively few people faced serious crime and the vast majority of these crimes occurred in particular areas and were often done to particular groups in society. The idea of random violence has developed in the USA, Best believes, as a wider expression within society of a sense of risk and fear.

The fact that victims have become so central to claims-making and the wider culture suggests that there is a greater sense of powerlessness within certain groups and

arguably more generally across society: a sense of powerlessness that encourages a greater sense of anxiety and increases the tendency for panics to erupt.

Thompson has noted that the current period is often understood to be one of an 'age of moral panic'. However, this understanding, which continues to see panics as a product of neo-liberalism and traditional conservatism, is both one-sided and fails to recognise the more significant development of amoral panics. We are indeed living in an era of panics, but these panics are being generated by 'left and right' wing campaigners around issues of safety and often in the defence of *the victim*. Conservatives may continue to campaign on issues like abortion and crime, but they do so less as a promotion of moral values than through a more therapeutically oriented language that engages not with the 'moral majority' but with the fragmented individual.

Elite reactions and the institutionalisation of *amoral anxieties*

The current age of *amoral* panics is not a repeat of what went before. Not only has the basis of these panics changed and the radical opposition to them declined, but through the prism of safety many new panics are actually promoted by 'radical' claimsmakers. Society has subsequently become more systematically organised around panics. Rather than having occasional panics, contemporary modernity could more accurately be described as being in a permanent state of anxiety – a state that is often encouraged and institutionalised by the elite.

Youth crime and 'antisocial behaviour' have, over the last decade or so become, more established as social problems. Having often been a site for occasional panics by a minority of conservatives in the past, today these concerns about youth are more mainstream and widely accepted as issues to address. Panics about youth and youth crime were central to Cohen and Hall's classic moral panic studies in the past. Likewise Pearson's study of past 'respectable fears' has noted the significance of panics about youth. However, one key difference in the reaction to panics about youth crime in the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries compared with these earlier periods is that while previously the political elite generally did not 'over-react' to moral panics, *today the elite are often at the centre of promoting them.*

One measure of the importance of panics in terms of their impact is whether or not new laws are developed on the back of them, whether social movements emerge in relation, to them and whether or not the issue is adopted by official political parties as something to campaign around. As Goode and Ben-Yehuda put it:

Do moral panics have an impact on the society in which they take place by generating formal organizations and institutions; do they, in other words, leave an institutional legacy in the form of laws, agencies, groups, movements, and so on? If so, what is the nature of that legacy? Do moral panics transform the informal normative structure of society? If so, what is the nature of that transformation? (Goode and Ben-Yehuda 1994: 168)

Examining past moral panics, it is clear that at different times the British political elite, rather than elevating concerns connected to moral and crime panics, actually either challenged them or dampened them down. A sense of purpose within the elite appears to have mitigated against a panic reaction within the establishment itself. For example, Pearson notes how, in the 1840s, liberal members of the British elite saw the panic about crime as a problem not to be overly concerned with, as the development of the rational individual – especially amongst the poor – would, it was believed, result in an end to crime (Pearson 1983: 175).

Similarly, in a different historical and political period, Pearson notes that despite continuing anxieties being expressed about family values, the destruction of community and lawless youth by movements like the ‘Scrutiny’ group in the 1920s, running alongside these complaints ‘and often holding them in check’ was a counter-movement, which involved a ‘quite different moral emphasis’. Despite there being strong evidence for a sharp rise in crime and violent crime – like a 70% rise in shop raids and a 90% rise in bag snatching between 1925 and 1929, which Pearson believes was almost certainly connected to the availability of the motor car – there was no subsequent ‘law and order’ campaign.

Indeed, comments from Robert Baden Powell in the 1920s appear almost unbelievable in today's climate of crime panics. As the *Times* reported:

To him it was rather a promising sign, because he saw in those banditry cases, robbery with violence, and smash and grab, little 'adventures'. There was still some spirit of adventure among those juveniles and if that spirit were seized and turned in the right direction they could make them useful men (1983: 34).

Similarly, in Parliament, reports about motor banditry in the press were ridiculed as gross exaggerations and police memoirs, while recounting no go areas for the police, described much of the 'action' on the street as people having a 'good time'. Other examples of magistrates are cited, where stealing off the back of lorries was dismissed as 'perfectly innocent joyriding' and the 'line between mischief and crime' was said to be 'not easily drawn' (Pearson 1983: 42).

Looking at Cohen's *Folk Devils and Moral Panics* we see that a significant reaction of the government, politicians, educationalists and religious leaders in the 1960s was not to inflame the moral panic but to dampen it down. As Cohen notes:

At times of moral panic, politicians in office, even though one might expect them on the basis of their personal records to be full of moral indignation, often act to 'calm things down' and minimize the problem. Thus it was with the [Conservative] Home Secretary, Mr Henry Brooke, the only participant in the first debate who expressed an awareness of the exaggerations and distortions (Cohen 2002: 113).

Also, as Goode and Ben-Yehuda note regarding the institutional legacy left by the Mods and Rockers panic:

Some panics seem to leave relatively little institutional legacy. The furore generated by the Mods and Rockers in England in the late 1960s resulted in no long-term institutional legacy; no laws passed (although some were proposed), and the two germinal social movement organizations that emerged in its wake

quickly evaporated when the excitement died down (Goode and Ben-Yehuda 1994: 168).

The above examples are, as we shall see throughout this thesis, in stark contrast to the reaction of the political elite in British society today. The significance of this is that while 'even seemingly inconsequential panics leave behind some sort of legacy' (Goode and Ben-Yehuda 1994: 169), the impact of panics upon society is qualitatively increased when they are institutionalised. If a panic is institutionalised, it can - especially if it goes unchallenged - change the 'informal normative structures of society'. Over time the new understanding of a problem and the laws and institutions established to deal with them simply become part of the way things are. This 'norm' is then something that can be built upon by subsequent panics, as Jenkins notes: 'Problem construction is a cumulative, incremental process in which each issue is to some extent built upon its predecessors, in the context of a steadily developing fund of socially available knowledge' (Jenkins 1998: 220).

The role of the elite in the past in often challenging panics about youth crime is significant in terms of the impact panics have upon society. The role of any opposition to panics today, or the lack of it, especially within the political elite, is key to the extent to which public fears and those of claimsmakers can become institutionalised and thus impact upon society.

As will be explored in the next chapter, from the early 1990s the centrality of crime and crime panics to political life and institutional frameworks has developed apace. Centred upon the safety of *victims*, a raft of legislation has developed with increasing rapidity, not simply in relation to panics, but also as part of government programmes and manifestos. New terms like 'binge drinking' have emerged which give a greater sense of young people being out of control: terms that are used and promoted by all political parties. Issues of crime, violence and today even antisocial behaviour are rarely 'put into perspective' or 'dampened down' by government ministers. Rather, the extent of the problem of crime and behaviour is often pushed most vociferously by the government itself.²⁹

The direct engagement of the political elite with panics, and the institutionalisation of practices based upon them, is even more visible in relation to crime against children and young people. Having built upon the child abuse panics of the 1980s, the issue of child safety has become so institutionalised that following almost any one-off extreme act of violence towards children we can predict a political and institutional response. From the killing of James Bulger and the Dunblane massacre to the death of Victoria Climbié, institutionalised panics have resulted in new laws and safety initiatives being developed by government that impact upon the way all adults now work with and relate to children (Waiton 2001: 41-5).

It was noted above that in the 1920s the argument was put that the line between mischief and crime was not easy to draw. Today this sentiment has been reversed and through the language of antisocial behaviour much mischievous behaviour of young people has been redefined as a crime. With the defence of the *victim* increasingly taking centre stage within social problem formation and political rhetoric, rarely do we encounter debates whereby the exaggeration of a problem is challenged.

From moral panics to a fear of risk

Where moral panic theories analysed what were occasional outbursts within an otherwise stable or calm society, more recently sociological theories have emerged that depict a more generalised state of risk and fear. As argued above, a key difference between panics past and present is that they have become an ever-present feature of modern society and, as such, it is more accurate to describe society as being in a permanent state of anxiety. Theories of 'risk' and a 'culture of fear' both analyse society from this point of view and are useful in helping to frame concerns about crime and disorder today. While appearing to be similar in their approach, however, Beck's theory of 'risk' and Furedi's theory of a 'culture of fear' are in fact very different. Indeed, following Furedi's understanding, Beck's approach can be understood as a form of amoral panicking itself.

Both Beck's theory of *Risk Society* (1992) and Furedi's *Culture of Fear* (1997) correctly describe how 'risk consciousness' has become widespread across society.

Occasional eruptions of fear have been replaced by a more permanent cultural sense of unease. These theories both accept the significance of the fragmentation of society that has in part helped encourage this sense of insecurity; however, their explanations for why this has happened are poles apart. Where Beck understands the sense of risk as a correct reaction to an objectively riskier society; Furedi to some degree follows the approach of moral panic theories, and argues that the culture of fear is more to do with the current state of subjectivity. However, for Furedi the generalisation of fear is not simply a ratcheting up of what went before, but rather is an expression of a fundamental loss of belief in humanity, progress and the idea of active moral subjects, which has developed out of the collapse of both left and right-wing ideologies.

Sheldon Ungar, examining the usefulness of the idea of a 'risk society' compared to past moral panic theories, correctly notes how 'new sites of social anxiety have emerged around environmental, nuclear, chemical and medical threats'. Consequently, 'the questions motivating moral panics research have lost much of their utility' (Ungar 2001: 271). Whereas moral panic research, Ungar argues, is concerned with exaggeration of the threat and the use of panics 'to engineer social consensus and control', with risk society, 'accidents being highly unpredictable and uncontrollable, the social constructionist concern with exaggeration is largely undermined as an analytical strategy'. Also, because a risk society has a 'roulette dynamic' – rather than more consciously created folk devils – then, for Ungar, the idea of risk society being used to develop social controls is questioned. Rather than moral order being created through 'risks', authorities can find themselves as carriers of 'hot potatoes' (Ungar 2001: 276).

Correctly, Ungar notes how the moral panic focus is more narrow in terms of looking at exceptional occasions of anxiety, whereas fearful events associated with risk are more ubiquitous (2001: 276). Moral panics are also often associated with a change in moral boundaries, whereas risks can emerge more from scientific findings. Also risks, for Ungar, are not developed 'top down' like many moral panics, but often emerge from a reaction to events like problems with nuclear reactors – which are made into issues by interest groups. Indeed risk society issues 'tend to involve diverse interest groups contending over relatively intractable scientific claims' (Ungar 2001: 277).

Rather than 'risks' being generated by an elite who attempt to promote an alternative moral order, Ungar accurately illustrates the way many risks emerge out with the traditional elite and can undermine rather than cohere the elite.

However, Ungar's understanding of risks being the product of 'highly unpredictable and uncontrollable' developments is questionable. Like Beck, Ungar accepts the idea that these risks are *real*. Describing Beck's analysis, Furlong and Cartmel note that: 'Whereas modernity involved rationality and the belief in the potential offered by harnessing scientific knowledge, in late modernity the world is perceived as a dangerous place in which we are constantly confronted with risk' (Furlong and Cartmel 1997: 3).

For Furedi, a culture of fear has not developed because of any technical or global objective changes in production or communication. Rather, changes in society and the weakening of institutions have come at a specific time when there is a, 'conservative sense of caution' (Furedi 1997: 9). In previous historical periods, Furedi argues, there was far more suffering, pain and disease than today. Despite there being various risks facing society, it is not the risks themselves but the pessimistic outlook within society that both inflates their significance and generates a sense of impotence in relation to social, scientific and even personal problems. This sense of impotence amongst the elite helps to explain why panics and anxieties are rarely 'dampened down', as they were in the past, but become institutionalised.

Explaining this cultural sense of cautious pessimism, Durodie argues that there has been an:

[U]nprecedented convergence of the political left's loss of faith in science and social transformation with the political right's traditional misgivings [that] have lent themselves to a pessimistic outlook leading to the rise of an exaggerated risk consciousness (Durodie 2002: 4).

How society reacts to technological changes is highly influenced by the cultural and ideological framework within which they emerge; and for Furedi, Beck's starting point for analysis upon these technical changes misses what is specific about late twentieth-century society. Rather than risks emerging in relation to global threats, Furedi identifies how the emergence of a 'risk consciousness' has occurred at every level of society and has impacted upon all relationships and institutions. That children are identified as being almost permanently 'at risk', for example, cannot be explained by global developments, or simply in relation to the individualisation of everyday life. Rather it is the end of ideologies and the notion of human progress, ideologies that have held back the individuation of society for a century, which have collapsed and are central to understanding the culture of fear.

At a certain level of abstraction, what is being proposed here is that the idea of a 'risk society' is a reflection of the consciousness of the elite, which is then reflected back upon society. As such, the 'objective' risks identified by Beck, Giddens and others are a sociological expression of a loss of will of this elite – rather than an indication of any real increase of 'risks' in society.

Just as the enlightenment belief in science 'was a reflection and pronouncement of faith in humanity itself rather than merely in science' (Durodie 2002: 2), the loss of faith in science and the belief that the source of danger to society is not ignorance but knowledge (Beck 1992: 183) is the reverse - the loss of faith in humanity and of the capacity of human subjectivity to create social progress. All that is left for humanity is the question not of liberation, but of 'self limitation' (Beck 1996: 29). In a world of unintended consequences, 'Democracy in the sense that Lukacs described it, as "societal self-determination", is rendered impossible by "manufactured uncertainty"' (Heartfield: 2002: 81). Or as Furedi puts it, the picture portrayed by Beck is of a semi-conscious humanity desperately trying to control the destructive forces it has created (Furedi 2004: 133).

In this respect Beck's 'risk society' could be seen as another expression of amoral panicking by a sociological critic who sees a society under threat from technological developments rather than 'folk devils'.³⁰

For both Furedi and Durodie, Beck's exaggerated sense of risk (Durodie 2002) reflects societies' own timidity and impotence towards social change and experimentation. In a sense, risks become the 'active agent and people - at risk - are the passive agents in society' (Furedi 1997: 64). With the loss of faith in human progress, what has emerged is a culture of self-loathing, which affects how every relationship or development in society is understood. Rather than embracing change, the left are now as conservative as the right and view change with suspicion and distrust. With a degraded image of 'man', many thinkers on the left have increasingly become preoccupied with images and issues associated with crime and abuse, discovering, as we have already seen, the endemic nature of violence across society.

Furedi's thesis notes that while a more conservative outlook has developed amongst more radical thinkers, at the same time many traditional values and norms of the right have also lost their consensus. Consequently without a social sense of the future and with the increased questioning of traditional norms, the result is a diminished sense of individual and social control (Furedi 1997: 68-9).

The politics of fear will be explored in the following chapter. Here it is worth noting that the rise in panics about youth crime and the institutional development of more laws and more prisons to resolve this perceived problem took off from around 1993 – a year when 'old' Labour became 'New', and the Conservative Party lost its moral credibility following the failed Back to Basics campaign. As the heroic individual of the right slipped out of view and the 'social man' of the left disappeared, the icon of the *victim* took centre stage – a victim whose fundamental demand was the *right to be safe*.

This new 'morality of safety' filled the vacuum of traditional morals and politics and now the demand was for 'crime to be taken seriously', for 'victims' rights' to be recognised, or for 'community safety' to be prioritised. Reflecting broad social and political trends, the emergence of this new 'morality' or amorality was encouraged by claimsmakers and campaigners from the left who promoted panics around child abuse and transformed crime and antisocial behaviour into a 'working-class issue'. Having

given up on transforming society, the claimsmaking of many radical campaigners was reduced to demands to regulate, control and monitor individual behaviour. The loss of drive for social change within this process was replaced by a move to enforce social control.³¹

Within this cultural framework of understanding, moral panics, generated by conservative concerns about family and nation, can still occur, but are more likely to develop within the general concern about risk and safety. Indeed as noted previously, the AIDS panic, while initially taking the form of a conservative panic about gays and promiscuity, was soon transformed into the modern-day form of panic around 'safe sex'. In general, it is the argument of this thesis that panics may still come and go, but more importantly there is a general and heightened sense of anxiety that affects almost all relationships, policies and practices in society. Rather than there being the occasional disproportionate outburst to social problems, there is a trend to exaggerate almost all social problems and a diminished sense of the capacity to overcome them.

Grassroots anxieties

The panics and anxieties discussed above relate largely to the outlook and actions of the elite and of claimsmaking groups. However, for a culture of fear and indeed for *amoral anxieties* to be a general societal trend, the sense of unease and the desire for safety and a more regulated society must also take an expression within the public itself. The increased fragmentation of society has helped to ensure this development at the grassroots level of society.

Discussing where moral panics are generated, Goode and Ben-Yehuda (1994: 143) have argued that most studies of moral panics incorporate an understanding of the role played by the elite, interest groups, and by the 'grassroots'. Indeed for 'moral' or amoral panics to exist, there must at some level be an element of grassroots support for them. Whether or not panics are generated by the public, there does appear to be a high level of fear and concern in society about a wide variety of issues. The fear of crime has remained high, for example, despite statistical falls in crime, and indeed this fear has become a significant issue in its own right. Child safety concerns also capture

the public imagination and have had some impact on the emergence of 'cotton-wool kids',³² and have also resulted in a number of paedophile panics on working-class estates.

Part of the explanation for the rise in grassroots anxieties and the high level of fear is the increased level of individuation within society, a development that has been widely explored within sociology (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002, Furedi 2001, Bauman 2000). The significance of this development is, for Thompson, that as the old structures and norms of society fragmented, an increasing amount of individual choice and diversity helped to generate more of a sense of being at risk (Thompson 1998: 88).

The family, Thompson notes, at a time of declining communal values, has become 'all that is left of traditional community' (Thompson 1998: 88). The result of this modernisation process is that people have a sense 'that they are constantly going into a strange country and being at risk' (1998: 89). At the same time, the weakening of traditional beliefs and hierarchies, including family hierarchies, has increased the sense of risk concerning children and family relationships.

Furedi following Beck and Beck-Gernsheim's (1995: 37) point, takes this idea of the family as the last remaining 'institution of trust' one step further, arguing that because marriage itself has become a problematised area of life, today the last remaining 'institution' of trust is the bond between parent and child (Furedi 2001).³³ A world has emerged, argues Beck, where we have 'individuals within homogenous social groups', and communities 'dissolved in the acid bath of competition' (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002: 33).

This emergence of a more 'liquid' form of modernity (Bauman 2000), in which relations of trust are reduced to the family and even to the bond between a parent and child, helps in part to explain the heightened levels of fear in society. However, individualisation has a long history within modernity and cannot in itself explain the emergent culture of fear. Fragmentation may have reduced trust at the level of the individual, but this has also been informed by a more pessimistic understanding of

humanity more generally: a sense of pessimism and anxiety that has also been transmitted through the activities of safety-based claimsmakers, and by the development of laws and institutional practices that attempt to engage with this more fragmented individual through the prism of fear.

The new therapeutic ‘morality’ of safety

Despite the declining influence of traditional morality, the tendency to *moralise* has not declined. Indeed, as we will see in future chapters, the emergence of the ‘politics of behaviour’ suggests a more intensive scrutiny of individual behaviour has developed. Issues related to antisocial behaviour, crime, family life and relationships are central to social problems that both capture the public imagination and excite political comment and action. However the dominant form that these problems take today relates not to tradition but to the amoral absolute of safety, while the justificatory basis (Beetham 1991) of this development is often in the form of therapeutic governance (Nolan 1998).

As Furedi argues,

The marginalisation of traditional morality does not mean that society is without any system of values. On the contrary, the space left by the marginalisation of traditional morality has been filled by the system of values and notions of conduct associated with risk consciousness (Furedi 2002: 150).

That this new risk conscious outlook is rarely recognised as a form of moralising is explained by the ‘value-free’ basis upon which it is often promoted. Rather than ascribing a particular lifestyle as such, the new etiquette of safety is more self-consciously non-judgmental and relativistic. Almost any form of behaviour and outlook is acceptable within this etiquette – as long as it is safe and does not disturb the safety of others. Despite being unconventional, this ‘morality’ is not purely ‘new age’ but also incorporates a number of traditional conservative themes, emphasising restraint and focusing on individual behaviour and responsibility.³⁴ Unlike traditional morality, however, that prescribed a ‘single answer’ to moral questions, the new

etiquette of safety is more individualistically oriented and is therefore more able to relate directly to the contemporary experience of individuation (Furedi 2002: 163).

One key development within this more individualistically oriented etiquette is the emergence of the *Therapeutic State* (Nolan 1998), or of a *Therapy Culture* (Furedi 2004).

As the state comes to lack a moral or political basis of legitimation and engagement with the fragmented public, Nolan argues, a new set of 'cultural ideas and values that undergird the practical functions of the state' has emerged (Nolan 1998: 26). Reinforced by the 'demise of politics and social solidarity', social problems have subsequently been recast as emotional ones (Furedi 2004: 100). Social problems like crime, for example, have increasingly been understood in relation to the emotional sense of fear ascribed to it, while even welfare-related issues have become more therapeutic. Supporting this therapeutic framework, Giddens argues that economic benefits of welfare are virtually never enough – but rather, 'welfare institutions must be concerned with fostering psychological as well as economic benefits' (Giddens 1998: 117).

The state's increasing orientation towards a therapeutic model of intervention, Nolan observes, in the USA has influenced civil case law, where emotional damages have outstripped other 'damages' cases dramatically since the 1980s; in criminal law where drug counselling and drug courts have developed an Oprah-esque relationship with the accused; in education where feelings of children - their self-esteem - is seen as one of the key guiding principles; in welfare where both the notion of emotional abuse and the reformulation of support around notions of dignity and self-esteem have increased; and in politics where connecting with the public has increasingly been established by politicians explaining themselves and their policies in terms of how they *feel* about them (Nolan 1998). The significance of this development that has been replicated in the UK is, however, not simply in relation to the more emotionally-oriented basis of contemporary culture, but that within this therapeutic outlook the individual is understood to be *fundamentally vulnerable*.

Actions and experiences that would have been ignored or understood as insignificant in the past are, within today's framework of therapeutic vulnerability, given a greater significance. Name-calling, for example, is now interpreted as a more serious form of 'bullying' for children, while the 'mischievous' actions of children are increasingly being redefined as forms of 'antisocial behaviour' - both examples being understood as having potentially long-term and significant implications for individuals and communities. Even crime itself has become problematised and given greater importance. As Furedi notes, in the 1970s crime surveys tended to suggest that the impact of crime was relatively short-lived and that only a small percentage of victims were affected by their experience of crime. However, more recently a radically different interpretation has been given to this experience, and through therapeutic language: 'Most studies highlight the acute stress, trauma and psychological damage suffered by victims of more serious crime' (Furedi 2004: 112).

The new etiquette of safety is able not only to relate to the individualisation within society, but through the therapeutic culture a more vulnerable individual is both constructed and engaged with.

Conclusion

Through examining moral panic studies a number of questions have been raised about the issue of morals, the degree to which panics occur, and the method used to analyse this. When asking what values are unchallengeable today, this chapter has attempted to explore the changing nature of values and concluded that, while traditional conservative reactions still occur, the new and dominant trend in terms of 'moral absolutes' is the amoral value of safety. Here the term amoral is used not only as a contrast to the traditional morals of conservatives, but also in that the amoral anxieties to do with safety are less associated with any grand narrative or political/religious ideal. Indeed concerns about victims' rights and protection are largely directed towards atomised individuals, and the safety campaigns around children, sex and even crime have a more limited ideological framework that has less social meaning or content. Concerns about crime, for example, within this framework are more related to the defence of the individual victim than to an upholding of 'British Law and Order'.

Amoral panics are a form of moralising without any wider system of meaning, and indeed have emerged largely because of a collapse in the secular ‘faiths’ on the right and left, that cohered society in the past.

These changes can be summarised as follows.

Table 1

Moral Panics	Amoral Panics
A minority concern or reaction to a specific event or change in society.	A universalised sense of anxiety felt across society to myriad issues.
Often dampened down by key sections of the elite.	Political elite often encourages and institutionalise the panic.
Promoted by conservatives who defend traditions from the past.	Often promoted by ‘radicals’ with neither a belief in the future nor past.
An attempt to defend a conservative morality associated with religion and nation.	A rejection of universal values and promotion of the etiquette of individual safety.
Emerges at a time of political contestation between left and right.	Emerges with the collapse of both left and right.
Moral claims face a political challenge.	Amoral claims face little opposition.
Predicated on a belief in the possibility of a morally responsible individual.	Predicated on a diminished sense of the individual and the emergence of the vulnerable public.
The ‘virtue’ espoused attempts to promote a shared system of meaning.	It is the loss of meaning that explains these ‘panics’ and no alternative system of meaning is promoted through them.

Cohen's definition of a moral panic still holds to a degree, but the values of society have changed, as have the 'right thinking people' who man the 'moral barricades' (Cohen: 2002:1). Panics today are less about the promotion of universal human morals than about an individuated moralising over forms of risky behaviour. The new etiquette of safety actively avoids any attempt to uphold or promote a particular system of meaning in society that can unite people around a common goal. Relying upon their engagement with fragmented individuals, amoral panics are by their nature a more asocial form of moralising.

The liberal/left orientation of much moral panic work, especially in the UK, has to a degree meant that signs of modern-day panics have continued to be understood within a critique of traditional conservatism and the New Right. However, as a number of authors have noted, the development of claimsmakers on the left, which sometimes overlap with those on the right, has meant that panics today often take the form of defending 'victims' from crime and abuse.

Panics, risk and fears are today less based on the more overtly class-based political contestation identified by Hall and Pearson. Indeed, as theories of risk and fear suggest, anxiety is today more pervasive than ever before. In a sense, one could argue that the decline of political ideologies and organisations that were largely class-based has left a moral and political vacuum that, in part, helps to explain a greater sense of unease today. This, in turn, makes elites and the public more prone to panic.

A number of writers have also noted the significance of an 'opposition' to the prevention of moral panics being accepted in society. The contestation of ideas, issues and policies is a major barrier to the establishment of certain concerns becoming institutionalised and unquestioningly accepted in society. The significance of crime as a 'social problem' within politics is today accepted and, as has been shown, is something that has been increasingly accepted, indeed promoted, by the liberal press and by radical writers. While overt 'authoritarian' policies are still questioned today, as we shall go on to show, framed within a discussion about victims and safety, crime and antisocial behaviour initiatives are more difficult to challenge.

Although the term moral panic and then amoral panic have been used throughout this chapter, in a society where a sense of risk and anxiety are more general, the term panic becomes less useful. Panics may occur, but these panics, unlike in the past, take place in an already nervous climate. Rather than panics coming and going, they are ever-present - or at least are less of a divergence from the norm. Whereas in 1960s Britain, society's level of anxiety was relatively low and panics can be seen as a significant increase in this level of anxiety, in the 1990s and still today the level of anxiety is high and panics appear as a relatively small deviation from this general state of affairs. Various terms will be used from here on in, simply to avoid repetition: however the idea of 'amoral anxieties' comes closest to the themes that will be addressed.

Moving on to address the issue of antisocial behaviour – the Hamilton curfew will be examined with reference to the above theoretical considerations. However, before examining the Hamilton curfew that was launched under the New Labour government in 1997, the transformation of politics and the emergence of the 'politics of behaviour' is addressed to illustrate how antisocial behaviour was made into a social problem in the 1990s.

Chapter 3: Institutionalising Vulnerability: The Politics of Antisocial Behaviour

Our country faces two major threats. One comes from international terrorism, the other from neighbourhood terrorists (The Economist 22 July 2004).

Introduction

The above quote from the outspoken Labour MP Frank Field gives a sense of the problems it is assumed people face in their daily lives. The terrorists Field is talking about are not organised gangs of criminals, but antisocial youth.

The problem of antisocial behaviour had comparatively little political significance until the 1990s: yet within a decade, curfews had been introduced, Antisocial Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) developed, and community safety was established as a core framework directing the operation of local authorities. But why? Had young people suddenly become little terrorists in the space of one generation, or was there some other explanation for the rise of this social problem?

Antisocial behaviour has become a major national political issue that unites all the political parties. Often assumed to be simply a 'real' problem for local people – one that politicians have subsequently engaged with – this chapter argues that the rise of concern about antisocial behaviour must also be understood as an expression of the rise of amoral anxieties across society.

Due to the vast array of issues that are today labelled as being antisocial, and also due to the central role that politics and politicians have had in promoting issues associated with antisocial behaviour, rather than studying individual issues of antisocial behaviour – rowdiness, dropping litter, and so on - this chapter focuses on the general concern about antisocial behaviour and the changing nature of politics to help explain why this new social problem emerged at the time it did. In brief, this study examines the change within politics from a macro and ideologically based approach to society,

to a micro form of 'politics of behaviour'. A number of trends identified above, the decline of ideology, the fragmentation of society or the emergence of therapeutic governance, all have a long history and are not specific to late twentieth century life. However, at the beginning of the 1990s a number of these trends were become more apparent and resulted in a clearly defined transformation not only of politics but of the relationship between politics, the state and the public.

Following the approach of moral panic theorists and social constructionists, the starting point for this chapter is to look at what have become the unchallenged values of late twentieth century life , and ask, how does this influence the formation of social problems, and therefore what issues became politicised at this time? With the decline of both the moral and political traditions represented within the two major political parties of the UK – in other words, with the deterioration of any dynamic system of beliefs – the question is raised, what impact did this have on the political elite and how was this reflected in the changing relationship between the public and the state?

Having started with a concern about the introduction of the Hamilton curfew in 1997, here the period prior to this is examined to help understand how and why antisocial behaviour and issues relating to individual safety became so prominent and laid the basis for this initiative. The impact that the emergence of an 'amoral', and 'apolitical', elite had in helping both to form and engage with the *vulnerable public* is examined through the rise of the politics of antisocial behaviour.

The transformation of the Labour party, represented in its approach to law and order, is often interpreted as an example of New Labour's move to the right. Below it is argued that, in fact, notions of left and right have little meaning today and that the ideologically-based politics of the 1980s have been replaced by a kind of micro politics, which emerged under Conservative leader John Major, but has been more systematically developed by the Labour governments since 1997. This is a politics that reacts to events rather than forming them: a politics in a panic.

The emergence of the politics of antisocial behaviour, and the political engagement with the 'vulnerable public' described below, is understood as a development

stemming from the loss of a sense of social progress and ideological engagement within the political elite, and between political parties and the electorate.³⁵ Here we explore the impact that the intensified loss of political purpose in the UK had upon the politics of crime through the 1990s following the decline of the Labour movement and the exhaustion of Thatcherism.

In tracing the transforming rhetoric and policy proposals relating to crime and antisocial behaviour the emergence of the centrality of 'victims' of crime and the vulnerable public is explored - with particular reference to the example of the construction of the social problem of 'aggressive beggars' and the increasing centrality of 'community safety' as an organising principle for local authorities.

Having established the changing framework within which crime and antisocial behaviour was understood, the role of feminist and radical criminology is explored to help explain the influence of the 'left' in this process. The emergence of the victim in intellectual and political thought, it is argued, represented not simply a change to the policy framework in the UK, but a more profound transformation in the role of subjectivity within politics, reflected in the loss of a sense of a 'public', and the emergence of a newly formed relationship between a hollow political centre and an atomised electorate.

Ultimately the emergence of the 'vulnerable public' is understood as a reflection of the loss of a sense of subjective or human possibilities within a period of cultural pessimism represented by thinkers on both the left and the right. The centrality of antisocial behaviour within the discourse of crime is therefore seen as a by-product of this political mood (Feeley 2003: 127), a mood that has created a government strategy within which people are no longer governed as part of a social citizenry (Rose 1996: 327).

The emergence of what is most accurately understood as an isolated and anxious anti-'social' elite helps explain the political preoccupation with antisocial 'terrorists'.

The emergence of Labour as the new party of law and order is mapped out and the transformation of its approach to crime contrasted with the more 'political' approach of the Conservatives – a politics which ran out of steam in the early 1990s and resulted in an even more authoritarian and technical approach to crime and policing.³⁶

Ultimately, the argument presented below suggests that while the preoccupation with crime had a basis in the rising crime figures, it is not any rise in crime and antisocial behaviour that explains the development of these issues as social problems. Rather it is the changing political, cultural and ideological engagement with an individuated public that is central to this development, and the transformation in the relationship between institutions and an anxious public.

The political context – Thatcher's confrontation

The Conservative Party throughout the 1970s and 1980s helped to fan the flames of fear with regard to the 'problem' of crime. Many social and political issues were discussed within the context of a problem of 'law and order'; indeed the 1970 Conservative government was the first to identify itself specifically as the party of law and order (Pitts 1988). Describing the Tory approach to crime, Phipps noted:

Firstly, it became conflated with a number of other issues whose connection was continually reinforced in the public mind – permissiveness, youth cultures, demonstrations, public disorders, black immigration, student unrest, and trade union militancy (Hall 1978). Secondly, crime – by now a metaphorical term invoking the decline of social stability and decent values – was presented as only one aspect of a bitter harvest for which Labour's brand of social democracy and welfarism was responsible. (Phipps 1988: 179)

The *typical* criminals in question were 'outsiders', the violent trade union member or the young black mugger. Traditional British values and individual freedoms were contrasted to the collectivist, promiscuous values of the 'enemy within' (Milne 1995: 26). Even burglars were understood as being part of the 'something for nothing society'. Here the 'criminal', either the trade union member or the burglar, was not a

victim but an immoral actor and the damage being done was not centrally to the victim of crime, but to the economy and moral values of society as a whole.

Social control and public order were promoted within both a political and moral framework in which the deviant in question was likewise understood to have certain political or moral traits that needed to be confronted.³⁷ The responsibility for cutting crime was seen as not simply that of the government or police, but also that of the public, who, it was argued, should take action to defend themselves (Conservative Manifesto 1987). This, after all, was a government that promoted the idea of the strong individual, telling unemployed people to get on their bike and find work.

The idea of 'restoring people to independence and self reliance', as Thatcher put it, meant that despite the attacks on the rights of pickets or demonstrators, the notion of the 'rights' and 'freedoms' of 'law abiding citizens' continued to influence Tory policies (Thatcher 1995: 7). Demonstrators and militants were criminalised and their freedoms curtailed within the discourse of 'public order', but wider law and order policies continued to be influenced and somewhat curtailed by a certain libertarianism within the ranks of the Conservative Party.

The legacy of 'Thatcher's decade', the 1980s, is often felt still to be with us today. Individuals are often portrayed as being 'greedy' (Wilkinson and Mulgan 1995) and living in an era where neo-liberalism is dominant (Fukuyama 1992). However, in hindsight the strength of the Thatcherite ideology appears to be more of a myth than a reality and was something the Conservative Party itself instinctively recognised in 1990 when Margaret Thatcher lost the leadership of the party and the country.

As the Conservative Party continues today into a relative state of disarray, it appears that the key to Thatcher's success was less in relation to an internally coherent ideology than to the failings of the welfare state. Rather than representing a dynamic movement, in this respect, 1980s Conservatism should be understood as a more negatively based political approach that gained its strength through its opposition to the Labour movement (Heartfield 2002: 170). Despite the decline of Labourism at home and of the Soviet Union abroad, the 'victory' of the right was consequently

short-lived. In spite of the defeat of the left, the political and cultural victory of the free market right is far less obvious; and indeed the idea that the right lost the ‘culture wars’ has become more accepted today, especially in the US (Schneider 2003: 430).³⁸

Even the moral renewal witnessed with the rise of ‘Victorian values’ in the 1980s appears to have little significance. As explored above, moralising may have increased, but outside of a traditional moral framework. The Family has been replaced by an acceptance of families; abortion remains contested but is largely accepted as part of modern life; the question of homosexuality, rather than being challenged by the elite, is more likely to undermine traditional institutions like the church; and the capacity of government to use a nationalistic ‘Falklands factor’ to win an election is far more limited.

Examining *Sex and Politics* in the 1980s, Martin Durham notes that despite much rhetoric and the publicly-vocal moral campaigners of this decade, the institutionalisation of measures to uphold moral family values remained limited. The New Right were not the same as the moralists, Durham argues – something the feminist and Communist Bea Campbell argued at the time (Durham 1991: 142). Key to the New Right was an agreement that they were ‘against socialism’, but there was ‘far less agreement about what it was for’ (1991: 143).

For this chapter, Thatcher is understood at one level to be *the last politician* – in the sense that her government had a sense of purpose and engaged in a political battle in an attempt to challenge the beliefs of the adult population. In the context of the fight against the ‘enemy within’, many policies – especially in relation to crime - were carried out within this politicised framework. This contrasts to the growing use of law and order in the 1990s, where the direct regulation of ‘behaviour’ replaced any sense of the role of politics in challenging the consciousness of the electorate.

However, the negative basis of ‘class war’ in the 1980s and the subsequent decline of conservatism in Britain, once the Labour movement had been defeat, suggests that Thatcherism carried little internal ideological weight and lacked the ability to develop a new outlook for society. As Furedi notes, in this respect Thatcher’s notion of TINA

(There Is No Alternative) can perhaps be understood not only as reflecting a loss of alternatives to the market, but also as a loss of political imagination by the elite about politics itself and its capacity to direct social change (Furedi 2005: 14).

Perhaps Thatcher can therefore better be represented as *the last economist*, rather than the last politician – in that the key to the Conservative success was the promotion of an economic alternative, rather than a coherent political one. Indeed the promotion of the robust entrepreneurial individual within the Conservative Party was something that clashed with much of the overt moral campaigning of the time (Durham 1991: 152). More significantly, this belief in the capacity of the free individual both held back to some degree the rise of the ‘victim’ within law and order policies, and also limited the more paternalistic, or ‘Nanny State’, forms of regulation that emerged in the 1990s.

Despite this, a more therapeutic approach was also developing at this time – in part due to its individualistic nature. Victim Support Schemes grew and were being well funded by the government as another strand to the focus on law and order (Maquire and Pointing 1988). However, notwithstanding this financial support, victims of crime were often used politically, ‘paraded’ by Conservative politicians and by sections of the media as a ‘symbol of disorder’, not as the central focus for law and order policy or rhetoric itself (Phipps 1988: 180).

Under Margaret Thatcher, authoritarian measures were developed to back up the battle against the ‘enemy within’, but otherwise crime, policing and the regulation of behaviour more generally was of little political significance. This class struggle, of which the politicisation of crime was a part, appears to have given a certain coherence to the conservative political elite and also a sense of political purpose in the 1980s. In the 1990s however, the loss of this cohering sense of purpose resulted in a loss of political will, and the consequent increase in law and forms of regulation to control society more directly.

Major regulation

Law and order in the 1980s arguably helped to develop what Heartfield describes as a 'police state' (2002: 165). However, despite the increased significance of law and order in politics at this time, the drive to control society directly and to regulate the behaviour of individuals more systematically did not develop until the 1990s. John Major's premiership, from 1990 to 1997, saw an acceleration of new laws, forms of policing and a greater use of prisons than any time since the Second World War. This was not, however, simply a continuation of Margaret Thatcher's political authoritarianism, but was a qualitatively different shift towards a more technical and 'apolitical' attempt to regulate society.

Margaret Thatcher had politicised crime in the 1980s and developed a more authoritarian society. However, within this confrontational approach remained a political attempt to win the 'hearts and minds' of the public and to forge a new era for capitalist development. New authoritarian laws were developed against, 'illegal immigrants' (British Nationality Act 1981); powers were developed against enemies of the state through the Prevention of Terrorism Acts (1984 and 1989), and demonstrators, pickets and marchers were regulated more directly via the Public Order Act of 1986. However, more broadly in society, outside of these 'high risk groups', crime and the general everyday antisocial behaviour of individuals was of far less importance – at least in terms of political rhetoric and legal sanction – than it was to become in the 1990s.³⁹ *Under John Major society as a whole became increasingly organised around crime and safety, not as a means to a wider political end, but as the end itself.*

In 1993 then Home Secretary Michael Howard 'broke the policy of a century by declaring that "Prison works"' (Dunbar and Langdon 1998: 115). Prison numbers, which had increased between 1951 and 1991 by only 11,000, began to increase significantly and within a decade a further 25,000 people had been imprisoned (*Guardian* 14 October 2005). Similarly, the number of children under the age of 18 in the prison system has more than doubled since 1993.⁴⁰ Howard argued that the criminal justice system needed to be transformed from a system concerned with the

criminal to one based on the protection of the public, and, as Dunbar and Langdon note:

Both penal policy and relations between government and judiciary had been changed far more within the lifetime of the Major administration than had happened at any of the changes of government since the end of the Second World War, at least (Dunbar and Langdon 1998: 2).

Rather than using law and order to crusade and battle the 'enemy within', John Major in 1993 simply promoted a 'crusade against crime' (Dunbar and Langdon 1998: 115). Now the focus was placed upon a different section of the working class, the 'underclass' and teenage criminals – joy riders and persistent young offenders. Subsequently, laws were introduced that created 'a new generation of child prisoners', returning the British Criminal Justice System 'not...to the 1970s but to a period preceding the Children Act 1908' (Goldson 1997: 30).

Contrasting Thatcher's promotion of moral values with the approach of John Major, Hugo Young observed that the 'Victorian values, to which she pledged herself, were essentially an economic rule-book for individualists, reminding them that thrift and self-help were the necessary accompaniments to both individual and national prosperity'. Rarely, Young notes, did Thatcher 'posit a social order handed down from above'. Behaviour of the individual deviant was often challenged within a political context, but the direct focus upon individual behaviour in itself was less of an issue for Thatcher than it was to become under John Major - or at least, it was not seen as something that could be enforced by the state. However, as Young remarked in relation to Major's promotion of 'family values':

It is a disciplinary slogan, voiced in ministerial rhetoric which excoriates parents for their slack attitudes, and single parents for even existing. Far from there being no such thing as society, the component members of society need to be told to brace up and take their social responsibilities for what goes on around them, whether through ill-trained children, negligent pastors, unwatchful neighbours or other agents of a failed community. The manual to

be issued today from the Department for Education, laying down modes of behaviour, clothing and discipline in schools, marks another stride towards a society upon which Major's ministers, more and more desperate to achieve social control, are trying to impose standards which they, at the centre, define (*Guardian* 4 January 1994).

The increasing use of law to enforce moral behaviour, and of prison to lock more people up, indicated, not the rise of the moral right, but rather its demise. Now more than ever, law and order became the 'only effective deterrent in a society that no longer [knew] the difference between right and wrong' (Lasch 1977: 187).

By 1993, as noted previously, the capacity of the conservative elite to promote traditional moral values had become highly problematic, and despite its continued attack on the 'underclass' and on single parents, the moralising language of the Tory leadership was coming under attack even from conservative sympathisers. The cohering political framework provided by the 'militant scroungers' had disappeared – although it remained a framework that, to some degree, the Conservative Party continued to use in developing its policies on crime. Even the economic basis of the Tories' success was in disarray, to the extent that the government was described as being 'permanently destabilised' following the country's enforced departure from the European Exchange Rate Mechanism in 1992 (Dunbar and Langdon 1998: 2).

'Thatcher's propaganda war' had focused on issues of 'trade union power, left-wing extremism, law and order, British chauvinism and Victorian values' (Richards and Freeman 1988: 98). Despite Major's continued attempt to use these 'zombie' issues in the 1990s, in reality the 'class war' was over, while 'traditional British values' were in decline – all that remained was the issue of law and order. Following Major's failed attempt to promote the moralistic 'back to basics' campaign in 1993, law and order became increasingly central as the framework for political debate and social policy developments. This reflected not simply the loss of any wider political imagination amongst the Conservatives, but also, having lost the economic and political dynamic of the eighties, the political elite arguably developed an internal sense of society being out of control. In this respect the emerging rhetoric about the 'yob culture', the drive

to develop CCTV cameras, and the increasing prison numbers and laws to deal with crime, was not simply to engage the more individuated fears of the public, but reflected a state of political panic. Lacking a solution to existing social problems, social control became an end in itself, and laws and the police replaced moral and political arguments as resources for dealing with these problems. At this time, the focus for attention moved from the ideas and beliefs of the adult population onto the 'behaviour' of children and young people.

The increasingly direct regulation of society under John Major, and in particular the growing focus on the behaviour of children and young people, indicated a certain shift away from any attempt to engage with the subjectivity of adults and a loss of belief in political and economic possibilities. As Graef notes, at this point in time, the enemy of the 'miners of the mid 1980s [was] replaced by the minors of the mid 1990s' (Graef 1995 quoted in Scratton 1997: 134). The idea of sovereign individuals having to come into the moral fold, despite Major's moral rhetoric, was actually being side-stepped by the Conservative leadership and undermined by laws that attempted to enforce this.

The increased regulation of society in this respect became the solution offered to the fragmented and insecure public that emerged out of the Thatcher years, but also was the solution for the political elite who lacked any wider political framework for directing society. Politicians now engaged with people's fears not to promote an alternative political solution but simply to engage with the more individuated fear of crime and regulate more directly a society that felt out of their control.

The 'freedom of the individual' that was, at least rhetorically, promoted in the 1980s was becoming less important for the Conservatives than the desire to enforce responsible behaviour of individuals. With social control as a central aim for politics, the personal behaviour of individuals was increasingly politicised and the 'politics of behaviour' emerged.

From the 1980s on, the Conservative party had used moral rhetoric and developed law and order as both a tool with which to beat the left, but also as a way to promote an alternative norm, a new social vision for Britain. As argued above, much of the moral

rhetoric of the Thatcher government did not result in a coherent policy on the family: however, traditional institutions like the family and the nation were central to the rhetoric of 1980s Conservatives. By the early 1990s, however, the defeat of the labour movement had created a far more fragmented society, while the cohering basis of the nation and the family was in decline. At this point in time, the law and order policies of the Conservatives changed under John Major and a more systematic and diffuse form of regulation emerged. Major continued to frame much of his crime 'crusade' within the political rhetoric of the past: however, moral pontificating about single parents, and law and order initiatives targeted at ravers and the underclass based on a watered down form of 'class war', could no longer cohere the conservative elite, or engage the public as it once had. It was New Labour who were able to engage more systematically with the fragmented and 'vulnerable' public outside of the old moral and political framework of the 1980s, and were able to become the new party of law and order.

New party of law and order

As with the emergence of amoral anxieties, the shift from the politics of crime to the politics of behaviour was developed most coherently by those from the left of the political spectrum. With the decline of the labour movement and the welfare state as a framework for government to organise society and engage with the public, a new basis for policy development and public legitimacy was sought. Having jettisoned its relationship with 'old' Labour and without the libertarian outlook of sections of the right, the new Labour leadership was able to reengage more systematically with individuals via their sense of fear and anxiety.

Labour's ability to engage with the idea of victimhood – often framed with reference to 'vulnerable groups' - was coupled with their condemnation of the greedy individual of the 1980s, and helped to develop both a more authoritarian and more 'caring' therapeutic approach to crime and antisocial behaviour. In adopting the individually-focused concerns expressed through the underclass debate, crime was accepted by Labour as being more of a behavioural than a structural question (Revell and Heartfield 1996: 177). However, this focus on behaviour was to emerge with a more

‘inclusive’ language, outside of the traditional moralising of conservatives like Charles Murray. Individual rights were defended – but these rights were redefined as rights of protection from others and from fear. Right-wing authoritarianism and attacks on the poor and ‘vulnerable’ were now replaced with the defence of the poor and vulnerable as victims of crime. Tapping into the culture of fear and promoting the new ‘morality’ of safety, Labour were successful in presenting themselves as the new party of law and order who could tackle the more widespread ‘epidemic’ of crime and disorder and in so doing protect the *vulnerable public*.

The 1997 General Election brought the first Labour government to power since 1979. It was also the first time the now ‘New’ Labour Party made crime a major issue within its manifesto (Downes and Morgan 1997). In the Labour Party document *Tackling the causes of crime: Labour’s proposals to prevent crime and criminality*, the extent of the problem of crime and the importance of overcoming the fear of it were explained thus: ‘Tackling the epidemic of crime and disorder will be a top priority for Labour in government’ (Labour 1996: 4) - and - ‘Securing people’s physical security, freeing them from the fear of crime and disorder *is the greatest liberty government can guarantee*’ (Labour 1996: 6 (my italics)).

Before the 1997 election – at least within Labour Party manifestos - crime had been either ignored or associated with wider ‘social’ issues. As the *Guardian* noted, comparing former Labour Party leader Neil Kinnock with Tony Blair:

There are areas where Neil Kinnock’s manifesto barely ventured. In 1992, crime, for instance, rated five paragraphs and mainly concentrated on improving street lighting. Now law and order rates two pages with the now familiar “zero tolerance” strategies and child curfews fighting for room next to pledges to early legislation for a post-Dunblane ban on all hand guns. Such policies seemed unthinkable five years ago. However, in this case, Blair’s “radicalism” – with its social authoritarian tinge – may play better with the centre rather than the Left (The *Guardian* 4 April 1997).

The shift in New Labour began in earnest in 1993 when Tony Blair made his first major speech attacking 'crime and the causes of crime'. Here both crime and 'chronic' antisocial behaviour were targeted and subsequently a 'zero tolerance' approach to antisocial behaviour was proclaimed and the Labour leadership moved to distance itself from the notion of crime and delinquency being directly associated with inequality. A 'Quiet Life' from nuisance neighbours and aggressive beggars was proposed, and the idea of curfews for young children aired. When the Conservative government announced a version of the US policy of 'three strikes and you're out', and Jack Straw, Labour's Shadow Home Secretary accepted this policy, a clear 'break with past Labour policy' was established (Downes and Morgan 1997:100-6).

In Labour's *Partners against Crime*, produced in 1993, the shift in their approach to law and order issues was clarified. Serious acts of violence that 'hit the headlines', as well as daily burglaries, car crime, abuse and petty vandalism, helped to 'make life hell', it was argued, especially for the poor and the vulnerable. Crime was now understood by the emerging New Labour leadership as not a transitory occurrence but as an *endemic* part of life that both undermined communities and individuals sense of well being (Labour 1993). One problem identified by the *Partners against Crime* paper was that of eroding confidence in the criminal justice system. The government, it argued, had been 'thoughtless, insensitive' and 'cruel' in their treatment of victims of crime and the solution to this insensitivity is to make 'the whole of the criminal justice system become more victim focused' (1993: 22).

By incorporating the fear of crime and antisocial behaviour in the discussion of crime, New Labour understood there to be a 'chronic' 'epidemic' of crime and disorder. The logic of this approach was that the entire population became conceptualised as potential 'victims of crime'.

Focused on the public as potential victims of crime, the concern was with the 'damage' done to individuals - the 'fear' and 'misery' caused by a 'life of hell'. Rather than the moral, political or economic concerns about crime, here a central focus became the emotional damage being done to individuals and communities. Consequently the orientation of the criminal justice system shifted and a more

therapeutic relationship was developed with the public. According to this outlook, the greatest liberty New Labour could bring to the public was to free people from the fear of crime and disorder. By being thoughtful, sensitive and caring, the victims of crime would thus regain a trust in the criminal justice system and indeed in the Labour Party itself.

In this respect, New Labour had not simply moved away from 'Old' Labour's understanding of crime, but had also moved on from the Conservative understanding of the problem. An example of this change can be seen within the debate about aggressive beggars.

'Aggressive' begging

The concern about victims of crime had developed within politics from the 1980s. However the centrality of the victim to Labour's campaigning around law and order only emerged in the mid 1990s, and was expressed explicitly by Shadow Home Secretary Jack Straw when he launched an attack on 'aggressive begging' in 1995 (*Guardian* 5 September 1995).

The question of street begging had been raised a year earlier by Prime Minister John Major during a European Election. Major, whose 'personal rating [had] plummeted to record lows following the [economic] debacle of Black Wednesday', attempted to raise his profile and support by attacking street beggars as an eyesore (*Times* 3 June 1994).

It was not until May 1994 that the issue of 'aggressive begging' became a national political issue and thus a recognised, if contested, social problem. Major's attack on begging was seen as a European election stunt to gain popular appeal from the right. However a year later, to the surprise of many traditional left and liberal supporters of Labour, the shadow home secretary Jack Straw, using American labels, attacked 'aggressive begging of winos, addicts and squeegee merchants' (*Guardian* 5 September 1995).⁴¹ The attack by the shadow home secretary was linked to John Major's 'understand a little less - condemn a little more' outlook, developed by the

Conservative Party, but the framework for this attack was different. Whereas the PM John Major and his Chancellor Kenneth Clarke had attacked the problem of begging using the political rhetoric of the 1980s, as a problem of 'welfare cheats', Jack Straw was not concerned with the act of begging so much as the *aggressive behaviour* that came with it.

By the time the election year of 1997 came around, the soon-to-be Prime Minister, Tony Blair had elaborated on the typical and problematic beggar. This was not a man quietly scrounging money off the public, but the often drunken 'in-your-face' lout who would 'push people against a wall and demand money effectively with menace' (*Guardian* 11 January 1997).

In this new offensive against street disorder, New Labour *redefined* begging: not as an offence against the laws of society, or a political or social problem of welfare cheats, as the Conservative leadership had done, but specifically as an offence against the public sense of 'well being'. Rather than the criminal act of begging being defined as the scrounging of money by those already receiving benefits, the problem was relocated onto the *non-criminal attitude and behaviour* of the beggars and the assumed reaction of the public.

The public was presented as being *victimised* by the aggressiveness of the beggars, and described by Jack Straw and Tony Blair as being 'intimidated', 'harassed' and 'bullied' by the 'incivility' and 'loutish' behaviour of these beggars. Straw, appropriating a well-worn feminist slogan, demanded that we 'reclaim the streets' – streets that had been 'brutalised' by beggars and graffiti vandals.

In this respect, the shift in Labour policy was less of an authoritarian move towards 'public order' where a problematic and unlawful group are identified and punished. Rather Straw's concern was with a *disordered public*. It was the intimidation of the public that was of concern. It was not so much a move to defend the law and order of society itself, so much as an attempt to advocate on behalf of the individual victims of this form of harassment.

Before 1994 aggressive begging was not a recognised social problem within the press, or one being campaigned around by politicians – indeed the term itself did not even exist at a public level. By the time of the election year, 1997, the notion of aggressive beggars harassing the public was established. In opposition to this development, adopting an equally victim-centred defence of beggars, homeless charities argued that the homeless were even more vulnerable and more likely to be victimised than to be victimisers. However if the problem for homeless people was also that of antisocial behaviour, then the need to resolve this problem – whether of public or homeless antisocial behaviour - was accepted. As Jack Straw pointed out, his concern was with the ‘liberty of victims’ whoever they may be (*The Guardian* 9 September 1995).

The politicisation and problematisation of aggressive begging was dependant upon an outlook that understood the problem of crime as one of incivility that undermined the public’s feeling of security, and with this a focus on the victims of antisocial behaviour was central. The justification for ‘government at century’s end’ was here based not on a political battle between those for or against welfarism, but on a more therapeutically-oriented relationship with the public (Nolan 1998). The connection between the individual and the state was now more direct and based less on the collective will of the people represented in the laws of society than in the protection of the atomised individual’s emotional well-being.

New Labour and community safety

The example of the aggressive beggar is useful in that it indicates the attempt by New Labour to change their relationship with the public and develop a form of *advocacy* to engage the more fearful individual. The approach adopted by the Labour party and the justificatory framework that was being developed was now more therapeutic than political – safety, and particularly the feeling of safety, being the goal.

The use of ‘safety’ as a political goal developed through the 1990s within both the Conservative and Labour Party, and began to be a more significant basis for developing a relationship between the government, local authorities and individuals. The relationship with the public was transformed in this period from a political one to

a more technical and managerial form of protection. A key example of this new relationship was the increasing centrality of ideas associated with 'safety' – like Community Safety, a concept that became one of the new organising principles for local authorities.

Safety in respect to community development emerged as an economic issue under Margaret Thatcher's government, and related to regeneration initiatives developed with the promotion of 'Safer Cities' in the late 1980s and early 1990s. While moving the idea of safety more centrally into the workings of local authorities, safer cities remained, to a degree, an attempt to improve the economic regeneration of an area through safety improvements, and also an attempt to involve businesses in the development of crime prevention initiatives (Cummings 1997). In a sense Safer Cities was more about an internal organisation of local authorities and the development of interagency co-operation than a relationship with the public. But from an initial attempt in the late 1980s to use safety initiatives to improving business confidence and increase entrepreneurialism (Gilling 1999), as the 1990s progressed, the issue of safety became a more central focus for local authorities in their attempt to reengage with the public. Here the re-creation of communities and the relationship between the political elite and state institutions developed more systematically in relation to 'safety' as an end in itself. Emerging during the final years of the Conservative government, the significance of community safety initiatives increased significantly under New Labour from 1997. Where Thatcher had understood the creation of 'safer cities' as a means to developing the economic basis of communities, increasingly 'community safety' was the end point of the new therapeutically conceptualised community.

The development of policies around the idea of 'community safety' had little existence in the public realm until 1987, when it was radical and dejected Labour supporters – criminologists and feminists - who helped develop this idea. In this year the term became more commonly used in the press with reference to the policing and community safety units set up in Labour-controlled London boroughs. Here, the relationship between Labour councils and the public was more explicitly developed within a framework of safety, and helped move these local authorities away from a

welfare model to one based more on the protection of individuals and 'victimised groups'.⁴²

As the nature of politics changed and the public, particularly the working class, became more disaggregated, the relationship between the state and the individual increasingly became organised around safety issues. This development also emerged within the workplace at this time and helped to transform the relationship between the public and many public sector workers. Reflecting the more insecure and fragmented climate of the 1990s, this relationship developed around the sentiment of vulnerability. Professions that were renowned for their 'caring' approach to a public of which they once felt part were increasingly encouraged to monitor the behaviour of their 'clients' and 'customers', and to protect their members from antisocial behaviour.

Trade unions, for example, transformed their role in this period, from one of collective bargaining to agencies involved in protecting the security of their members. At the Trades Union Congress annual meeting in 1996, Frank Chapman of the electronics union the AEEU explained that, 'Our members want zero tolerance of criminal, offensive and loutish behaviour'.⁴³ At the same conference, Tony Rouse of the Civil and Public Services Association said that his staff, 'go to work daily knowing they may be seriously assaulted', while Bernadette Hillon of the shop-workers' union USDAW explained how 350,000 sales staff suffered violence at work in 1995 – partly because of people 'losing it' when they bought lottery tickets (*Guardian* 11 September 1996).

Despite a lack of figures to compare the level of victimisation by the public with past experiences, the notion that antisocial behaviour was on the rise became commonplace and public sector workers were increasingly encouraged to institutionalise measures to evaluate the extent of the victimisation of their workers – victimisation and violence being redefined as not only acts of physical, but also verbal, 'assault' (Waiton 2001: 40). Local Authorities, and Labour Authorities in particular, also began to develop the notion of 'community safety' as a priority category around which to develop services, and 'multi-agency' initiatives were recommended by the Audit Commission in 1996

which suggested a statutory duty be imposed on local authorities to establish youth offending teams from representatives of social services, health and education authorities as well as the traditional law enforcement agencies (Waiton 2001: 31).⁴⁴

By the 1997 general election, the idea of the 'politics of left and right' had little meaning. Now politics was increasingly about the management of public insecurities and behaviour.⁴⁵ Indeed, with the end of welfarism and 'Old' Labour, the promotion of concerns connected to antisocial behaviour were developed in the 1990s most fervently by sections of the Labour movement.

'Community Safety', a term and framework used to relate to the public, was first developed by left-wing Labour councils in the late 1980s, and had, ten years later been incorporated into the vocabulary and operation of national government. The development of a relationship with 'communities' based on safety and also a 'feeling' of being safe inevitably led to the activities of young people who hung about the streets becoming an increasing focus of concern in the press, with politicians, and for local authorities.

Prior to the 1990s, the Labour Party, the labour movement and Labour local authorities had often acted as a barrier to the politicisation of crime as a social problem in and of itself. With the transformation of Labour politics, not only was this barrier removed, but also New Labour organisations become the most vociferous advocates of community safety. In the 1990s, unions and local authorities, in unison with Labour politicians, developed a relationship with the public not based on a wider social, political or moral framework but focused upon the vulnerable individual and their sense of security and well being: a relationship predicated upon a wider culture of fear. The relationship with a 'victimised' public was, however, also being developed by the Conservative government, although with one foot still in the past, there remained a tendency for the Tories to prioritise the targeting of deviant 'groups' within a more class-based political, and traditional moralistic, framework. For example with the Criminal Justice Act of 1994, the Conservatives targeted squatters, new age travellers and ravers – an Act that received significant opposition from the liberal press.

Unlike the Conservatives who continued to use the traditional moral and confrontational rhetoric of the 1980s in their condemnation of yobs and criminals, New Labour adopted the more 'amoral' form of moralising that relied not upon political and moral values but on an individuated sense of fear and insecurity. New Labour's *cosmopolitan authoritarianism* was far more appropriate for the more 'liquid' relationships of the time (Bauman 2000). Relating to the public as vulnerable individuals, Tony Blair was able to tap into the culture of fear and use 'safety' as a modern day 'slogan' – a therapeutic promise of a quiet life for all.

In the 1990s, 'vulnerability' became an increasingly important framework through which society and individuals were understood. The Conservative Party's association with moral and political pronouncements about 'muggers', 'scroungers', the 'gay plague' and so on added to its hard-nosed, 'get on your bike' image, and meant that its capacity to relate to the more universalising sense of victimhood was limited. New Labour, however, having unshackled themselves from the collective subject of the working class and influenced by radicals who had helped develop the idea and support for 'vulnerable groups', were well placed to develop their ideas to tap into the individualised sense of anxiety and of vulnerability.

The rise of the victim in criminology

The changing emphasis within the Labour Party in the late 1980s towards issues of crime and antisocial behaviour were influenced in part by the work of left realist and feminist criminologists who had an active role within Labour local authorities. Through the work of writers like Jock Young, crime was made into a 'working class issue', due largely to the transformation in how large sections of the working class were understood: i.e. as 'victims' rather than active citizens.

Social changes and political defeats of the labour movement had a profound impact upon subsequent developments within local and national government alike during this period. However, the role of claimsmakers on the left is also significant in understanding how crime became a radical issue and an issue more centrality focused

around a particular understanding of the 'victim of crime' and the 'fear of crime'. The culture of fear, as we have seen, developed in the 1990s, riding on the back of the growing pessimism about social change and also with the emergence of a more fragmented society. This fear, however, rather than being understood with reference to wider social and cultural changes, was increasingly interpreted as simply a reflection of the 'real' problem of crime and more particularly disorder.

The increasing centrality of victims to not only the criminal justice system but more broadly to political and social problem formation has been noted by various sociologists (Best 1999; Garland 2002), and within criminology itself the victim had become increasingly important as an area of study (Maquire and Pointing 1988; Rock 1990). The rise of victim-oriented research in criminology developed with the growing concern with the fear of crime - a fear that was initially identified by conservative thinkers but increasingly became a social problem focused upon by feminists, and then left realists. As will be examined below, this development ran in tandem with a growing pessimism within radical circles about the dynamic potential of the working class, or of the welfare state to transform society, and resulted in a radical reorientation around the problems of crime, harassment and antisocial behaviour. Whilst being a product of a declining labour movement and the result of the failure of welfarism, the ideas of these radicals also helped to elevate the concern about crime and they acted as key claimsmakers of victims of crime.

The first significant identification of and support for 'victims' emerged in the USA in the form of a conservative reaction in the 1960s to criminal justice processes that were understood to be more concerned with the rights of criminals than with *victims' rights* (Best 1999: 98). Reflecting a more distant and pessimistic belief in the state policies of the time, this defence of the victim also signified a sense of alienation from social institutions and political processes. By the 1970s this pessimism towards welfarism, and the rehabilitative approach within the American criminal justice system, was becoming more pronounced - as illustrated in the influential article by Robert Martinson, where he argued that within the current system, 'Nothing Works' (Feeley 2003: 119).⁴⁶ This pessimism was also emerging within the UK, and the vision and optimism of the expansive politics of the welfare state (Garland 1985) began to

unravel. By the 1980s numerous Home Office reports were arguing that the government could not resolve the current crisis within the criminal justice system - reflecting the fact that, as Garland argues, man was losing his 'strong moral compass' (Garland 1996: 451).

The claim for the rights of victims represented a certain shift within social thought about the relationship of the individual with society. Where previously the criminal justice system was understood as a representation of the laws of all within society in relation to the criminal, by focusing upon the victim of crime, the priority was given to the individual who had been 'damaged' by the criminal and also who felt estranged from the existing criminal justice system. In the UK, the prioritisation and representation of the victim emerged most fervently within the feminist writing of the 1970s and 80s with the 'discovery' of violence and abuse against women and children (Jenkins 1992: 231).

The battle to centre the victim within criminal justice developed in the 1980s but remained contested; and Ashworth's view that it was questionable 'whether the particular victim's interests should count for more than those of any other member of the community' remained the established opinion (Cretney et al 1994: 16). However, as the former director of the Howard League, Martin Wright, noted in the *Guardian*, times were changing, reflected in the draft Declaration on the Rights of Victims being discussed for the first time at the United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (*Guardian* 28 August 1985). A similar trend was also becoming apparent within popular culture, with the emergence of programmes like *Crimewatch* on the television. Producer Peter Chafer explained why the programme was such a success.

Ten or fifteen years ago I don't think it would have worked because...then we were concerned as a society about what it was we were doing to people to make them criminal...In the past three or four years we've suddenly said to ourselves, "To hell with the criminal, what about the poor bloody victim?" (Schlesinger and Tumber 1993: 22).

Concerns for the 'poor bloody victim' emerged alongside the growing concern with the fear of crime – both 'victimhood' and fear reflecting an increasing sense of distance and loss of connection between the individual and social processes. This fear was again first identified in 1960s America.

In the UK the idea that the fear of crime was a direct consequence of crime itself remained highly contested in the seventies and eighties and both radical and Home Office criminologists challenged this idea. Sparks, Glenn and Dodd in 1977 argued that 'feelings of crime or insecurity appear to have many sources, and to be strongly influenced by beliefs, attitudes and experiences which have nothing whatever to do with crime', and that, 'we need to be very cautious about interpreting literally expressions of uneasiness about other aspects of experience, or about the state of the world in general' (Jones 1987: 192-198). Similarly Smith noted in 1984: 'In sum, fear is frequently generated quite independently of either the mass media, or people's direct experiences of crime' (Smith 1984: 293). Indeed, as van Dijk notes, in the initial discussion about the fear of crime in Britain, fear itself was seen as a problem which undermined communities - not in terms of the level of anxiety it created, but in the exaggerated response by those living in fear, where 'Those who [took] special measures to protect their households against crime were said to exhibit a 'fortress mentality' (Van Dijk 1994: 122). In this respect it was those people who feared crime 'too much' who were seen as being antisocial and helping to undermine communities, rather than criminals or antisocial youth.

The idea and significance given to the fear of crime remains contested within criminology and the reality of this specific fear has been challenged and arguably been shown to be exaggerated (Farrall et al 1997; Farrall and Gadd 2004). However the emergence of the concern with the fear of crime as a problem in its own right has grown within politics and in the policies developed by governments from the early 1990s. This development was assisted most systematically within criminology by sections of the feminist 'movement' and by left realist thinkers, particularly with the growth of 'victim surveys'.

Throughout the 1980s and 1990s research had been carried out to identify victims of crime. Often stemming from a feminist perspective, this research attempted to challenge the idea that fear of crime was to some extent irrational,⁴⁷ by illustrating the extent to which women and other 'vulnerable groups'⁴⁸ developed a sense of fear due to their experiences of 'minor' everyday harassment. Rather than associating the fear of crime within wider social and political developments, this research largely analysed the direct experience of 'victims' within their local communities and in so doing focused concern upon the interpersonal relationships between people. Junger for example attempted to prove that the 'experiences of sexual harassment, which usually are not serious but could occur relatively often, can lead women to be fearful and restrict themselves to their homes' (Junger 1987: 358). Other research has 'discovered' teenagers and elderly women to be 'victims of harassment', with the 'experience of crime' being the core concern addressed (Hartless et al 1995; Pain 1995). Despite often contradictory evidence of the significance and even the extent of the victimisation under study, this research had an underlying and in-built acceptance of the vulnerability of those people being studied. For example Hartless notes with 'surprise' that, of the young women who said they had experienced sexual harassment of some kind, 'only 8%...said they had been 'very scared'' (1995: 119). Surprise at any level of robustness and at the ability of 'vulnerable' individuals to cope with unpleasant experiences was coupled with a trend to interpret any evidence of fear as a product of harassment. Pain, in her analysis of fear amongst elderly women, raises the question of why older men fear crime more than young men. Despite the myriad possible reasons including physical frailty, social isolation or a sense of powerlessness and estrangement from society which could be the cause, Pain speculates that perhaps it is due to their *vulnerability to harassment*, 'especially in very old age, to abuse from carers inside or outside the immediate family' (Pain 1995: 595).

Whatever the myth or reality of the experience of harassment by these 'vulnerable groups', there is an implicit and sometimes explicit assumption within this work that communities are being undermined by crime and more particularly antisocial behaviour, including harassment. This antisocial behaviour, it is assumed, will have a long term and cumulatively damaging impact upon the individual and subsequently on communities as a whole. Here we see a complete turnaround from the argument put in

the 1970s by radicals who questioned and even denounced the 'fear of crime' as a reactionary sentiment. Rather than denying or challenging the notion of the fear of crime and the centrality of victims within the criminal justice system, in strands of feminist criminology there was a tendency to accept the problem of fear and to then discover the cause of this fear within the realm of abusive personal relationships. Whereas previously radicals had attempted to challenge the official statistics on crime and deny the social problem of crime, increasingly this feminist criminology reversed this approach and attempted to prove that crime, harassment, and antisocial behaviour was even more of a problem than was officially accepted. Here not only was the opposition to the notion of crime as a social problem lost, but feminists became promoters of the social problem of crime and of wider forms of 'antisocial' behaviour. This was specifically developed with particular reference to less serious or non-criminal offences, and was also bound up with the centrality of the fear of crime as a significant factor to be taken into account within the criminal justice system. Regardless of the intentions of the researchers themselves, one logical outcome of this process was to criminalise everyday behaviour and interactions, to help develop the 'politics of behaviour', and thus to support the trend towards the 'policing' of relationships.

In the 1980s feminist and left realist concerns about the impact of crime on individuals and society drew closer to the official criminological approach at the time - especially with the common use of victim statistics. 'Establishment' criminology had however undergone its own transformation during this period moving from a positivist belief in society's capacity to overcome the problem of crime to an 'administrative criminology' (Young 1988: 174). This administrative criminology, associated with Wilson's (1975) approach to crime, was a more pragmatic method of dealing with the effects of it. Despite the political nature of much of the feminist and particularly the left realists approach to crime, the common bond that had brought them and the official criminologist closer to one another was a diminished belief in social possibilities to resolve the problem of crime. With a greater pessimism about society and a greater sense of distance from social outcomes, radical and conservative thinkers became more preoccupied with the plight of the victim. The public, or at least substantial

sections of it were now increasingly conceptualised as being what Stanko described as, 'universally vulnerable' (Pain 1995: 596).

Feminists and left realists as claimsmakers

The significance of crime and behaviour for New Labour was assisted by the work of feminist and new realist thinkers of the left in the 1980s, who helped to formulate an understanding of the public as vulnerable. This vulnerability was understood to be the product of antisocial behaviour within the day-to-day relationships of significant sections of society. Rather than a right-wing authoritarian issue, here the fight against crime and antisocial behaviour was reposed as a means to recreate community.

In Philip Jenkins' analysis of *Moral Panics in Contemporary Great Britain*, in which he analyses the emergence of panics around child abuse in the UK, he notes the significance of feminist as claimsmakers:

From the mid-1970s on, there evolved in Britain a strong feminist movement, which had had an enormous impact on many aspects of society and politics...[f]eminist ideas soon prevailed in radical and left-wing journals...and were commonly expressed in liberal newspapers like the *Guardian*...[and] by the mid-1980s, fifty local authorities had women's committees (Jenkins 1992: 35-6).

By the late 1970s, many of the feminist activists had already broken with the 'radical' outlook within criminology and were equally critical of socialist ideas on the left, turning away from issues of social equality and focusing more upon problems that emerged in the relationships between men and women. Indeed as one author noted, by the 1980s the women's 'movement' as a radical drive for equality had all but died and fragmented into individualistic concerns and a separatist celebration of 'womanhood'. Where the early socialist feminists to a degree rejected the idea of difference between men and women, many feminists in the 1980s appeared to celebrate women as caring rather than violent – illustrated by the peace camp at Greenham Common, which excluded men because of their 'violent tendency' (Marshall: 1982: 48). This more

disparate form of feminism did, however, as Jenkins notes, make a substantial impact upon politics in the UK - as did the left realists, led by Jock Young, who, like these feminists, had become disillusioned with the *idealist* beliefs of the radical left.

In the editor's introduction to *Confronting Crime*, Matthews and Young pointed out that 'if the women's movement has indicated the way forward in terms of the creation of a radical victimology, it is now time to extend its theoretical and political potential' (Matthews and Young 1986: 3). Crime for these left realists needed to be taken seriously and victims needed to be placed at the centre of concern for criminologists and the state. The role for socialists was now to engage with 'problems as people experience them' and to tackle the problem of crime - a problem that can destroy communities:

Crime is of importance because unchecked it divides the working class community and is materially and morally the basis of disorganisation: the loss of political control. It is also a potential unifier - a realistic issue, *amongst others*, for recreating community (Matthews and Young 1986: 29).

By engaging with the immediate experiences of a disaggregated community and understanding crime as a major cause and solution to this loss of community, Young, along with other realists and feminists, attempted to turn crime reduction into a working-class issue and in the process became significant 'anti-crime' claimsmakers on the left.

In the 1980s both feminist and left realist thinkers had a significant influence in the left-wing Labour-run inner-city councils - carrying out victim surveys, and sitting on a number of council boards particularly within the Greater London Council. Developing out of the radical framework of the early 1970s, a number of feminist and realist criminologists became disillusioned with the fight for political and social change and, rather than challenging the issue of crime as a form of bourgeois amplification, for example, increasingly identified crime as a major issue, particularly for the poor, women and blacks who were now understood as being 'victims of crime'.

Carried out within a critical feminist and socialist framework that was often 'anti-police', these radicals focused their concerns on the most deprived and fragmented communities, discovering that crime was not a myth, as past radicals had argued, but a reality. Indeed crime was seen as a 'working class problem' and issue to be addressed (Jones et al 1986).

The identification of harassed victims of antisocial behaviour rose proportionately with the declining belief – particularly of the left realists – in the possibility of radical social change. As the active potential of the working class to 'do' something about Conservative attacks on the welfare state declined, Jock Young and others uncovered the vulnerable, 'done-to', poor.

Discussing the shift in Labour councils from radicalism to realism Young noted that:

The recent history of radical criminology in Britain has involved a rising influence of feminist and anti-racist ideas and an encasement of left wing Labour administrations in the majority of the inner city Town Halls. An initial ultra-leftism has been tempered and often transformed by a prevalent realism in the wake of the third consecutive defeat of the Labour Party on the national level and severe defeats with regards to "rate capping" in terms of local politics. The need to encompass issues, which had a widespread support amongst the electorate, rather than indulge in marginal or "gesture" politics included the attempt to recapture the issue of law and order from the right (Young 1988: 172).

It was sections of the left who, with the support of their victim surveys, both discovered and advocated on behalf of women, blacks and the poor as *victims* of crime, the problem of fragmented communities being located within the prism of crime, antisocial behaviour and the fear of crime. Indeed crime and the fear of it became so central to Young's understanding of the conditions of the working class that, when finding that young men's fear of crime was low, despite them being the main victims of crime, he argued that in a sense they had a false consciousness. Rather than trying to allay women's fears about the slim chance of serious crime happening

to them, Young questioned whether it 'would not be more advisable to attempt to raise the fear of crime of young men rather than to lower that of other parts of the public?' (Young 1988a: 172).

Based upon an accurate critique of the romantic notions of radical criminologists, but within a climate of political defeats and working class fragmentation, Young increasingly related to large sections of the working class as victims, on whose behalf he advocated. Again, while often carrying out more accurate research of crime, the tendency was for Young and his co-authors both to exaggerate the significance of crime and to generalise an understanding of the public as fundamentally vulnerable - within the narrow parameters of crime and antisocial behaviour. In the demoralised and poverty stricken inner-city areas of London, like Islington, where crime rates were five times the national average, the equally demoralised realists concluded that it was the problem of crime that 'shaped their lives' (Jones et al 1986: 201). While correctly noting that crime was not a fantasy for the people of Islington, these realists noted that a third of the women of the area avoided going out after dark, concluding that this represented a 'virtual curfew of the female population' (1986: 201). This misrepresentation of one third of women being transformed into the entire female population reflected not simply an exaggeration, but a newly developing conceptualisation of the public more generally as vulnerable - something which was to become more central to the Labour Party's understanding of social problems in the 1990s and would help to transform the relationship between citizen and state.

Discovering victims of crime was by no means a uniform development and differences of opinion and prioritisation existed amongst those advocating on behalf of differing 'vulnerable groups'. Indeed identifying victims of crime was not a solely radical pursuit. As we have observed, within administrative criminology and amongst sections of conservative thinkers the victim was becoming more central to the approach to crime and criminal justice. Claims on behalf of victims were becoming more systematic and politicised by the late 1980s, and had to some degree already been institutionalised with, for example, the introduction of the Victims' Charter by the Conservative Government in 1990.

Before 1970, social problems associated with *victims of crime* and the *fear of crime* had little or no academic, public or political presence in British society. However, by 1990, victims and the fear of crime were becoming increasingly important concepts informing how the problem of crime was understood. This development emerged as belief in social possibilities under welfarism declined, and within certain radical circles the previously understood creative capacity of the working class, and indeed of humanity in general, was replaced with a concern with its destructive potential. Where some practical measures to provide victim support had become institutionalised in the 1980s (Van Dijk 1988: 120), the centrality of the victim within politics was held back by the remaining political contestation between the Tories and the 'Old' Labour movement. For the victim and the 'vulnerable public' to become central to politics and indeed to the state's relationship with the people, as Maguire and Pointing (1988) noted, 'fairly major reforms of the relationships between State and citizen' would need to occur. As we have seen with the example of the aggressive beggar, this transformation did indeed take place and was fundamentally dependent upon a change in the nature of subjectivity within politics and the consequent transformation in the understanding of the electorate from active individuals or a collective agent to a more passive and diminished vulnerable public.

This transformation developed not simply within sections of the left, but also with the relative failure of the Conservative government to create a vibrant economic and moral culture founded on the entrepreneurial individual. Margaret Thatcher's ideal of 'restoring people to independence and self reliance', as Heartfield notes, failed even in terms of 'rolling back the state' (2002: 156). State subsidies replaced nationalised industries; 'dependency' on the state increased in the form of unemployment benefits expanding the number of those reliant upon the state more than any other post-war government; regulation of industry in the form of organisations such as Ofwat increased; and from 1985-1994 the number of quangos increased exponentially, rising to 5521 by 1994. Rather than the rise of the *free* market, what emerged was an alternatively regulated society, and despite the defeat of collective working class institutions, 'flowing individualism' did not emerge (Heartfield 2002: 158-160).⁴⁹

As we have seen with the example of the aggressive beggar, the Conservative party, in part, continued to understand and organise its policies in relation to the imagined problem of welfare dependency, but its rhetoric sounded increasingly hollow and its capacity to cohere even conservative thinkers was becoming increasingly problematic (Calcutt 1996). By 1994 Labour were well ahead in the opinion polls helped by their transformation into the new party of law and order illustrated in their support of the Conservative government's Criminal Justice and Public Order Bill. Prime Minister John Major continually attempted to paint Labour as the 'villain's friend', but to no avail, and the Conservative Party's disarray continued the following year, illustrated by the leadership challenge to John Major (*Guardian* 30 January 1996).

Chapter 4:

Diminishing the Subject

Now for the first time – outside of the extremes of conservative thinking – a misanthropic strain emerged that questioned whether MAN was indeed the central figure of the human story, and whether he deserved to be (Heartfield 2002: 21).

Introduction

By the early years of the 1990s, as Giddens correctly noted, politics was moving 'beyond' left and right (Giddens 1994). The traditional outlook of conservatives and their attempt to play the morality card and get 'back to basics' was running out of steam (Calcutt 1996). Where the demise of the left can be chronologically located in terms of the collapse of the Berlin Wall in 1989, the incapacity of the right to stand up for its own values rather than rely on the negative crutch of denouncing the left led to its own decline around 1993. Collective solutions were discredited and the disillusionment with grand narratives became more generalised at this time (Fitzpatrick 2001: viii). With a loss of belief in social progress radicals were increasingly inclined to *panic* and develop solutions to social problems not in terms of their positive transformative capacity but by promoting the need to *conserve* and to regulate areas of life, including industry, the environment and also communities (Durodie 2002; Cohen 2002: xxiii). With the loss of belief in both left and right wing thought of the human potential to *make* history, and with the parallel loss of belief in politics, both in society and amongst the elite itself, risks became the 'active agents and people - at risk [the] passive agents in society' (Furedi 1997: 64).⁵⁰

It was within this context that the understanding of the vulnerable public emerged – an understanding predicated upon the development of the diminished subject.

The development of the engagement between the political elite and the public in relation to their vulnerability is often portrayed one-sidedly as politicians simply reacting to public concerns about issues like those connected with antisocial behaviour. However, this development should be seen as a dialectical one involving not simply the public, but more importantly the role of the elite and the underlying

philosophy, or loss of one, within which policies associated with antisocial behaviour have developed. At the heart of these developments is a loss of a sense of both individual and collective capacities and the cultural development of diminished subjectivity.

In the 1990s concerns about child safety and child villainy, which were to become central to the formation of the Hamilton curfew, developed at a pace rarely seen before in political life. Indeed compared to past political periods, the tendency was for the political elite to panic and develop ever-more laws and initiatives to deal with these 'social problems'. As traditional morality declined, the moralising about behaviour was reconstituted and promoted through the New Labour language of 'rights and responsibilities'. However, the meaning of responsibility, as we will see in the case of the Hamilton curfew, was actually being diminished, while the idea of rights was being transformed to relate not to people's freedoms but to a new form of protection of a 'quiet life'.

This downgrading of the notion of responsibility, the elevation of the problem of child villainy, and the tendency for governments to panic, could all be seen in the reaction to the James Bulger killing (King 1997: 125). Following the election of the Labour government in 1997, the propensity of Labour to institutionalise new laws based upon this panic was illustrated when the Bulger case was used to justify the abolition of *doli incapax* - a law dating back to the Middle Ages that protected children from criminal charges based on the assumption that they could not be held *morally responsible* for their actions. Here the question of 'moral responsibility' was revised by the Labour government in the Crime and Disorder Act (1998), and minors were now transformed into subjects, responsible for their own actions. In criminalising children in this way, the image of dangerous young people who were a threat to society was projected and given political and legal support – this fear itself being institutionalised in the process.

However, within this change of law and the newly confused understanding of moral responsibility, an implicit diminution of the idea of adult responsibility was also suggested: if ten year old children can be said to be responsible for their actions in the same way that adults are, the very idea of responsibility appears to be diminished. As

we will see, despite the promotion of rights and responsibilities by New Labour, what it meant to be responsible becoming infantilised.

The emergence of the notion of community safety and of the vulnerable public were predicated upon this infantilisation of responsibility, and indicated a weakening understanding of subjectivity and a lowering of expectations of the adult population. Conceptualised as vulnerable and 'at risk', the *active* role expected of the public was reduced, and politicians, interest groups, union representatives and so on, developed a more passive relationship with anxious individuals across society.

The failed social, economic and political experiments of left and right by the mid-1990s had led to what Feeley and Simon describe as a 'decline in social will' (Feeley and Simon 1992: 469). Despite the triumph of the market, it was not the 'market individual' or promethean man that stepped forward, but rather the victim and the vulnerable public. This does not mean that this development marks the 'death of the subject', but rather, as Heartfield argues, 'the human subject persists, but in denial of its own subjectivity'. The notion of diminished subjectivity in this respect is not a description of individuals as such, but is a cultural phenomenon that informs institutional practices: practices that have increasingly developed in relation to the regulation of the public.

The image of the individual and to some extent the self-image that individuals take on board is one prone to a sense of vulnerability, and is best expressed in the concept of the *victim*. The victim, as Best argues, is often portrayed as blameless and powerless (Best 1998: 100), and whereas past moral weight was given to saints in the Renaissance period, or heroes in the nineteenth century, the iconic individual carrying moral weight in late twentieth century society is that of the victim (Best 1998: 138). This transformation in the understanding of humanity reflects both a more passive sense of human capabilities and also a more negative sense of what humanity represents. It has also helped to form the framework within which individuals have increasingly come to understand themselves.

The trend to identify and understand the public in terms of its vulnerability was something that informed the turn towards crime as a significant social problem by radicals in the 1980s. For the new realists, both a more passive and more negative understanding of individuals and in particular the working class is represented. The issue of crime and antisocial behaviour was not a major focus of concern for these criminologists until their own subjective understanding of social and political possibilities had been diminished.

Part of the reason for the left realists' orientation towards an understanding of the working class as victims was that the more active and dynamic sections of the working class were understood to be part of the problem. In a sense what developed was the problematisation of subjectivity itself – in the form of the problematisation of the aspirations of the *active man*. One caricature of this *man* was the 'Essex Man' – the upwardly mobile, greedy, selfish Thatcherite, who was blamed for the consecutive Tory election victories by many of those on the left, a caricature that was explained in theory within the notion of Thatcherism and hegemony.⁵¹ The greed and selfishness of the Essex man was for left realist Jock Young the same greed and selfishness that resulted in crime and antisocial behaviour on estates. For Young, crime was a product of capitalist values played out on the streets, of 'individualism, competition, a desire for material goods and often machismo'. Values that in more optimistic times would have been understood as largely aspirant – something socialists could tap into when the market failed to deliver – were now reconceptualised as criminal and anti-communal (Lea and Young 1984).

The understanding of the greedy working class Tory voter was developed most systematically by Stuart Hall, within his analysis of Thatcherism. The use of Gramsci's theory of hegemony 'offered a way of theorising the political crisis of the Left and understanding how the Right had come to dominate' (Findlayson 2003: 117). Fundamentally, Hall did this by undermining the idea of political consciousness and of the fluidity of subjectivity by identifying an ideology – 'Thatcherism'⁵² – which developed not simply as an idea that people agreed with but rather as something that got under their skin and 'inserted itself into people's experience and common sense, redefining their identity and sense of interests' (Findlayson 2003:117). While correctly

criticising economic determinism in traditional Marxism, this approach did not simply elevate the significance of ideology so much as to transform ideology and subjectivity into a *thing*. Now the ideas of the working class were understood to develop in relation to a more statically conceptualised *culture*. As Malik notes in relation to the concept of culture in race, culture had increasingly become understood in the latter half of the twentieth century, as a more static conceptualisation of what we *are*, as 'static and immutable', culture being related to unconscious tradition rather than with 'conscious activity', not the 'conscious creation of humanity but the unconscious product of human activity which [stands] above and beyond society' (Malik 1996: 154-162).

Ironically, within criminology, the 'static' cultures of deviants was something that was first theorised by radical rather than conservative thinkers, as Calcutt has observed with reference to British criminologists in the late 1960s (Calcutt 1996). Originally positing these cultural differences with a positive gloss, by the 1990s the conservative notion of cultures of crime, or what today has become a concern with 'gun culture' or a 'knife culture', took on a more overtly negative and authoritarian dynamic.

In the 1980s realists like Lea and Young coupled their pessimism about social change with a discovery of a 'culture' of selfishness and greed amongst the working class. Describing the problem as they saw it in 1984, Lea and Young argued that crime, rather than being in opposition to capitalist values, was an expression of them. By this the left realists were not referring to Marx's understanding of alienation and the inequalities produced under capitalism, but rather to the *values* of the working class themselves and in particular to the 'antisocial egoism which permeates the totality of behaviour and values within capitalism' (Lea and Young 1984: 55). In a sense subjectivity was one-sidedly understood to have been objectified by the market, and through the ideology of Thatcherism.

Past theories connecting capitalist values to criminal activity often took on a more optimistic note. American author Daniel Bell, discussing how gangsters were understood in the USA, noted that, 'He was a man with a gun, acquiring by personal merit what was denied him by complex ordering of stratified society', a man who was

taking a 'queer ladder of social mobility' (Bell 1962: 129). Similarly on the left, deviant behaviour was often seen as understandable given the limitations of capitalist society. Here subjective action, even if deviant, was to a certain degree seen as acceptable and even positive. However by the early eighties, the realist criminologists had already begun to see subjective intent as something implanted by the capitalist system that was a problem (of greed and selfishness) rather than a potential solution to social problems. Meritocracy and aspirations of individuals, without a belief in social progress, became problematised and understood more negatively to represent a 'dog eat dog' mentality. Young men who felt able to 'take care of themselves' in public, for example, were regarded as being macho and violent, and in denial of a more real understanding of themselves as *victims* of crime (Young 1998a). Subjective activity was problematised and seen as a semi-conscious product of capitalism under Margaret Thatcher: as such the *active* intent of even the criminal was to some extent denied, and the engagement with the 'done to' working class increasingly related to their passivity and victimhood.

Within the identification with victimhood a more diminished subject is related to, and engagement with and this representation of individuals was increasingly universalised through the 1990s. At the same time, the idea of the greedy Thatcherite individual was also predicated upon a more static and immutable sense of subjectivity. Rather than being able to challenge the outlook of this 'selfish man', the call was to police him, and to regulate his excesses. The democratisation of the police force – and the involvement of the working class in the policing of the selfish Thatcherite members of the community – was one way the left realists felt the fear of crime could be overcome and the greedy criminal dealt with (Jones et al 1986).

Interestingly, the notion that key sections of the working class were becoming more greedy and selfish has been questioned in research looking at the rise and fall of Essex Man. Questioning the structural explanations for the Tory voting worker, including the collapse of manufacturing jobs, the growth in home ownership and *the shift from a collectivist to individualist perspective*, Hayes and Hudson noted that,

We were sceptical of the idea of an autonomous correlation between changes in working class social structure and changes in working class political behaviour. We chose to look at the social and political attitudes of the skilled working class to see if in fact these changes had eroded a sense of working class identity in the light of a clear falling off in the vote for Labour. We found that Basildon's C2's did not conform in any way to the academic stereotype of what they were supposed to be. The key point to highlight here is the neglect of the essentially *aspirant* nature of the skilled working class. (Hayes and Hudson 2001: 14 (my emphasis))

The support for the Conservatives was here found to be less connected to structural changes or to an acceptance of Thatcherite 'ideological convictions' than to a negative experience of Labour's welfarism, connected with poverty and an individual, pragmatic aspiration for self improvement. Rather than the working class having being transformed by a hegemonic Thatcherism, the authors stated that 'the results of the Basildon survey reveal that conservative policies are not capable of enthusing anybody. If anything, it is the lack of popular attachment to the Conservative programme that needs to be explained' (2001: 65).

Ideas of the free individual subject were associated with free market theorists in the 1980s. However, as Heartfield argues, the problems of the eighties, at a time of TINA,⁵³ became associated not with the failures of the market, but as a problem of freedom itself.

The communitarians criticised subjective freedom because they took on face value the claims of the Thatcher and Reagan governments to represent individual freedom. Their response was ultimately a conservative response to the socially corrosive effects of market policies. But because the argument that there was no alternative to the market had been won, the culprit identified for the problems of the eighties was the selfish individual (Heartfield 2002: 154).

Within realist and feminist criminology the problematisation was often of the active subject itself. Freedom, without a positive belief in social change, was increasingly

seen as being problematic and indeed dangerous. Aspiration became greed, self reliance became machismo, and active subjective engagement with others increasingly became understood within the Foucauldian framework of power and its abuse.⁵⁴ The Foucauldian understanding of society, with its problematisation of subjectivity (Heartfield 2002: 20) and its pessimism about human action, also became more influential at this time; an understanding, as Stone explained, within which we find 'a denial of the Enlightenment as an advance in human understanding and sensibility', with a 'recurrent emphasis on control, domination, and punishment as the only mediating qualities possible in personal relations' (Harpham 1999: 68).

Like the risk theorists' understanding of human knowledge as destructive, here too the free action of individuals was increasingly understood to be damaging rather than creative. Instead of being subjective actors, through the prism of the victim and notions of vulnerability, the public increasingly became understood as being 'subjected to' by selfish, abusive villains. Replicating their own disengagement with positive subjective (or political) action this trend to conceptualise subjective activity in a negative or diminished light became a foundation stone upon which the politics of New Labour was established: a politics, or more accurately a 'process', without a subject (Heartfield 2002:174).

Regulating the culture of greed

The outlook of members of the Labour Party towards crime was transformed in the time span between the early 1980s and the mid 1990s. A few examples of this change, appeared in the *Guardian* newspaper on 30 January 1996 and are given below.

1982: *'Five years of Sir Kenneth Newman as Metropolitan Police Commissioner could leave the working class areas of (London) in as much the same state as the Catholic areas of Northern Ireland.'* (Ken Livingston, GLC Chairman, later MP for Brent).

1985: *'After the death of PC Keith Blakelock at the Broadwater Farm riots, Bernie Grant, who became Labour MP for Tottenham two years later, said the police got a "bloody good hiding."*

1993: *'We should be tough on crime and tough on the causes of crime.'* (Tony Blair).

1995: *'Law and order is a Labour issue. We all suffer crime, the poorest and vulnerable most of all. It is the duty of the government to protect them.'* (Tony Blair).

These quotes give not only a taste of the change in the approach to crime within the Labour Party, but equally a sense of the transformation of what was a more confrontational and radical opposition to policing by left-wing Labour members in the 1980s. By the early 1990s a number of key trends had emerged that helped this transformation: the collapse of the left and the labour movement, the acceptance of the market as the only way of running society, and the increasing centrality of the victim in criminal discourse. The victim and the vulnerable public, discussed above, could not become the core of the approach to crime while the political contestation between left and right continued. The conservative promotion of the active individual⁵⁵ and the socialist engagement with the 'collective subject' of the working class declined in the 1990s, and the more subjectless image of the victim became increasingly central to a diminished political elite.

Fitzpatrick argues that whereas the working class for much of the twentieth century had been understood by conservatives 'as the source of instability in society', with its retreat from the political stage, 'perceptions of a more diffuse threat [arose] from trends towards social disintegration' (Fitzpatrick 2001: 91). This new, more amorphous sense of anxiety, as discussed in the first chapter of this thesis, came about in part because of a sense of loss by the political elite, both left and right, of a social and political purpose that resulted in a generalised tendency to panic and to institutionalise anxiety. Increasingly the micro-politics that developed focused less on attempting to change society, or challenging the morals of the public, and moved to the management of the more psychologically posed 'behaviour' of individuals (Finlayson 2003; Muncie 1999: 285).

Despite left realism's increasing focus upon crime as a social problem, its understanding of this problem remained, in part, associated with deprivation. This

understanding also remained within the ranks of New Labour, but with their acceptance of the market, the question of deprivation was transformed into a more psychologically founded idea of social inclusion, and the problem of crime again was connected more to the attitudes and values of the public than to issues of social inequality.

Despite New Labour's endorsement of the market, crime was seen as a problem generated within the entire culture of a selfish society. However because of this endorsement, it was not the market that was understood as the problem so much as the Thatcherite 'values' embodied within the prevailing culture.

Somewhat ironically, following Tony Blair's denouncement of the 'self-interested' culture that was 'tearing apart the social fabric of society', in 1996 Margaret Thatcher felt the need to dampen down the concern about this endemic nature of crime and greed, arguing that 'Crime and violence are not the result of the great majority of people being free - they are the result of a small minority of wicked men and women abusing their freedom' (Heartfield 2002: 198). For Thatcher freedom was a positive thing abused by the few; for Blair, this freedom was understood more problematically within the perceived culture of greed. While problematising this culture of greed and viewing crime as endemic, particular attention was given to those who were understood to embody these selfish antisocial 'values' - the disconnected 'underwolves'⁵⁶ who had the capacity to 'ruin pretty much everyone's quality of life' (Wilkinson and Mulgan 1995: 108).

Disconnected therapy

The coupling of political disorientation with an understanding of the public as being victimised by antisocial behaviour led to an increasing attempt in the 1990s by the political elite, and particularly New Labour, to re-engage the disconnected public through its fear of crime. The rights campaigned for by the Labour leadership were not classical rights and freedoms of the individual, but the right to be protected - the right to a 'quiet life'. Community Safety emerged, particularly after Labour's election in 1997, as a key organising principle for local authorities, and community

'participation' developed around this safety agenda, predicated on an engagement with a more passive and fearful public.

Within the framework of TINA, the economic and political contestation of left and right was lost and social policy developments increasingly took on an individual and managerial orientation. Social problems were now largely understood with reference to the minutiae of everyday life, rather than to grand social visions based on political or moral principles and beliefs. Without the economic and political framework of the past, the fragmented public was engaged with as individuals - but more particularly as emotionally constituted individuals. Expressing how you felt and engaging with the feelings of the public increasingly became the basis of political rhetoric and the justification for social policy interventions. However, within the framework of diminished subjectivity, 'therapeutic man' was understood not as a vibrant and strong character, but as more fragile individual who needed emotional protection and support.

A more therapeutic relationship with the public was developed by New Labour with their concern for the victims of crime, the fear of crime, and with their challenge to the 'thoughtless, insensitive' and 'cruel' treatment of these victims by the criminal justice system (Labour 1993: 22). 'Freeing people from the fear of crime', was now the 'greatest liberty government [could] guarantee' (Labour 1996: 6). Subsequently, the management of the emotions – the anxieties and fears - of individuals was now more central to the concerns about crime and disorder in society.

Within this cultural and political framework, a trend has developed for 'victim' groups to emerge, where individuals find meaning through their experience of crime. Mothers' campaigns, for example, have developed in the last decade, supported by the unquestioned moral weight that victimhood provides. Following the model of the Mothers Against Drunk Driving campaign, that was launched in America in 1980, a variety of 'Mothers Against' groups have been formed in Britain. Beginning with Mothers Against Murder and Aggression in 1993 there are now mothers' campaigns against drugs, violence, guns, knives, crime and telecommunication masts. These 'victim' groups have almost all been generated by the personal loss of a child or loved

one, relate to safety issues, and have campaigned for new laws and regulations to prevent the same thing happening to others. Promoting the awareness of problems of crimes, Ms Shakespeare of Mothers Against Crime explained in 2004 that 'Nobody is safe' (Birmingham Evening Mail 11 March 2004).

'Awareness' campaigns give out the message that you need to be more fearful than you are, and attract significant media interest and political support. The cultural validation given to campaigns of this sort acts as a further spur to the spiral of crime panics, and is predicated upon the incontestable amoral absolute of the victim. Speaking 'from the heart', the emotions of a mother who has lost a child, within a therapeutic culture, are not only very difficult to challenge, but are often actively courted by the political elite, who attempt to regain legitimacy by displaying their emotional awareness.

As James Nolan has noted with reference to state legitimation, the therapeutic ethos has become central to the justification of the state. In the UK, like the USA, a therapeutic relationship with the public has developed at the same time as a more punitive approach to criminal justice emerged. Both of these developments can be understood as a more alienated engagement between the individual and the state – an engagement without a social or moral basis for individual or collective action.

Describing this therapeutic development within the criminal justice system and the changing relationship between the state and the criminal, Nolan notes:

Where once the self was to be brought into conformity with the standards of externally derived authorities and social institutions, it now is compelled to look within...In other words, the contemporary cultural condition is such that externally derived points of moral reference are not available to individuals as they once were. Instead, cultural standards for judgement, guideposts for actions, understandings of oneself, and the tools for navigating through social life are likely to be rooted in the self. (Nolan 1998: 3)

The problem of crime and disorder in this respect relates less to the laws of society and the upholding of these laws by the state as an expression of the 'general will' than to the protection of the emotional well-being of the individual. Policing has therefore become founded more on the fears of individuals than in carrying out the will of the *public*, and a more directly therapeutic relationship has developed between the authorities and the individual.

Furedi also notes that adults and children are today 'continually invited to make sense of their troubles through the medium of therapeutics'.

Take the example of crime. The belief that the impact of crime has a major influence on people's emotional life is a relatively recent one. Back in the 1970s, crime surveys tended to suggest that the impact of most crime on the victim was superficial and of relatively short duration...But during the past 25 years, criminologists have adopted a radically different interpretation of the effects of victimisation (Furedi 2004: 112).

For Furedi, a dialectical relationship has been established where cultural and institutional practices help orient the public towards a therapeutic understanding of themselves and their troubles.

Coupled with this therapeutic turn, the punitive response to crime that developed most fervently in the UK in the early 1990s can be understood as part of a single process in respect to the move away from the 'social' (Rose 1996). Within criminal justice this can be seen in the move from practices of traditional rehabilitation to increasingly locking people up or developing more self-referential therapeutic practices, exemplified most clearly in the drugs courts in the USA that are being developed in the UK.

Nolan, examining the 'emergence of a therapeutic culture with the universal discrediting of rehabilitative practices', notes that the rehabilitative ideal is 'dedicated to the achievement of social purposes' in that it intends to 'bring the offenders' behaviour and attitudes into harmony with certain values socially defined and

validated'. Here the judgement about morality was seen to be based upon social norms not individual judgements. In contrast, the therapeutic ethos is more centrally disposed to 'assign ultimate moral priority to the self, over and against society' (Nolan 2001: 179).

Whereas the emphasis of rehabilitative or adaptational therapy was to bring the individual into harmony with society, [today's] therapies of liberation see society as oppressive and as contributing to a person's illness. Society, as it were, is the cause of a person's sickness (Nolan 2001: 180).

This estrangement from social norms and outcomes is also reflected in the punitive approach to crime developed in the 1990s, in that it is similarly distanced from the traditional idea of rehabilitation and reforming the criminal into an upstanding citizen, and it more negatively attempts simply to keep criminals off the streets. The pessimism about social change that developed out of the 1970s' rejection of welfarism here takes on a more detached view of the criminal. Where the tabloids shout for more prisons, the more liberal therapeutic approach attempts to heal the criminal by relating them to their inner selves and by raising their self-esteem, or by giving emotional support to victims. In neither approach does the 'social' world of politics, society or morality enter.

The therapeutic concern with the victim of crime has also run in parallel to the conservative promotion of this victim - both reflecting a move away from a social engagement with law and order and towards a more individually oriented concern for the victim. But as Nolan has pointed out, 'The therapeutic emphasis on the victimised and emotive concerns of the self are tendentially anticomunal', and at a time of a growing concern with the need to rebuild communities, he asks, 'How... can such an orientation effectively provide the basis for a new form of civil solidarity?' (Nolan 1998: 301).

The increasing centrality of the victim within the politics of crime and the engagement with the public based upon its vulnerability and personal fears all imply a connection with the individual based less upon his or her active subjective engagement with the

'social' than a relationship of protection from it. Rather than people being understood and engaged with as producers of their environment, individuals are conceptualised and engaged with as products of it. A more managerial rather than transformative sense of society and the 'public' has similarly emerged and is seen most clearly in the Third Way project.

The veneer of politics

Examining C. Wright Mills' conception of the *public* as opposed to a *mass*, we are able to identify a distinction between an autonomous public that has a separate life from social institutions, where 'virtually as many people express opinions as receive them', and perhaps most importantly can 'find an outlet in effective action against, if necessary, prevailing systems and agents of authority'. This contrasts with a mass, where 'far fewer people express opinions than receive them', and where 'the community of publics becomes an abstracted collectivity of individuals who receive impressions from the mass media' (Mills 1968: 355). *Public* opinion for Mills is therefore predicated upon an *active* ebb and flow of opinion where anyone can speak and, most significantly, *does*. Action by democratic institutions thus emerges from this 'general will' of the people. Rather than the public and the democratic institutions *reacting* to society they collectively create it.

Today, it appears that Mills' notion of a *mass* society is more prevalent.⁵⁷ However, this development has a dialectical component and can be seen in relation to politics and democratic institutions themselves. Logically, the transformation of a *public* into a *mass*, with the implied interconnection between the public and society's institutions, necessarily means that this transformation could not occur unless there was an equally profound transformation in politics itself. If in the late twentieth century icon of the victim we see a more powerless, socially alienated individual - within the political elite, a similar development must have occurred.

In Alan Finlayson's *Making Sense of New Labour*, the emergence of New Labour is understood to represent a move away from politics and towards a form of social engagement based more on *sociology*. What Finlayson means by this is that the

government has become distant from the 'energy of society' - politics - and has become more of a technocratic manager of a process that it believes to be beyond its control. Whereas political developments are predicated upon an ideology or philosophy and a movement from the present to the future, politics under new Labour is more about a sociological examination of the *facts* of society and a subsequent develop of policies according to these facts. Having lost an engagement with the idea of political agency, New Labour increasingly responds to social facts, which they believe create certain types of *behaviours* (Finlayson 2003).

For Heartfield, the Third Way represents a 'process without a subject' (Heartfield: 2002: 174). Illustrated in Fairclough's examination of the language of New Labour, we find government documents are increasingly expressed with 'passive sentences without agents' (Fairclough 2000: 24). Similarly Fairclough notes how change is discussed by Labour ministers as a noun rather than a verb, and the absence of, 'responsible agents further contributes to constructing change as inevitable' (Fairclough 2000: 26).

Citing the examples of 'globalisation' and 'modernisation', both Finlayson (2003) and Heartfield (2002) suggest that these concepts, rather than reflecting profound economic and social changes, are rather expressions of the political elites' sense of the rudderless nature of society: a sense expressed by New Labour in that they are 'not the authors of their own destiny' (Heartfield 2002: 180).

The *search* for a big idea, which has troubled political leaders in the West for the last decade, gives an indication of the dislocation of the political elite from social processes. Where ideas previously emerged from society and the conflicting tensions and movements within it, today the new political elite believes think-tanks and policy officers can invent them. Dislocated from a *public*, acting more as sociologists than as political parties, and attempting to engage with a society that feels beyond their control, the political elites' own sense of anxiety and alienation has developed into a propensity to engage individuals through their personal insecurities. The elites' own sense of diminished subjectivity helps them to both understand themselves and the public through the prism of the *victim*.

As well as the political elite reacting to society through their own sense of anxiety, being dislocated from the *public* and from a social will, they are inclined to search for points of contact with the electorate. Participation subsequently becomes an aim in itself and has, through the 1990s and into the twenty-first century, become increasingly developed at a *micro*, or local level - the community (Gilling 1999, Rose 1996 and Flint 2002). As Alice Miles has pointed out, with reference to the move to regional governments and the rise of Antisocial Behaviour Orders (ASBOs), 'Our rulers are in denial about the big issues and are seeking refuge in little things' (*Times* 3 November 2004).

While politicising 'little things', the role of *governance* has also developed, increasingly incorporating institutions, both voluntary and state-run, in the management of initiatives that attempt to regulate society more systematically and often engage with the public through issues of community safety (Rose 1996). Many of these institutions, for example trade unions, as discussed above, or housing associations and departments (Cummings 1997; Flint 2002,) have also been transformed and subsequently developed a relationship with their *consumers* or *clients* based on the protection and regulation of their behaviour and that of their neighbours.

Finally, and in relation to the changed operation of politics, organisations like the police have become more directly involved in the participatory concerns of the state. With antisocial behaviour - noise, graffiti, vandalism and so on - being understood to 'undermine community spirit' (Waiton 2001: 17), the police themselves have, according to one Chief Constable, become 'formidable agents of change' (Dennis 1997: 116). As 'agents of change' within a therapeutic culture, the primary objective of the police in late twentieth century life has increasingly been transformed from enforcing law and order, into an objective where the 'feel safe factor is the primary measure', against which they believe they should be judged (Dennis 1997: 121).

That the police in Britain can today understand themselves as having a role in rebuilding communities by their own actions, rather than in their relationship with the state and as an extension of the social will, gives a sense of the loss of this will, the

increasingly technical approach to community building, and the growing centrality of safety to individual, public and political life.

The politics of fear

'Safety' as an amoral absolute under New Labour has developed apace, and the attempt to regulate social processes that appear to be beyond their control has led to more laws and more new crimes being created than by any other administration.⁵⁸ Relating to a more fragmented public there is simultaneously an attempt to reconnect with people through their fears. Safety has consequently become the organising principle of the politics of fear. As Heartfield notes, whereas the Third Way in the UK and USA has failed to connect people to a social vision, this does not mean that they have made no connection: 'If they have failed to appeal to a collective vision of the future, both the Democrats and New Labour have managed to relate to a more atomised electorate, by playing upon its fears' (Heartfield 2002: 195).

New Labour's campaign advisor Philip Gould, in his 1994 document 'Fighting the Fear Factor', argues that the public are insecure and anxious and are more inclined to fear that things may get worse rather than better. Given these circumstances Gould believed that the right had used fear as a way of gaining support. Despite Gould noting that much of this anxiety had developed because of social changes, and despite his concern with the reactionary use of fear, his proposals were for Labour to connect 'with the populist instincts of voters through policies that are tough on crime'. In Gould's book *The Unfinished Revolution* he explains: 'Progressive parties have learned to...connect directly with the insecurities of working families', and that this is necessary because 'in an increasingly fast-changing world, insecurity is likely to grow, and with it the basis for fear campaigning' (Heartfield 2002: 195).

New Labour developed their own form of fear campaigning, and did so more systematically than the Conservatives by relating not to the *public* with politics, but to the *mass* of individuals through their fears and anxieties.

The killing of James Bulger in 1993, a year when, as we have seen, the Conservative Party's moral and political coherence was on the wane, provided an ideal platform from which Tony Blair could launch Labour's alternative fear factor. Rather than being seen as a one-off occurrence perpetrated by children who lacked the *moral responsibility* to be fully aware of their actions, Blair used Bulger's death to promote a new morality that emphasised responsibility over selfish individualism. Discussing Blair's reaction to this event and also denouncing sociologists who had previously talked about 'moral panics', the editor of the *Independent* newspaper wrote,

Tony Blair, the shadow Home Secretary, did not exaggerate on Friday when he likened the news bulletins of the last week to "hammer blows struck against the sleeping conscience of the country, urging us to wake up and look unflinchingly at what we see". This was not - as it once might have been - a party political argument which sought directly to connect the murder in Bootle of two-year-old James Bulger with unemployment and deprivation: the failures of capitalism equal crime, the economic system is to blame. As Blair went on: "We cannot live in a moral vacuum. If we do not learn and then teach the value of what is right and wrong, then the result is simply moral chaos which engulfs us all." (*Independent*, 21 February 1993)

The fear factor was here turned against the Conservative government and the previous understanding of responsibility - related to adult subjects - was replaced by the *responsibilisation* of those who were previously understood to be unable to be morally responsible - the two *children* who killed James Bulger - and by a notion of responsibility that actually targeted the idea of rights-bearing responsible individuals, replacing it with a more communitarian understanding of rights and responsibilities.

Below the same *Independent* editorial is quoted at length, with reference to Blair's concern with moral chaos. It sums up much of what had changed in political life by 1993, and also what was to come.

A Tory theologian - John Patten, say - could have said [what Blair had said] and few would have noticed. But we are all becoming moralists now - even

Ken Livingstone has come out of the closet - and rightly so. We have lost all sense of direction; we mostly despise our political leadership; ancient institutions combine humour and pathos; the economy crumbles. President Bill Clinton across the Atlantic may not be totally sincere - in terms of global resources his is the most *selfish society* - and he may fail. But there is at least in his rhetoric an appeal to sacrifice for the common good, and to a sharing of values and beliefs, that no government minister could hope to match here, because Conservatism since Thatcher simply does not allow it. Our men at the top cling stubbornly to what one Japanese commentator described recently as "a kind of inverted Marxism". Their dogma is purely economic individualism, with occasional forays into Old Testament certainties (John Patten) and the criminal-spawning tendencies of socialist local authorities (John Major, at his silliest) to explain away the glaring failures of British society. (*Independent*, 21 February 1993 (my italics)).

Conclusion

Crime panics developed apace in the 1990s under John Major, while New Labour promoted the message of personal and moral responsibility. Cook, looking at the question of crime and moral panics argues, that in the 1970s and 1980s one could make the case that little had changed in British political life (Cook 2000: 207). However, in reality, this thesis has attempted to show that in fact, like the shift in panics from their moral to an amoral form, the politics of crime and antisocial behaviour in Britain reflected a profound change within politics. As Cook herself notes, a key change was in the collapse of the Labour movement. But this was no side issue – it was a change that transformed the nature of crime policies in the 1990s. No longer was the politics of crime part of a wider political struggle between the left and right, but rather the increasing focus on the regulation of behaviour and the more direct attempt to regulate society was a reflection of the collapse of politics itself. The regulation and control of society was no longer a means to an end but the end in itself. Political goals associated with individual entrepreneurialism or with socialism were now replaced by a more ubiquitous drive to create a safe society. Rather than engaging active subjects within these political campaigns, the more fragmented public

became vulnerable clients on whose behalf the new political elite advocated. This new politics of behaviour, like the amoral panics that accompanied it, engaged neither with individual subjects nor with a social or collective vision, but rather developed a more limited and therapeutic form of protection of individuals through the management of behaviour.

By the time of the 1997 general election, as the *Guardian* law correspondent noted, all parties' proposals on law and order were about 'public reassurance rather than crime-fighting' (*Guardian* 16 April 1997). Within six months the Hamilton curfew had been implemented.

Before this election the ailing Conservative Party had continued in vain to use the crime card as its own and attempt to label Labour as soft on crime. Where the previous Labour shadow home secretary Roy Hattersley, in the late 1980s, had made civil liberties the key test of the government's criminal justice legislation, Tony Blair argued that 'reducing crime had to be the first test and civil liberties the second' (*Guardian* 30 January 1996). Labour had been transformed as a political party that was now even more able than the Conservatives to play the crime card and in effect transform what liberty meant, from freedom of action to freedom from the action of others.

With an anxious and fragmented electorate supporting a more regulated environment, New Labour followed on from John Major in developing a *new authoritarianism* based on the protection of a vulnerable public. This new authoritarianism, through the prism of diminished subjectivity, was largely welcomed within society - if without any great passion. As such, authoritarianism became understood to a degree as a more enlightened engagement with the real world and with the fears of real people, than as a form of social control by a diminished political elite over a diminished public.

The transformation of the image of the public,⁵⁹ from political subjects to pitied victims, had emerged with the suspension of politics, the change in left-wing thought from radical to real, and the increasingly fragmented nature of the public itself. While the trend towards a more individuated society, the greater disengagement from

politics, and the loss of belief by sections of the elite can be identified many decades earlier, in the 1980s and peaking in the early 1990s we can see a qualitative change in the politics of crime and the relationship between the public and the political elite.

The rise of a more technically authoritarian politics was predicated upon the collapse of political contestation between left and right: a collapse that left the Conservative Party without a coherent 'enemy within' to organise itself against, and one which helped to disengage the Labour Party from the 'old' labour movement. Both parties increasingly isolated from *public* life, reacted to events by attempting to control a society that they felt was beyond their control.

Despite the desire for 'community',⁶⁰ the sentiment of 'to hell with the criminal' in the 1990s increasingly represented the de-moralised elites' underlying approach to humanity that implied 'to hell with society' and the *social*, and indeed, 'to hell with politics'. The role of micro politics was now increasingly reduced to the management of and engagement with the fragmented and anxious individual at the 'local level'.

Laws, legislation and an anxious form of authoritarianism developed under John Major and erupted under New Labour. As Garside observed: 'Since 1997 more than 20 crime-related Bills have been debated by parliament. More than 270 new offences and at least 350 regulations have been created since 2000' (Garside 2004: 7). Here, as Heartfield notes, Labour pursued through legislative activity what it lacked in broader purpose (Heartfield 2002: 190-4)

Vulnerability, a category given to specific 'groups' that classified them as in need of protection by their very nature of being black, women, or poor, increasingly became a term used for ever more groups in society and ultimately to the population as a whole. Claimsmaking on behalf of 'victims' similarly developed in this period and carried with it moral weight that united radicals and conservatives and became a framework of relating to society that was difficult to challenge. Soon almost all claims for groups in society began to take this form of protecting victims and the vulnerable: the aggressive beggar preyed upon the vulnerable public, while the vulnerable beggar was a victim of aggressive members of the public; and the antisocial youth made life hell

for vulnerable communities, while alternatively aggressive policing victimised these young people.

As the editor of the *Independent* argued in 1993, 'we have lost all sense of direction' - but on a positive note he recognised that 'we are all becoming moralists now - even Ken Livingstone' (*Independent*, 21 February 1993). The lost sense of direction reflected the loss of political and moral belief amongst those in authority, but the problem was understood as one of disorder not within the elite itself but within the public and in particular with the selfish individualism that was believed to have infested the culture of British life.

The crisis of belief and the loss of political direction and a *social will* encouraged both a tendency to regulate society more directly and lock more people up, but also to moralise about 'little things'. The minutiae of everyday life, the focus on community, and the engagement with the 'troubles' of the public, became the basis of political action and explains the rise of not only the politics of crime but more specifically the politics of antisocial behaviour.⁶¹ Lacking a 'vision thing', the demand that the public learn the difference between right and wrong was no longer founded upon a moral or political basis, but on the more vacuous amoral absolute of safety. The beliefs and behaviour of people was to become judged not in terms of their relationship with society and their public actions, but on the personal interactions that was problematised through the radical language of harassment and abuse - the ultimate act of responsibility being a 'zero tolerance' approach to personal and public life.

C Wright Mills, discussing the need to help constitute an active *public*, believed that for this to occur the 'troubles' of everyday life needed to be made into 'issues' (Mills 1968). These troubles, Mills felt, could only be fully understood by being situated within society as a whole and transformed into 'issues' that could then be addressed by the *public*. Rather than troubles, it was 'issues' that would then become understood as the *social problems* to address. The 'troubles' of local communities before the 1990s were generally not made into *social problems*. However, with the loss of a political and social will, these troubles have been engaged with more directly and in a

sense the political elite, backed up by key institutions including the trade unions, have, rather than making 'issues' out of troubles, made *troubles* the *issue*.

The problems of everyday life, in the form of antisocial behaviour, rather than crime itself, have under the New Labour governments become the basis of politics and the newly institutionalised framework within which to reengage the atomised individual. Having lost a *social will* (Feeley and Simon 1992) and the *energy of society* (Findlayson 2003) to redirect social process and structures, a therapeutic culture (Furedi 2004) has developed within which state institutions relate not only to individuals and 'little things', but to the *emotions* associated with them.⁶² Initially developed within the welfare state in the form of Victim Support Schemes, with the collapse of the welfare state, the emotionally constituted (and damaged) victim has become universalised, and state legitimation has been reconstituted in relationship to the emotionally vulnerable public.

Finally, whatever the problem of crime and antisocial behaviour, it is not the nature of these problems themselves that have led to them becoming social problems in the form they now take. Despite the insecurities felt by the more fragmented public and the relatively high statistical crime rate, there remains a tendency for politicians to exaggerate still further the problem of antisocial behaviour and fear within neighbourhoods that are understood to be 'terrorised' by antisocial youth.

As Cummings argues with the respect to former Labour home secretary David Blunkett's belief that reducing antisocial behaviour will create a rise in civil republicanism:

A crucial point missed by most commentators is that the fear of crime is an expression of atomisation rather than a cause of it. And except in a few extreme cases, it is a nagging sense of unease rather than crippling fear that people feel, even in rough areas. People generally get on with their lives, while worrying that they are vulnerable to unspecified threats. The politics of antisocial behaviour gives shape to these threats by focusing people's unease on clear targets, typically young loiterers. This institutionalises atomisation

rather than overcoming it by officially endorsing a fearful attitude and undermining people's confidence in their ability to negotiate problems without official support (O'Malley and Waiton 2005: 7).

Chapter 5: Methodology

Introduction

The motivation for studying the Hamilton Child Safety Initiative (CSI) came from my existing concern and research into the developing 'Zero Tolerance' police initiatives being introduced by Strathclyde Police in the mid-1990s (Waiton 2001: 5). 'Operation Spotlight', a stop and search initiative, had been of particular concern to me, as I was, at the time, running a youth drop-in centre in Coatbridge and had noted the level of searches of young people taking place by the local police force, and the level of intervention into their activities.⁶³

One of the key arguments made about why the CSI would be beneficial to the targeted areas was that it would help to recreate a sense of community by reducing the number of children and young people who were 'wandering the streets at night' - young people who to some extent were believed to be helping to create a sense of fear in these areas. However, and somewhat paradoxically, research was also being developed at this time about the broader trend within society of the emergence of 'cotton-wool kids'. Rather than young people and children wandering the streets, this research suggested that the opposite development was more generally true - that children were having an increasingly regulated existence, playing out less frequently, travelling less, and having their free time ever more supervised.⁶⁴

Similarly research examining the relationships between children, young people and adults had also suggested that the amount and quality of contact between generations was in decline, in part because of a loss of surety and confidence amongst adults as to what these relationships should be predicated upon (Furedi and Brown 1997). Situated within a knowledge of moral panics research and the more recent theoretical developments of a culture of fear (Furedi 1997), risk (Beck 1992) and individuation in society, a research project was developed to analyse the development of the CSI.

As well as analysing the projected social problems in the areas of crime, youth disorder and children being 'at risk', this research project also aimed to assess wider trends within the targeted communities. Rather than analyse to what degree fear was being created by young people, the project aimed to ascertain to what extent a culture of fear was undermining relationships between all sections of the community, and limiting the contact between them. Within this framework, the question being posed was: to what degree is the curfew actually reinforcing the culture of fear, reducing contact between people and ultimately undermining, rather than re-forming, communities? The purpose of the research was therefore to understand the operation of a particular social policy and its development within, and impact upon, the culture of fear.

The research took a variety of forms, but at its heart were interviews with children and young people in the areas of Hamilton whose lives had been impacted upon by the introduction of the curfew. Added to this are more informal interviews – or discussions - with local adults, and observational fieldwork of the area. This work is supplemented by a contextual social constructionist analysis of the presentation and understanding of the curfew, particularly in the press. Within the latter research, the process of typification⁶⁵ is identified as is the justificatory framework and therefore the underlying values that informed the introduction and defence, and indeed the opposition, to the CSI. Through this work the very meaning of a 'good' community is analysed and re-connected to the concepts developed in the previous chapter of the moral, or more accurately amoral, absolute of safety and the idea of diminished subjectivity. The ontological framework of this research is therefore largely focused upon individual interpretations and cultural frameworks, and attempts to understand lived experiences and cultural trends that inform these experiences and interpretations (Mason 1996: 11).

Numbers interviewed

A table of the number of children and young people interviewed, and the number of discussions held with adults living in and around Hillhouse, is provided below in Table 1. In Table 2 some more details are given about the ages of the children and young people interviewed. Further information about these statistics is provided later.

Table 2: Number of interviews and discussions in Hamilton

Number of children aged 9-11 years old interviewed	32
Sex of children	17 female
	15 male
Number of young people 12-15 years old interviewed	26
Sex of young people	13 female
	13 male
Number of adults involved in discussions	20
Sex of adults	7 female
	13 male
Total number of interviews and discussions in Hillhouse	78
Total number of children and young people interviewed	58

Table 3: Ages of children and young people interviewed

	Primary Schools			Secondary Schools				Total Children
Age	9 yrs	10yrs	11 yrs	12 yrs	13 yrs	14 yrs	15 yrs	
Number Interviewed	3	25	4	3	7	7	9	58

Research methods

As well as the semi-structured interview and the contextual constructionist work, which will be explored in some detail below, other research methods were used to develop a broad understanding of the Hamilton curfew.

Observation of one key targeted area helped form a picture of the estate in question and give a sense of its nature and the activities of young people at night.⁶⁶ This

fieldwork also included informal discussions with adults in and around this estate, which helped the understanding of some adult interpretations of events, and in particular gave a more detailed background to developments. Finally, telephone conversations and written statements were gained from various children's charities, which helped to supplement the construction of the social problems reflected in the press and in speeches of key claimsmakers.

Observations

When news of the forthcoming Child Safety Initiative broke I visited the largest of the three targeted areas to get an idea of the 'ghetto' which Hillhouse was, to some extent, being portrayed as. There were 12 visits to the area in total, two at the weekend during the day, 10 during the week - 5 of these at night. These visits consisted largely of 'drive throughs' where the whole estate was driven around a number of times. Although this could only provide a snapshot of the estate, it brought the area 'to life' and gave a picture of the number of privately owned houses, the state of the gardens, and the amount of graffiti and boarded up housing. This fieldwork also allowed a more detailed understanding of the 'rough streets' that were mentioned by the adults and children who were met in Hillhouse.⁶⁷

As well as allowing a familiarity with the area, this observational work also gave an idea of where children and young people went at night, where they played and where they hung around. It also gave a limited opportunity to see to what degree young children were 'roaming the streets' late at night, as was argued by the authorities.

The area was visited in this way four times before the curfew was implemented and eight times during the initial month of its inception – including the launch day, when the streets were 'invaded' by the press and camera crews. Conscious of the potentially suspicious nature of driving around the estate at night observing children – especially at a time when child safety and the threat of paedophiles were being raised as a possible problem for parents - this work was carried out with a female colleague and the 'drive throughs' were carried out, in the main, without stopping and drawing attention to ourselves.⁶⁸ The estate was also walked through a number of times, again

with a female colleague, both before and after the curfew's introduction. This allowed more time to observe the estate and the young people who were out at night.

In and of itself, this work could only provide a partial glimpse of the estate and the activities of young people, and was largely used to gain a 'feeling' of the area and acquire a certain amount of local knowledge and detail about the Hillhouse estate. This estate was chosen simply because it was the largest of the three curfew-targeted areas and, as it turned out, was also the area that was chosen by the police and the Scottish Human Rights Centre, for much of their research. At the time I was unaware of any other research taking place in Hillhouse.

Local adults

The key focus of the research in Hillhouse was always intended to be with children and young people in the area. However, discussions with 20 adults also helped to give another perspective on the curfew and the issues of concern to older generations in Hillhouse and in Hamilton more generally.

The development of the Hamilton curfew, as it was labelled in the local newspaper, was a significant talking-point amongst local people and offered the opportunity to discuss the pros and cons of this initiative. Initially I began talking to adults at bus stops simply out of interest in their understanding of the curfew. After the first of these discussions, it became clear that this informal and moderately nondirective form of conversation could offer valuable qualitative information and subsequently notes were taken after each of these discussions. This form of note-taking had its drawbacks, in terms of recollection and the accurate recording of what was said, and there was a danger that 'sound bites' rather than detailed narratives were recorded. In general, key points and specific quotes were gained from this work, and again helped to build up a picture of the local understanding of social problems and of the curfew itself. Part of these conversations, sometimes spontaneously, sometimes through questioning, would discuss young people today compared with these adults' own youth, in the process offering life histories and a sense of how people felt 'times had changed'.⁶⁹ Seven adults from Hamilton were 'interviewed' in this way and a further

seven from Hillhouse itself. These latter discussions took place on the street during the day outside a newsagent's. Some insight was therefore gained about the curfew from those on the 'outside' and those within the targeted area.

With all of these discussions, the adults were informed at some stage that I was carrying out research into the curfew, and, largely due to the newsworthy nature of the issue, people were generally keen to give their view of it. None of these informal discussions led to gaining personal details of these adults which, in hindsight, could have been useful for follow-up interviews.

There was also a separate 'cascading' process of interviews that developed with adults in Hillhouse. This was generated after contacting a local councillor who gave me the name of a local activist, who then gave me another named individual to talk to about the curfew. This process led to 6 more interviews with adults in Hillhouse and was occasionally connected to specifically-named individuals being suggested to me by other interviewees because they had a 'story to tell'. These stories were often connected to issues and incidents in the local press that these named individuals had some direct experience of. This process was in part a form of investigation into events and claims made about the curfew as they unravelled.

These interviews were often with key adults within the area, often with more active older men who were involved in the local politics and community groups in their area and were therefore not representative. However, their more active involvement in the locality was of interest in and of itself, in terms of the outlook that these adults had about young people compared with some of the other adults in the area.

Initially interviewing the local Labour councillor, this led to a meeting with the chair of the community council who helped run a youth club, who then gave me telephone numbers for other local adults who had an opinion about the curfew - some in favour, and some who opposed it. Eventually, through this process, I interviewed a member of the Hillhouse Citizen's Jury, which was of importance at the time as it was this Jury that the local MP had stated had come up with the idea of the curfew in the first place.

All of these interviews were carried out informally and with the exception of the councillor and community council chair they were all carried out by telephone. All of these adults were made aware of the purpose of the discussion and were specifically asked about being quoted in this work.

With all of the above work with adults, the aim was to gain a general understanding of problems, issues, and the outlooks of local adults. As such the recording of these conversations was less detailed than the interviews with the children, as was the framework for questioning these adults. More detailed thoughts could have been systematised with a formal questionnaire-framed interview, although this would have limited some of the 'stories' being told by these adults, which were of particular importance at the time.

In the process of discussing the curfew with all of the above adults, the primary concern they expressed, in terms of my impact upon their responses, was a concern about whether or not I was 'with the papers' - in other words, whether I was a journalist. There was a level of suspicion about the press by a number of adults - especially those people living in Hillhouse itself and more particularly from those who were upset at the image being portrayed of Hillhouse. Once it was explained that my work was a piece of research and that their comments would be anonymously recorded, there was little resistance to the questions I raised. In the 'cascading' interviews the fact that 'their names' had been given to me by somebody known to the individuals also helped to gain a level of confidence that may have otherwise been less forthcoming - especially when the interviews were carried out over the telephone.

Interviews in schools

From the standpoint of an existing concern with the 'regulation of youth' with respect to 'Zero Tolerance' policing in Strathclyde, the key focus for this research was on the impact of the curfew on children and young people in Hillhouse. The Child Safety Initiative, by its very name, was clearly focused upon the life and activities of young people, and in its actualisation was clearly targeted at transforming these activities in some way. It therefore appeared to be most important to ascertain the actual impact

this initiative had both upon the activities themselves and the perceptions of children and young people in the curfewed area of Hillhouse. This was seen as doubly important given the limited extent to which the 'child's voice' is aired in public discourse and media representations generally, and specifically in relation to the CSI. These interviews were therefore essential for 'generating data' that would otherwise have been unobtainable (Mason 1996: 39)

Due to the detailed nature of the information that was required to analyse the impact of the curfew, the length of the interview (around 20 minutes), and also the nature of relationships between young and old, an interview process with individuals within a school setting was established. This work was carried out through one-to-one interviews in three local primary and two local secondary schools. In so doing I was conscious that this aspect of the research was taking young people away from the 'natural' setting within which the curfew would be operating, and could be problematic in terms of the formal setting of the school.

Schools were chosen as the venue for these interviews, rather than homes, partly because of the ease of access to the young people, and the speed with which these interviews could take place. At the time, the speed of accessing the young people was felt to be important, so that the initial response to the implementation of the curfew could be established. It was also felt that interviews in these young people's homes might be more restrictive in terms of the capacity to have privacy for these young people to 'speak their minds'.

Street interviews would have been more difficult, in terms of the detailed nature of the questionnaire and could also have led to peer influences on the interviewee. This could have limited the interview, but it may also have produced more relevant results - in that in a group some of these young people may have been more 'up front' and assertive in their opinions about the curfew (Christensen and James 2000: 103).⁷⁰

Despite this drawback, the benefits of interviewing children and young people in schools were felt to outweigh the problems and therefore this approach was adopted. Both children (which for the purpose of this thesis relates to anyone in primary school

under the age of 12 years), and young people (high school pupils aged 12-15 years), were interviewed.⁷¹ These groups of children and young people were targeted for interview due to the fact that I assumed that it would be the older young people who would be largely affected by the curfew, but at the same time, it was the 'safety of young children wandering the streets at night' that had been promoted by the police as the main justification for introducing the CSI.

As an aside, it was due to the speed of contacting the schools that I was able to carry out this research. Others researchers, unbeknown to me at the time, were trying to access the schools to carry out interviews, were subsequently refused because I 'got there first'. There was, in this respect, a 'competition' between different individuals to get access to these young people - something that could have limited the research for this thesis if more time had been taken to set up the interviews.

The schools were initially contacted by telephone and following these conversations a letter of request was sent to South Lanarkshire Council's Education Department. Subsequently the schools were re-contacted after permission to interview the children had been granted.

Ethics

During this interview process ethical practice was adhered to throughout.⁷² The schools were informed that the names of the schools would not be used in relation to any particular interview; parents were sent consent forms to allow the interviews to take place; and the children and young people were informed that the interviews were confidential while also being given the option of refusing consent to the interview.⁷³

The capacity for the young people to 'opt out' may have been difficult given the pressure they could have felt from adults in a school asking them for their help. The purpose of the interview was explained to them and the general themes that were about to be discussed were described in brief. It was also made clear to the children and young people that if, at any stage during the interview, they felt like withdrawing their consent, this was not a problem. None did so. The young people appeared to be

more than happy to be interviewed and, in most instances, appeared to enjoy the process.⁷⁴

The importance of talking to the children, as explained above, and the newness of the curfew initiative, meant that the material being collected could not have been accessed from another source and therefore justified the interviewing of these children.⁷⁵

The interview process

The fieldwork mentioned above developed into useful qualitative research in itself, but was also useful as preparatory work for constructing the questionnaire around which the interviews were based. The local knowledge gained from this process, for example, while rarely forming the questions themselves, did create a greater understanding of the answers given by young people about certain events and places mentioned. A trial process was undertaken with this questionnaire with five pupils from a primary school and five pupils from a high school, to assess the relevance of the questions, the language used to allow comprehension of these questions by the young people, and the 'gaps' within the questionnaire.⁷⁶ The final questionnaire was updated following this trial and was used for the main interview process.

These qualitative interviews were in-depth and semi-structured (Mason 1996: 38), and attempted to find out 'facts' about the young people's lives, actions and interactions, and to also gain a 'narrative account' and perceptions of life in Hillhouse experienced by these young people (Silverman 2000: 823). The style of the interview was informal, verbal and face-to-face: however, the questionnaire itself was relatively structured, but flexible enough to allow for themes to be discussed and opinions expressed throughout. The framework of the interview allowed information about what the children and young people *did*, and also what they *thought*. 'What' and 'Why' questions, for example, allowing set facts and wider perceptions to be expressed, were asked. This helped provide a picture of the activities of young people in the area and of their perceptions of life, their relationships and their understanding of issues of safety and freedom.

The relative length of the interview was in part due to a 'build up' of questions, where specific acts and experiences were ascertained and followed up with broader questions about issues and relationships. For example, the children and young people were asked if they would ask an adult on their estate for the time, and if not why not. This was later followed up with a question of how much these young people felt they could trust adults. A number of these types of questions were used to assess what young people felt, for example, about adults in the abstract, and also to what degree this was replicated in their actions towards them.

To a degree, this type of overlapping questioning also helped to ensure that questions were understood by the children and young people, as contradictory information could be observed and questions re-asked if it was felt that they had been misunderstood. To a degree this overcame the potential problem about 'ambiguity' and ensured the young people were answering the questions they were being asked (Mason 1996: 107). The relatively simple language, and the use of known terms and phrases that were used by the young people themselves, also helped to minimise confusion throughout the interview process (Mason 1996: 107).

Questions about how young people felt about the curfew were extended to look at views about wider support of, or opposition to, policing and regulation of young people in general. This line of questioning was particularly fruitful, as the assumption about young people was that they would oppose further police regulation of their area, and overcame the overly simplistic way this was being understood through simply asking about whether young people supported the curfew or not.

The questionnaires themselves were different for the different age groups, with the secondary school pupils having a longer and more complex set of questions. This was done based on an assumption that older young people would be generally 'out' later, have a wider number of experiences, and be able to give more detailed answers - especially to questions of opinion and 'feeling'. The primary school pupils' questions were more fact based, with more emphasis on what they *did* rather than what they thought. After the initial trial interview, it was also decided to carry out a timetable exercise with the primary aged children at the start of the interview, where they gave

details about their weeks' activities outside of school time. This was done to gain a greater level of detail about activities and to help the children recollect what they actually did at night. The timetable also allowed retrospective cross-checking of information to ascertain the accuracy of other questions answers.

Despite the differences in these questionnaires, the core set of questions were asked to both the children and young people, thus allowing a comparative study of the answers given by the different age groups.

Information of the age, sex, race, and the area the children and young people lived in, was gained to allow an analysis of these factors and their influence upon activities and outlooks. The class of the person was not ascertained, largely due to the difficulty of accurately getting this information from the young people, and therefore reduced the ability of the interviews to allow a comparative class analysis of the information gained.

The ages of the 32 primary school children interviewed ranged from 9-11 years old: this older group of primary school children being chosen on the assumption that they would have a greater amount of experience of playing 'out', and would also be most able to answer the questionnaire. The 26 young people interviewed were aged 12-15 years old - different ages within this range being interviewed to give a relatively balanced cross-section of this group of young people. The children and young people were randomly chosen for interview simply by interviewing the first names on any particular register at school. This process meant that children and young people from both Hillhouse and other areas were interviewed. Of those children interviewed, 21 came from Hillhouse and 11 from other areas. There were 13 young people from Hillhouse interviewed and 13 young people from outside this area. Interviewing those both living in and outside Hillhouse was thought to be a useful exercise so that opinions about the curfew and about the area of Hillhouse could be expressed by those directly affected and 'outsiders' whose area was not targeted. This reduced the number of Hillhouse interviews, but the benefit of having different areas represented, on balance, was felt to be of more use. The 'other' areas were generally in close proximity to Hillhouse and largely similar in nature to it. For the sake of simplicity,

and because there did not appear to be any great difference in the outlook of these 'outside' young people, when assessing the opinions of the curfew they were labelled as 'others' or those 'outside' of the curfewed area of Hillhouse.

The questionnaires for these interviews were filled out and notes were taken when the children and young people elaborated upon their answers. While being an efficient form of recording, in hindsight tape recordings of these interviews would have been more detailed and would be recommended for further research of this nature.

The issue of bias was of concern in carrying out these interviews – in particular, the concern that children being interviewed by an adult in a school may encourage conservative or the 'right answer' to be given by these children. To overcome this problem I dressed informally, and explained clearly that the interview was confidential and that all names would be changed on any written work. To support this, when asking the names of the children they were informed that only the first name was required as this was 'confidential' and 'anonymous'. It was also explained that the research had nothing to do with the school, the council or the police. Where possible the interviews were carried out without a teacher present, although on one occasion this was not possible. In this case the need to ask the questions more quietly ironically gave the interview a greater sense of confidentiality, as the young people involved were conscious that the information was only for my use and not for the teacher present. The danger with this general approach is that by attempting to overcome one bias, another one is created. It is possible that the young people felt that I was 'on their side' and therefore encouraged more oppositional or anti-authoritarian answers. This was not felt to be the case but may have been an influence. To avoid this aspect of a possible bias, questions about the curfew were always asked in a neutral tone and indeed, before questions about the 'curfew' were asked, the children and young people were asked if they had heard of the 'Child Safety Initiative' and if they had heard of the 'curfew'. They were then asked which term they used, and this was the term that was used throughout the interview.

Once completed, the interviews were analysed and the answers both coded in table form and assessed in terms of the more detailed and less factual opinions expressed.

The data that was categorised and tabled allowed percentages to be gained in relation to factual questions – for example, the number of young people who opposed the curfew. It also allowed cross-referencing of answers to allow a study of ‘types’ of young people linking the amount of freedom they had, their relationships with others, and their perception of themselves and others – for example in relation to the issue of safety and risk. These percentages were not used ‘statistically’, in terms of their applicability to the population in general, but were useful to ‘suggest’ possible trends and outlooks, and were also useful to use with reference to other research in the area and wider research about young people and their use of public space. Opinions and elaborations by the young people were analysed, in part, to assess common perceptions, and also to allow clear expressions of particular thoughts and outlooks that were understood by myself to be particularly telling in relation to the cultural trends being explored.

There were a number of shortcomings with this research, of which some have been mentioned already. The representative nature of the groups, for example, is questionable, especially in relation to class; and bias due to the process of the interviews themselves may have had some impact on results gained. Although superficially the openness of the children and young people to speaking their minds when interviewed suggested that the concern about giving the ‘right answer’ may not have been significant.

Other potential issues include the in-built epistemological shortcoming of interviews - that experiences are being *recounted* rather than, for example, being directly observed (Mason 1996: 40). This was felt to be a particular problem when discussing events with younger children - especially events that had happened in the more distant past. This difficulty with recollection meant that where possible questions were asked about more immediate experiences (Mason 1996: 108).

There was also the potential problem, due to the newsworthy nature of the CSI, that as the interviews were not all carried out at the same time unfolding events may have influenced the young people over time. To avoid this being too much of an issue, the

interviews were carried out within two weeks of each other, which hopefully minimised differences.

Finally, it has been noted that when asking children multi-choice questions, there is a tendency for them to choose the first answer most often (Mason 1996: 108). To avoid this, the children and young people were asked these questions without being offered alternative answers. Only after an answer was given was clarification asked about which 'tick box' this would most accurately represent.

Overall, the interview process was relatively unproblematic once arrangements with the schools had been made, and despite the drawbacks with this approach, the results and information gained were felt to be very useful. The balance of 'factual' information and opinion also allowed a wide variety of data to be analysed and to give the research more than sufficient qualitative data to bring the experiences of young people 'to life'

Social construction

Within the context of moral panic research, the approach adopted for studying the introduction of the Hamilton curfew was that of contextual social constructionism: an approach that Stanley Cohen has argued is most appropriate for analysing the construction of social problems (Cohen 2002: xxii).

The work of Joel Best (1993; 1999) and Philip Jenkins (1992; 1998), two American contextual social constructionists, has been of particular significance in the attempt to analyse the construction of the curfew. As discussed in the previous chapter, these authors were especially useful for this research in that their approach allows both an ability to analyse 'moral panics', and a critical approach to understanding the influence and the integration of conservative and 'liberal' opinion in the development of these panics in more recent times. Best's method provided a useful starting point for examining the claimsmakers, and the typification made, before and during the life of the Child Safety Initiative (Best 1993: 10). While lacking a more structural or materialist analysis of 'social problems', and therefore necessarily being somewhat

partial, this approach has the ability to identify significant categories and cultural trends that influence the formation and institutionalisation of 'social problems'. Due to the particular interest in the development of a culture of fear (Furedi 1997), this approach was adopted to understand the core justificatory basis (Nolan 1998: 22) upon which the curfew was implemented, and indeed, to uncover the unquestioned norms and values that informed the discussion about the CSI, both from those who supported its introduction and those who opposed it.

At this point it is worth noting that, while much social problem construction research attempts to analyse a 'new' social problem and identify its origins and the typification process that have led to the institutionalisation of measures to resolve this problem, in studying the Hamilton curfew two processes were taking place simultaneously. In defending the introduction of the curfew, key claimsmakers were helping to typify the social problems highlighted, but this was taking place with the institutionalisation of the curfew. In other words, it is logical to assume that much of the debate and process of constructing the problems that the curfew was intended to counter had already taken place, shown by the very fact that the curfew was being introduced. In this sense what we are exploring here is this institutionalising process and its impact on a community. However, at the same time, due to the controversial and new nature of the initiative, a significant claimsmaking contest took place within the press to justify this initiative. As such we can also explore the claimsmaking process not simply to understand the construction of the curfew, but also to examine a key example of the values that already underpinned the understanding of social problems associated with the antisocial behaviour of young people. In a sense, the claimsmaking process had already occurred and what we were witnessing was the justificatory process of legitimising the curfew. At the same time, because the curfew was a 'trial' initiative, there was also a constant claimsmaking process that accompanied its implementation, which could be examined.

Finally, it should be recognised that the aims of the curfew and the social problems being addressed were extremely broad and included substantial thematic considerations, including child safety, youth antisocial behaviour, parenting, community cohesion and adult fears. Within the youth crime framework alone, there

are myriad aspects of the problematisation of behaviour, like 'binge drinking', 'youth violence', 'yob culture' and so on, that could be studied individually to understand the process of constructing these 'social problems'. Here, it is not the focus upon individual social problem constructions that are analysed, but rather the broad themes of safety, antisocial behaviour and fear.⁷⁷

A major source of data for this process was national and local newspapers that contained articles about the curfew. National newspaper articles were analysed using online searches, and the local Hamilton newspaper was examined in print over a two year period starting just before the introduction of the CSI in October 1997. Supplementing this research, speeches by key claimsmakers, television interviews, and debates with these claimsmakers, were used to access further claimsmaking by, in particular, the police, the local council and politicians, in their promotion of the curfew.⁷⁸ A press conference, six months after the introduction of the curfew, was also attended and notes taken of the speeches by those defending its introduction. Additionally, telephone discussions were carried out with a number of children's charities and organisations that opposed the curfew. This was carried out in particular to understand the differences, and more importantly the similarities, that existed between these groups and those defending and promoting the curfew.

The process of analysing the 'news' was done so less as an analysis of the way the media 'shapes' this news (Cohen 1972; Hall 1978; Best 1993: 88; McRobbie 1995: 565), although this was part of the analysis - but more so as a source of access to elite claimsmaking and alternative counter claims.⁷⁹ The telephone discussions and statements made by groups opposing the curfew were similarly used for this purpose.

This research attempted to understand how the curfew was defined, how it was typified, and how it was validated. In other words, what were the core examples and issues raised that were representative of the nature of the social problems being addressed? What were the core 'values' embodied within these examples? What 'image' of children, young people and adults was used to back up these values? What were the counter-claims to this typification process, if any, and what were their

differences? Most significantly, what were the common assumptions held by both groups?

Opposition statements

In the examination of the newspaper stories, press releases and speeches about the curfew, there was a significant imbalance in terms of the 'voices' being aired. Especially in the local newspaper, the majority of the news coverage was framed around the claims being made by those 'elite' individuals and groups promoting the curfew. The 'oppositional' voice was heard relatively infrequently, and in little detail. While this allowed for some analysis of the nature of the counter-claims being made about the curfew, it was felt that through telephone interviews with key individuals from groups who opposed the curfew, more in-depth and detailed material would be forthcoming.⁸⁰

The groups that were targeted were done so in relation to named individuals who had expressed an opinion in the press; through knowledge of other research that was being carried out that raising a critical voice about the curfew; and finally major children's charities and organisations were contacted. These organisations were understood to represent a significant 'voice' in relation to children and youth-related issues, policies and practices, and as such were felt to have an influential and potentially alternative understanding of the issues and values associated with the idea of curfews.⁸¹

The individuals were contacted and asked if they would like to make a statement about the curfew. These 'statements' were made initially through telephone conversations and subsequently a written statement was made by each of the individuals and organisations contacted, both about the Hamilton curfew, and about the use of curfews in general. These statements were then analysed in the same way as those made by the 'elite' voices supporting the curfew, to assess similarly what the core examples and issues were that were representative of the critique of the curfew; what social problems were understood to be made worse by its introduction; what were the core values embodied within these critiques, and what 'image' of children, young people and adults was used to back up these critiques.

Issues and problems

Thus far, it has been noted that there are potential problems with the type of research carried out - the potential difficulty of the environment in which the interviews took place, for example. In general it should be recognised that interviews, while presented as representing the 'truth', are necessarily partial snapshots of events and understandings carried out at a particular moment in time. However, the nature of the research and the detail in the questioning means that a similar approach could be adopted in the future to assess changes to the information and outlook gained from young people. A significant problem in this respect with this research is that there are a limited number of historically comparable pieces of research that would allow comparative work to be carried out with regard to children and young people's outlook in the past.

Perhaps the greatest weakness with the research carried out was not due to the specific issues in relation to the methods adopted, but in the target audience it was focused upon. With most research, to some degree, there will be a sense that not enough data has been gathered or that not enough various groups have been represented. In the case of the research into the Hamilton curfew, a major gap in the interviews carried out and the information obtained is that parents were not interviewed.

Following the analysis of the data and the issues being addressed, it became increasingly clear that the Hamilton curfew was not simply about young people, but was just as much about their parents. Questions about irresponsible parenting, the way parents understood the curfew, how they interpreted the 'risks' in their area, and the relationship they had with other parents and children, could all have been obtained more accurately through interviews with parents. Some of this information was gained through the interviews with the young people, but not to the level of detail that, in hindsight, could have substantially added to the analysis of the CSI.

As will be discussed in forthcoming chapters, whereas the curfew appeared, and to some degree was, an issue about the management of public space, it was also, and

possibly more importantly, about the management of the private sphere – about parents and their approach to keeping their children safe.

Conclusion

The methods adopted within this research, both the contextual constructionist approach and the interviews and fieldwork, allowed a specific and relatively small local initiative to be examined in its own terms. However, this was never the main purpose of the research, which was more generally concerned to relocate these 'local' developments within a broader analysis of contemporary modernity.

While recognising the specific nature of the estate in question and gaining an actual insight into the often contradictory and conflictual nature of the CSI, themes related to fear, safety, vulnerability and the nature of responsibility could all be related both to the particular situation in Hamilton and within a developing 'cultural' context. In this way different 'puzzles' (Mason 1996: 79) were uncovered by the various forms of research that could be integrated and reconnected within the theoretical framework outlined in the previous chapter.

In particular, the research helped to focus attention less upon the 'social problems' being promoted than upon the norms that underpinned the approach to these social problems. At the same time, by examining the 'facts' and 'reality' of the Hillhouse estate, questions could be raised about the acceptance of, and differences to, these norms, within a specific location.

From the 'direct' research into the curfew and the attempt to locate this within a particular cultural and political setting, the curfew work provided a basis upon which an analysis of both the historical development of the trends identified could be further explored, while also providing a starting point to analyse subsequent developments in society - most particularly around the 'social problem' of antisocial behaviour.

The focus of this research is therefore sometimes extremely 'small' and at other times abstract and general. It attempts, for example, to study how a particular child gets to a

friend's house at night, and then asks, what is the significance of the 'culture of fear' to this child's biography? Indeed, what is the significance of themes like safety and vulnerability to communities in general? The study is both limited in the extent of its analysis particularly of the 'structures' of society. However, as best as it can within the limitations of its approach, it attempts to find out what C. Wright Mills described as being one of the core components of the sociological imagination - to discover:

What varieties of men and women [and young people] now prevail in this society and in this period? And what varieties are coming to prevail? In what ways are they selected and formed, liberated and repressed, made sensitive and blunted? What kinds of 'human nature' are revealed in the conduct and character we observe in this society in this period? And what is the meaning of 'human nature' of each and every feature of the society we are examining? (Mills 1967: 7)

Chapter 6:

The Hamilton Curfew

Hamilton's pioneering crackdown on street kids is set to provide the blueprint for similar schemes across Britain. The Government's Crime and Disorder Bill, which came into force yesterday, allows local authorities to introduce curfews on under 10s in their area...Prime Minister Tony Blair backed schemes similar to the one pioneered in Hamilton during his keynote address to the Labour Party conference on Tuesday (Hamilton Advertiser 1 October 1998).

Introduction

Following the political developments in the UK through the 1990s and the transformation of the Labour Party in relation to crime and safety, the first Labour government for 19 years was elected, and in October 1997 the Hamilton Child Safety Initiative (CSI) was set up by North Lanarkshire Council. Immediately labelled a curfew by the press, this crime and safety initiative gained both national and international notoriety, and was understood to be a significant reflection of the New Labour Government's approach to law and order.

Seen within the context of 'moral panics' surrounding young people, this research was carried out to analyse the basis of the CSI, the arguments used to justify it, and the impact it had upon local people. In this chapter the findings of the research attempt to locate the development of this initiative within a culture of fear, and to a degree within the development of a therapeutic culture.

Rather than studying the curfew⁸² simply in terms of its impact upon crime and safety in the community, this chapter also attempts to uncover the justificatory process underlying it and the broader concerns and interests of the key claimsmakers who were both for and against the initiative. Safety, vulnerability, and a sense of being at risk, it is argued, were at the heart of the initiative and were central to the justificatory process, the values underpinning it, the relationship between the public and the authorities, and also formed the basis of how local people were understood and represented.

Situating the curfew

For social policies to develop, certain claimsmaking processes generally occur prior to them, and the framework around which these policies are formed are informed by the nature of these claims. Public attention is drawn to particular social problems, but more specifically, certain aspects of these problems become dominant and help form the understanding of them. Even the 'naming' of the social problem at hand plays a role in the way an issue is identified and how the cause is identified and solution sought (Best 1995: 8). 'Typical' examples are often the way that the particular understanding of a problem is highlighted and then acted upon (Best 1995: 9).

Social problems thus formed provide the basis for social policy developments - the 'socially constructed images of conditions (such as "homelessness")...serv[ing] as justifications for public policies' (Loseke 1995: 261). The Hamilton Child Safety Initiative, as a specific form of intervention by the police, was therefore pre-dated by a number of prior social problems that had been constructed in society. As the name 'Child Safety Initiative' itself suggests, 'child safety' was a core social problem being addressed by this initiative - something that had been systematically problematised, particularly in the 1980s around the issue of child abuse (Jenkins 1992). Youth crime and antisocial behaviour, another key area of concern addressed by the curfew, had also become a significant social problem, especially since 1993 (Scratton 1997). Likewise the 'fear of crime' (Van Dijk 1994),⁸³ the significance of the 'community' (Rose 1996), and the notion of sections of the public being 'at risk' (Furedi 2004: 127), had all developed as frameworks for understanding social problems - particularly social problems associated with children and young people. Finally, by the time the Hamilton curfew⁸⁴ was introduced, the idea of the 'irresponsible parent' (Furedi 2001) had also been firmly established as a framework for understanding a number of problems associated with young people, crime, and fear within communities.

The Child Safety Initiative, while being a 'new' initiative, was therefore not developed upon the basis of 'new' crimes or social problems (Best 1999), but rather was established in relation to existing social concerns. These concerns existed within

politics, professional practice and areas of academic research, but were also reflected in 'grassroots' demands for more policing of the streets. As Professor of Criminal Justice Rod Morgan noted at the time, there was an 'insatiable' public demand 'for a visible, uniformed presence on the streets' (*Guardian* 22 January 1997).⁸⁵

Similarly, this initiative, in terms of policy developments, was not a 'bolt from the blue', but rather a continuation of a number of initiatives, policies and laws developed under the Conservative governments of the 1980s and especially the 1990s (Goldson 1997). It was closely related to the development of inter-agency forms of crime prevention, linked to the notion of 'community safety' (Gilling 1999; Jacobs et al 2003), and was also related to the development of 'Zero Tolerance' forms of policing, at this time (Dennis 1997).⁸⁶

The curfew was, however, a major new initiative introduced not by the Conservative government, but by the newly elected New Labour government, and can be as seen as part of the crossover of concern from right and 'left' about the issue of crime and especially disorder.

Just as it had been the Democratic President Bill Clinton who gave his support to the introduction of many of the curfew initiatives in the United States, in Britain it was the Labour Party that, when in opposition, had first promoted the idea of youth curfews. In the US, Jeffs and Smith (1996) note that from the predictably alarmist underclass theorists like Murray and Wilson, through to Galbraith and Jenks on the liberal left as well as New Communitarians like Etzioni, the concern about the threat posed to social stability from an 'underclass' youth was intense. Similarly, within the UK, the development of a political consensus around the significance of crime, discussed previously, also coincided with an increasing concern with violence, abuse and general antisocial behaviour by more radical academics (Young 1984, Campbell 1993). Within psychology, authors like Rutter and Smith were also developing their influence within the discussion about *Psychosocial Disorders in Young People* (1995) and left-leaning think tanks like Demos were publishing papers describing young people as 'underwolves' who were 'disconnected from society' (Wilkinson and Mulgan 1995).

Theoretical and methodological considerations

The CSI was a local initiative addressed at problems identified in three relatively small housing estates in Hamilton. It was however, clearly developed in relation to the 'national' social problems and issues identified above, and had also developed as part of a series of initiatives and developments within the Strathclyde Police area itself.⁸⁷ While being local, the Hamilton curfew became significant - in its own terms, winning a number of national and international community safety awards (*Hamilton Advertiser* 15 October 1998), and also in terms of its 'success' being used as a justification by the Labour government's subsequent implementation of curfew initiatives across the UK. For example, following the Queen's Speech in 2000, Jack Straw defended the extension of curfew legislation to include under-16-year-olds with reference to the success of the Hamilton initiative (*Guardian* 7 December 2000). It was therefore an initiative of some significance, both at the time and in terms of its consequential impact on future discussions about curfews in Britain.

In studying this initiative, however, it must be borne in mind that much of the 'groundwork' and 'claimsmaking' for the basis of this development had already taken place, and therefore the focus of the research was somewhat different to much social problem studies. Whereas most social problem research identifies a 'new' social problem and traces its genealogy and specific claimsmaking process, what is under study within this chapter is the institutionalisation process of a number of already established social problems, in the particular form of the Hamilton Child Safety Initiative. Consequently, the subsequent examination of this initiative focuses on the justificatory basis upon which the curfew was established. As a policy development - or more precisely an 'initiative' - introduced by the local authority and police, the primary focus of this analysis is therefore upon the elite voices that justified the actions of the police and council. Within this justificatory process, it is still possible to identify the form that the 'claims' took, which establish the framework for how the social problems being addressed were understood and represented, and equally what the causes and solutions to these problems were understood to be.

A large number of social problems were being tackled by the curfew, from child safety to youth crime, and there was a wide array of relationships between people being addressed, from parent and child relations to peer relations and adult-youth relations. Consequently, in studying the justifications used to introduce the curfew, the general ontological understanding of the people in Hamilton held by the authorities, which laid the basis for the initiative, could also be explored. By examining how people and their relationships were understood, it was therefore also possible to analyse the type of 'citizen' being promoted and also the basis of the relationship being developed between the state and the individual.

With the apparent 'death of the social' and the rise of 'community' as a framework for governance (Rose 1996), the idea of the 'responsibilisation' of individuals has emerged and is examined below (Garland 2002: 124-7; Flint 2002). The idea that local people in Hamilton should take more responsibility for their actions was indeed promoted during the CSI. However, despite this, a contradictory and to some extent unintended consequence of this process was that the idea of individual responsibility was actually undermined and diminished. Governance based on an engagement with the *vulnerable* individual, within the rubric of the amoral absolute of safety, can be seen through the example of the curfew to weaken rather than encourage a notion of the 'responsible individual'.

Despite the predominance of a 'market society' (Feeley 2003: 117) and more individually-based relationships in society (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002), the curfew illustrates the centrality of the activities of a therapeutic state rather than a market-led form of governance, in reformulating the nature of relationships in society. The therapeutic basis of this intervention, whereby the role of the state becomes to *manage the anxieties* of the population, is here illustrative of the developing state form of 'governing the soul' (Rose 1999). However, again this development and understanding of the therapeutic nature of relationships, which is understood in part to be simply a reflection of a form of neo-liberal self-actualisation, is questioned (Gordon 1991: 42). Rather this therapeutic engagement is predicated on a diminished sense of the self (Furedi 2004: 195) and it is this weakened understanding of the subject that was both engaged with and promoted through the Hamilton curfew.

It is worth noting that, despite the limited nature of the Hamilton curfew, what is being examined within this initiative is an approach to a population by sections of the state that, it is believed, can be generalised and seen as part of a comprehensive and new form of political engagement and management of people and places within contemporary modernity.

The curfew at one level can be seen as a continuation of police and social work activities within an area that are not new – moving young people on and engaging with the maltreatment of children. However, the basis of this intervention was to some degree specific, and it is the elements of change from past practices and outlooks – rather than their continuity – that are focused upon. At the risk of being somewhat one-sided, this approach is adopted to emphasise what are felt to be the new and significant trends in culture and social policy that have gone on to influence approaches and attitudes to initiatives related to antisocial behaviour.

Finally, there were a number of critics of the Hamilton curfew, and their ‘voices’ will also be examined. For many of these critics, the curfew was understood to be an exclusionary form of authoritarianism: indeed as Garland notes, the criminal justice system has move from one based on the idea of solidarity to one of exclusion and punishment.⁸⁸ However, rather than being simply exclusionary, this initiative can also be seen as an attempt at re-including the targeted communities on a more diminished basis, in relation to their fears, but also in relation to their unsafe lifestyles. As such the local authority was attempting to reengage the more atomised public through their sense of being at risk, within a more therapeutically-oriented framework.

Background to the curfew

Visiting Hillhouse, the largest of the curfew-targeted areas, for the first time, I was struck by the unexceptional appearance of the estate. In conversation with local adults and the primary school teachers working in the area, they too appeared somewhat bemused by the initiative and the international media attention it had received. In an article examining the curfew, the music magazine *The Face* gave an apt, if somewhat

dramatised, picture of Hamilton - a picture that was equally applicable, if without the 'guns', 'hatchets' and 'heroin', to the Hillhouse estate.

There are knives, guns, hatchets, heroin, booze and unemployment problems throughout the vale of Hamilton, but it's nowhere near as grim as Glasgow's Easterhouse or Castlemilk. Or Manchester's Moss Side or Pill in Newport and a thousand other places in Britain and beyond. Places you can probably see from your own bedroom window. (The Face June 1998)

Hillhouse was an area of relative poverty, with a couple of small streets with largely boarded-up windows and a population of 2,400. Public sector housing made up 80 per cent of houses in the area compared to 44 per cent throughout the region of South Lanarkshire, with a greater percentage of young people and single parents living in them. Despite the murder of a Hillhouse boy two years prior to the introduction of the curfew, as the local police repeatedly informed the press, it was not an area with a particularly high crime rate.

Hillhouse was in no sense a ghetto.⁸⁹

The Child Safety Initiative (CSI), commonly known as the Hamilton Curfew, was launched in October 1997 and was to run for a trial six month period, ending in April 1998.⁹⁰ Three working class areas within Hamilton in South Lanarkshire were chosen for this pilot project – Whitehill, Fairhill and Hillhouse. The aim of the CSI or curfew was to move any under-16-year-old off the streets if they were out 'after dark' and could not give 'a reasonable excuse' as to why they were out. While not specifying a strict curfew time, the CSI was clearly aimed at encouraging young people to stop hanging around the streets at night and put the onus on them to justify their public presence. Although 'after dark' was the time at which the police stated they would start to act in Hillhouse, most of the young people spoken to in the area believed the police started picking people up around 9pm.

The announcement of the Child Safety Initiative on 23rd October came with speeches from both Chief Constable John Orr and council leader Tom McCabe. From the outset

the CSI was promoted as a joint initiative, not simply a police initiative, involving South Lanarkshire Council and in particular the Social Work Department. On numerous radio and television debates about the curfew, it was not the chief of police who explained the purpose of the new policing initiative, but Sandy Cameron, director of social work. Through the social work department, the Child Safety Initiative was presented as a safety initiative, to prevent young people becoming criminals, and also as a mechanism for ensuring the safety of young children who are allowed to wander the streets late at night. Sandy Cameron explained that, 'This is not a curfew, but an issue of safety and in particular the safety of young people'.⁹¹

The justification for this initiative therefore took on a distinct form compared with the more narrowly-focused zero tolerance police initiatives up to this point, which had been directed largely at the antisocial behaviour of young people as a problem for communities, and at the fear of crime. The apparently contradictory aspect of the CSI, which on one hand was being tough on youth and on the other was promoted as being a caring initiative concerned largely with children and young people's safety, was seen by many as being untenable, or simply a public relations exercise by the police.

From the outset, the CSI was labelled a curfew by the press, partly because of the nature of the initiative itself, but also due to the promotion of the need for curfew legislation being promoted at the time by the New Labour government. Especially for the tabloid press, this was simply another crackdown on 'juvenile crime', where kids would be 'nicked' for being out at night. Frustrated by the curfew label the local police chief, Jim Elliot, argued that the police were a 'caring organisation' not an 'oppressive one' (*Daily Record*, 3 October 1997). A year on from the launch of the initiative, Allison McLaughlan, a freelance journalist for the *Daily Record*, summed up what many of her colleagues thought about the police safety-first PR campaign: describing it as 'bollocks, it's about cutting down on crime' (*The Face*, June 1998).

However as we will see, the focus upon the CSI as simply an authoritarian form of policing of youth crime missed a number of wider trends that laid the basis for the initiative, and also exaggerated the apparent contradiction between caring and oppressive policing.

Safety Claimsmakers

The curfew was promoted by Strathclyde Chief Constable (Orr 1997a) as part of an 'enlightened', 'child welfare' approach related to the children's hearing system in Scotland - in which the emphasis is on protecting the welfare of the child rather than punishing his or her criminality. The emphasis placed upon safety by John Orr in his launch speech is presented below in detail to give a flavour of how the police were to justify the Child Safety Initiative - where italics are used this is to show my emphasis.

The Hamilton Child Safety Initiative is a pilot which aims - simultaneously - to protect the *safety of young people, decrease the opportunities for them to become involved in juvenile crime and reduce the fear of crime among the public...*[it] seeks to highlight the dangers faced by youngsters allowed out after dark without adult supervision - *risks* which can lead to children falling prey to possible danger, becoming involved in crime or creating a nuisance to others. [The initiative] was drawn up in response to local householders and young people about vandalism and the presence of unsupervised or unruly children on the street after dark...[and] the principle aim of the patrols is to *ensure that vulnerable youngsters aged under 16 - and particularly those aged 12 or less - are not exposed to dangers* or tempted to become embroiled in crimes associated with being out alone too late in the dark or with equally *vulnerable company* - crimes such as vandalism, creating disturbances and minor violence.

Police officers who come upon unaccompanied children during the evening patrols and who believe the children are at risk will return the youngsters to their homes. Parents or carers will be reminded of the dangers facing children out alone in the dark...The police patrols will be undertaken by a pool of community police officers who have been specially selected for their experience, skills and empathy when it comes to dealing with young people. *Some of the officers are parents themselves.*

In truth, the police have always had powers to return children home if they have concerns about their wellbeing. It is just that with this particular project, we are *formalising* this approach and giving a modern slant to *old-fashioned community policing*.

We do not allow young people to be in danger in the home so we shouldn't permit it in the street. Our hope is that by taking vulnerable and impressionable youngsters out of harm's way, there will be a double spin-off. They will be safer and they won't be tempted to get caught up in mischief-making or worse.

John Orr went on to give examples of the *typical* problems he was talking about, which included a story about a nine-year-old girl found in a close only in her underwear whose mother was 'dead drunk'. Another story was told of a nine-year-old boy found on the street whose mother was at the bingo and father was in the pub. This example of unsupervised children, Orr stated, 'beggared belief', as:

Yet - and what a paradox - paedophile court cases hit the headlines regularly and there is controversy about the issue of the rights of communities to know where convicted offenders are living.

Then in relation to the crime situation of Hamilton, John Orr explained that,

The figures for crime in the Hamilton area are down considerably so far this year, due to the hard work of the local police...But *if people remain anxious and concerned, then we must respond - decisively*.

Explaining that this was not a curfew he continued,

Strathclyde police do not think young people are public enemy number one and this force is not anti young people. On the contrary, we are taking this approach because *we really care that our young people live a safe and crime-free life*.

He concluded,

Views on people's rights are many and varied *but there can be no argument surely against the right of all people - including and perhaps even especially the young - to live in safety in the community*, safe from crime and neglect too. People have responsibilities, as well as rights. All-in-all, what Strathclyde police and South Lanarkshire Council want this initiative to do is to remind everyone of their responsibilities to others.⁹²

For John Orr this was a caring initiative based on the right to be safe, a right that, he felt, could not be argued against. The absolute nature of the 'amoral' principle of safety was central. The Child Safety Initiative was a form of responsibilisation. The responsibility that members of the public had was to ensure the safety of one another. This was not simply in relation to crimes like burglary or assault, as Orr explained - as far as police statistics went, crime was significantly lower in Hamilton than it had been. Rather the main target of the initiative was petty crimes of vandalism and antisocial behaviour of young people, with the key indicator of this problem being the levels of fear by local adults indicated by the number of complaints the police received.

But safety was not simply about adults. It was equally about children who were unsupervised at night - especially young children. These children not only risked the dangers of paedophiles but they were also 'at risk' of becoming involved in antisocial and criminal activities.

Following John Orr's speech, the South Lanarkshire Council leader, Tom McCabe, spoke, echoing many of the comments made by John Orr. Straight away, McCabe challenged the idea that this was a curfew (McCabe 1997):

This is a nonsense notion! Such a notion has no place in Hamilton, no place in South Lanarkshire. It has no place in a society heading for the new millennium. The Hamilton child safety initiative is about improving the quality

of life for the people of Whitehill, Hillhouse and Fairhill. It is about the safety and the protection of our children - today, now - and in the future.

On the issue of rights, responsibilities and the destruction of communities caused by fear, he explained that:

It is about responsibility. It is about civil liberties and freedom - *the freedom of everyone in the community to live without fear* or intimidation. Each of us has responsibilities to other people within our communities. We have to recognise that when some people chose to ignore their responsibilities - to their children, to their neighbours, to their community - to society - it leads to an erosion of community. It leads to people becoming fearful and distrustful of each other.

Challenging the civil liberties arguments that had been made in relation to children's rights, McCabe argued:

The initiative we are launching today is not about an increase in powers at the expense of the freedom of children and young people...*It is in fact about returning liberties to communities - about removing fear.* The truth is that our children and young people's safety initiative has at its core the rights of children.

However, these rights, he continued, must also involve young people and 'perhaps more importantly' parents being more responsible, as it is in the home that 'we learn that we are part of the community'.

It's about the responsibility of parents realising and recognising it is in their interest to know where their children are and what they are doing.

The safety initiative, McCabe argued, was a development from a wide process of consultation with young people, adults and Scotland's first Citizens' Jury, which 'showed that for all ages the number one priority was community safety'. Backing up John Orr's early point, McCabe reiterated that the targeted areas, 'have been chosen

not because they have any more problems than any other communities throughout the country - but because the community itself has called for action'.

When we looked at the evidence from the surveys and from the recommendations of the Hillhouse Citizens' Jury - the message came over loud and clear - safety issues were a top priority. And that includes safety of young people, particularly at night.⁹³

The partnership between the council and community was stressed in this speech, and particularly with young people who were to have as part of the safety initiative a new centre built in Hamilton, which would be recreational and social - with advice and information provided on a range of issues.

Absolute safety

Safety was key to both the police and politicians' justification of the Child Safety Initiative:

The aim of this initiative is not to force young people off the street: rather it is to make sure that our communities are safer for everyone. (Leaflet: Children and Young People's Safety Pilot, Strathclyde Police 'Q' Division 1997).

This initiative fits in with the Government's push for partnership between families, the people and local authorities to create a safer society. (The Scottish Home Affairs Minister, Henry McLeish in the Scotsman 3 October 1997).

At one level, safety has always been an aspect of policing and the police have always played a role in maintaining not only the law, but also order. However, the theme of safety was not simply a police matter but a political issue, and unlike past historical periods was here, not a means to an end but the end in itself. More particularly, it was the feeling of safety that was being promoted and engaged with - the process of ensuring this feeling of safety was to some degree more important than the actual

safety of the local people and children. In other words, it was as much the process of engaging with the public sense of unease that was central to the CSI, rather than the aim of reducing crime and unsafe practices, which to a degree were almost accidental outcomes of this more significant *process*.

The Child Safety Initiative was justified almost exclusively with reference to the generic issue of safety in and of itself. Children out at night was a concern because they were unsafe, young people were unsafe as they were at risk of becoming involved in illegal activities, and adults were being made to feel unsafe by the activities of these young people.

Looked at individually, each of these 'safety' issues could be seen as something the police had always been involved in. For example the *Children and Young Persons (Scotland) Act 1937* (s.12), 'provides that it is an offence on the part of a parent to neglect his child', and part of the legal justification for the curfew had been with reference to, 'the general duty of the police to protect life and property' (Springham 1998). However, the centrality of the issue of safety was qualitatively different.

Safety was an organising principle in its own right with regard to the community as a whole, and was understood to be central to the well being of the community. Indeed it was the issue of safety and fear that was understood to be at the heart of what was undermining, and equally what could recreate a sense of community. All aspects of the interactions between individuals within Hillhouse were therefore interpreted within the prism of safety - with even the previously described 'delinquent' or 'deviant' activities of young people being described as 'unsafe'.

As David Garland has noted with regard to the legal system in the UK in the past, 'the British political establishment pursued an ideal of solidarity' (Garland 1996: 406). In terms of rebuilding a sense of community within the curfew-targeted areas, there was an attempt to rebuild this 'solidarity' through the issue of safety. This was not, after all, simply a police initiative, or part of the day-to-day policing of an area, but was a political initiative involving the local Labour council with the backing of the New Labour government. It was in essence a development of the politics of fear.

Public safety

Noticeably, following the initial national interest in the curfew, media attention declined, but remained ever present in the local newspaper. Here the significance of the police as claimsmakers can be seen, where almost every article was either based on police statistics and stories provided to the press or in the comments made by the local chief of police. With no organised opposition to the initiative, the police, to a large degree, were able to 'make' the news with their weekly press releases describing the latest curfew interventions.

The most *typical* problem being addressed by the police was the safety of 'unsupervised under 10s who wander the streets after dark', a message constantly reiterated by the police to explain what the CSI was 'really about' (*Hamilton Advertiser* 20 November 1997). Young children who hung about the streets were understood and represented in terms of being 'at risk'. Rarely was any particular risk clarified - rather the very act of being out after dark, indeed of being 'unsupervised', was understood to be unsafe.

The extreme case of a four-year-old found on the streets after 9pm was an example of the *typical* problem being addressed by the CSI and the resulting target for condemnation of the 'irresponsible parent' (*Herald* 3 November 1997). In this respect, the basis of what was understood to be a good parent was a *safe* parent. Indeed being responsible, as council leader Tom McCabe argued above, was about ensuring the safety of all the members of a community, something which, if neglected, 'leads to an erosion of community. It leads to people becoming fearful and distrustful of each other'.

Despite the police and local politicians' emphasis upon child safety, the CSI was also presented as a way to ensure the safety of adults from young people being antisocial. This was the core understanding of the curfew for the press, particularly the tabloid press, who were more inclined to *typify* the problem in Hillhouse with reference to examples of 'drunk teenagers' and yobbish behaviour. Quotes from local adults were

also used to back up the problem of 'Buckfast-swigging vandals trailing through gardens' (*Scotsman* 3 October 1997). This emphasis was also stressed by Labour MPs and national politicians. George Robertson, the local Labour MP and the then defence secretary, combined his concern for, 'young children who should not be out late at night', with a more confrontational need to 'stamp down on rowdiness that makes life intolerable for decent people' (*Scottish Daily Mail* 24 October 1997).

Safety for adults was bound up with the fear of crime, an issue that will be examined more fully below. Here, however, it is worth reiterating, with respect to how children were understood to be at risk, that adults themselves were similarly understood to also be at risk - not from the criminals, but the antisocial young people in their community, who made the streets feel unsafe. The loss of a sense of community was located more centrally within adult insecurities.

That the problem being addressed was not simply the activities of young people, but also the feelings of adults, was somewhat ironically recognised by Campbell Thompson, a local senior police officer in Hamilton. Describing the insecurities felt by many adults, Thompson explained that,

It's modern society. There's a fear of crime among the elderly that's very seldom justified. A youngster is more likely to be assaulted than the elderly folk, but that's not the old folks' perception. They're taken aback by a bunch of boisterous youngsters in high spirits (*The Face*, June 1998).

The emphasis placed on safety was most distinctive in relation to the discussion about young people themselves, particularly the 'yobs' who were seen by the press to be the main problem being addressed by this initiative. For John Orr, the issue of crime and safety were interconnected, and he explained that 'we really care that our young people live a safe and crime-free life'. Being safe was, for the Chief Constable, an unquestionable issue: 'there can be no argument surely against the right of all people - including and perhaps even especially the young - to live in safety in the community, safe from crime and neglect too'.

Tom McCabe, Labour Leader of South Lanarkshire Council, and Sandy Cameron, Executive Director of Social Work, explained what dangers they were concerned about. In an interview with Sky Scottish, McCabe explained: 'We are trying to give people their liberty back – especially teenagers who through peer pressure may be led into acts that they will regret for a long time afterwards'.⁹⁴ Young people who commit criminal offences were here seen, not only as criminals, but also as victims – victims of peer pressure who need to be protected by the police. Sandy Cameron made a similar point, when he noted that,

It is important to take young people back home into dialogue with their parents – to help them avoid getting into criminal activities,.. We must also recognise that the misuse of alcohol by young people is a serious problem in our communities, and is something that sets patterns that affect us all.⁹⁵

Here, both McCabe and Cameron portrayed young people, especially those young people committing offences, as potential victims, victims of their peers or victims of alcohol, and in need of protection from these peers and even from themselves and their 'set patterns'. In this respect it became the job of the police not only to control the antisocial behaviour of young people that affected adults on the targeted estates, but also to monitor the unsafe interactions between young people themselves.⁹⁶

The concern about safety, at the time of the CSI's introduction, was not simply a framework for understanding the divisions in society and the 'collapse of community'. It was also a framework around which generational divisions could be overcome.

During the curfew, but not connected directly with it, a conference was held in Glasgow, organised by Strathclyde police and entitled 'Bridging the Gap between Young and Old'. The conference was organised on a Strathclyde-wide basis and was intended to find 'something in common' between young and old. Understood as a form of awareness-raising, the conference focused upon promoting the 'mutual understanding of each other's concerns and fears'. The conference was set up to challenge the idea, which it was understood elderly people had, of young people as "yobs"...only interested in drugs, alcohol and loitering on street corners'. Similarly

the conference wanted to challenge young people's understanding of the elderly as “‘killjoys” with nothing worthwhile to contribute to society’. These caricatured views, it was felt, ‘can lead to unnecessary fear, apprehension, intimidation, aggression and provocation’. As Strathclyde police were keen to tackle not only the issue of crime, ‘but the fear of crime’, finding something that young people and elderly adults have in common was seen as a way of overcoming this fear.

The common ground around which solidarity could be built, the conference believed, was safety. As the conference promotion paper explained, ‘Surely the seed is there. The young care about the safety of their grandparents, and granny and granddad worry about drugs, not for themselves but for their grandchildren’.⁹⁷ That young and old not only have fears of their own but also have fears for others was thus understood to be the basis for a common ground between the two. Fear and the need for safety was seen as the framework around which generational divisions and therefore divisions in communities could be overcome. Like the Hamilton curfew, this conference took the fear of crime and the issue of safety as the basis of connecting with people and indeed of reconnecting people with one another.

Those opposing the curfew raised various concerns regarding children's rights. However, in terms of the general theme of safety as an issue of concern, or a real ‘social problem’, there was little challenge to the rhetoric and typification process of the authorities. The issue of safety was also something that those opposing the curfew adopted as part of their resistance to the CSI. Various children's charities, ‘pro-youth’ groups and the Scottish Human Rights Centre opposed the curfew by challenging the legal basis for the initiative and promoting the issue of children's right to play without harassment.⁹⁸ However, with regard to the issue of safety, there was little questioning of this more ‘caring’ side of the CSI. For example, the *typical* problem of young children being out at night and therefore being unsafe was not questioned; nor was the issue of young people being at risk in relation to drugs, drink and ‘peer pressure’. Indeed, for a number of these groups, the ‘at risk’ framework was used as a basis of opposition to the curfew - with the home being presented as a place where children and young people were at greater risk of harm than when they were in public.

For the Scottish organiser of Save the Children, one of the dangers of the police taking people home was that children may face 'the possibility of domestic violence or other forms of harm'. Similarly for Play Scotland, safety was less of an issue in public in relation to 'stranger danger' than the concern that 'children are most often abused by people well known to them in the family or close friends'. Whereas 'children walking aimlessly' was not a positive thing, could the home, with 'the technology of video, computer and internet', have a worse impact on the 'future of the human race?' For Gerison Landsdown, the director of the Children's Rights Office, 'many children may be out in the evening in order to avoid abuse or violence at home. The imposition of a blanket curfew which forces them home would place them at a greater not lesser risk of harm'. Finally, Roger Smith of the Children's Society added his voice of concern, asking, 'Will children be forced into their own homes to suffer violence and abuse silently?' (Waiton 2001: 170).

The problematisation of child abuse, developed most forcefully in the 1980s, here provided an alternative framework for concern about the issue of child safety. Earlier it was noted that panics or anxieties promoted by the right are often challenged by more radical groups, only to find that they simply replace these concerns with alternative panics of their own. For those both for and against the curfew, this can be seen with the above quotes, where the fear and safety of adults promoted by the police and local authority was replaced by an alternative fear for the safety of children in their own home.

Young people were 'at risk' for both the curfew supporters and many of the opponents of this initiative. The radical alternative was simply to locate 'risk' within the private rather than public arena - dangers being located within the interpersonal relationships between family and friends.

The sense of children and young people being 'at risk' was, like the issue of safety itself, generic, and an accepted framework for understanding many of the relationships between people in the targeted area. The actual risks that children, young people and adults faced was not questioned. For example, how dangerous was it really for children to be out at night; how 'at risk' were young people of 'setting patterns of

behaviour' like drinking that will affect their future; how 'at risk' were adults from young people who hang about; and indeed how 'at risk' were the children in the Hillhouse area from their 'abusive parents'?

Reconnecting through safety

Before, during and after the trial Child Safety Initiative, both the council and police were at pains to prove that their activities were not self-interested or being externally enforced on the public, but rather, that this was an initiative developed by and for the public.⁹⁹ Safety and the desire to feel safe was therefore represented as a community issue, rather than one being adopted and promoted by the authorities themselves. Surveys, consultation documents and focus groups, as well as opinion polls, were set up and systematically referred to in an effort to show that the curfew was not only supported by the public, but that the idea of a curfew had itself come from the public.¹⁰⁰ Both the adult opinion of the curfew,¹⁰¹ and more particularly the 'youth voice',¹⁰² were constantly referred to as evidence of the support for the curfew.

The local MP George Robertson, relating to the 'misery' of those not able to 'live in peace and quiet', was the first person to claim that the idea for the curfew had come from the Citizens' Jury set up in Hillhouse. This was not the case – but the claim was repeated many times throughout the initiative to indicate that this was a community initiative, a 'partnership' based on 'community participation' (*Scotsman* 3 October 1997).¹⁰³

Rejecting the critical attack on the council and the police for being heavy-handed or for taking away young people's rights, the authorities kept relating their initiative to the support from the public, its desire for a safe society, and its support for increased police action in the areas targeted. The curfew itself was clearly justified in relation to the issue of safety - with all groups in the targeted area being represented as in need of support, in terms of the improved safety the CSI would bring to them.

At one level, the targeting of young people who, it was felt, were responsible for the fear within the communities, could be understood as a form of 'authoritarian

exclusion'. However, more generally, this initiative should also be seen as an attempt by the authorities to reengage and *include* the public in relation to its sense of fear and vulnerability. Even the once-labelled delinquents were seen not so much as groups needing to be excluded, but rather as vulnerable potential victims of external pressures who needed support. Indeed the attempt to engage young people's support for the CSI was often in relation to their own anxieties and fears about other young people, and their general sense of safety at night.

In this respect the authority of the curfew came not from the authorities themselves but from the vulnerable public, and the role adopted by the local authority was of an advocate for the victimised individual. The basis for the justification of the curfew was in relation to the 'at risk child', the 'fearful adult', and the 'pressurised youth' - each individual within these groups being understood as somewhat isolated and in need of protection. The participation, partnership and community involvement was therefore not an engagement with a collective *public*, but rather with atomised insecure individuals.¹⁰⁴

The importance given to the community participation aspect of the curfew reflected the need of the political authorities to reengage with an atomised public with whom there was no ideological or organisational connection. Through the Child Safety Initiative and the issue of community safety, the local council and politicians attempted to engage with the public through its fears. The amoral absolute of child safety was the most powerful cultural value at the time, and was the dominant justificatory basis for the curfew. Equally, however, the emotional insecurities of adults were related to as the basis for community solidarity, and the more therapeutically-oriented relationship between the state and the individual was promoted.

In terms of the local authority acting as advocates for the vulnerable on the Hillhouse estate, the issue of adult fears appeared, and to a degree was, contradictory to the idea of a child-friendly initiative, as young people were, in part, recast as dangerous and threatening to these adults.

Standing as advocates of the vulnerable community rather than as political representatives, the local politicians and the police were prone to feeling pressurised by alternative victim voices. The youth voice in particular, which was mobilised by the children's charities opposing the curfew, carried with it much weight as young people, by their very nature of being 'children' with 'rights', could be represented as powerless potential victims. Like the council's attempt to advocate on behalf of the public with reference to their vulnerability, the children's charities opposing the curfew did likewise. To counter these claims, the local authority attempted to prove that young people were on their side and that the curfew was in fact defending their right to be safe from harm.

Through the prism of safety and vulnerability a diminished public was engaged with by a diminished political authority – *an 'authority' which relied on the 'moral' weight of the victim for its legitimation.*

Rights

The well-worn term promoted by New Labour of rights and responsibilities was a central basis for promoting the values of safety throughout the life of the Hamilton curfew. The discourse of 'rights' was also engaged with by those opposing the curfew and promoting children's rights. Within social theory, there is also an understanding of recent social policy developments as a form of responsibilisation, whereby issues of crime and safety are understood to have filtered down to the community and individual level. However, the idea of what a right and indeed what responsibility meant in the context of the CSI was very different to the liberal notion of the past, and was in particular contradictory to what would be understood as a neo-liberal robust sense of individuality. With the centrality of safety over-hanging every relationship and experience of the adults and young people in Hamilton, the understanding of rights as freedoms was replaced by one of rights as protection. Freedom itself was understood to be the freedom from fear, and from putting yourself and others 'at risk'.

In the summer prior to the introduction of the curfew, Chief Constable John Orr had explained that his approach to policing was based on the 'highest possible' level of

protection, especially of children. 'Every single member of the public', he argued, 'has the right to be safe...and feel safe' (*Scottish Sunday Mail* 15 June 1997). A month, before the CSI was introduced, Scottish Home Affairs Minister Henry McCleish likewise argued that, 'People have the right to be safe and at peace in their homes. This is at the cornerstone of our vision for a better, safe and more prosperous Scotland' (*Herald* 13 September 1997). As noted previously, John Orr felt that the right to be safe was something that surely 'there can be no argument against'. Tom McCabe, like Henry McCleish, had also spelt out the significance of this *right* - a right that if neglected led to an increase in fear and the 'destruction of communities'.

Freedom was therefore recast as the freedom to live without fear - something that local people needed to take more responsibility for, but equally something that could be institutionalised through police initiatives like the Hamilton curfew. Indeed, through the prism of safety, 'liberty' was described by McCabe as something that could be *given* back to young people by the actions of the police, while the most positive thing that politicians could *give* to communities in Hamilton and indeed across Scotland was the right to be safe and the freedom from fear. The principle of the right to be safe and to 'peace and quiet' was, for local MP and Defence Secretary George Robertson, fundamental to a 'democracy' (*Herald*, 3 October 1997).

The rights being promoted through the CSI were rights to protection from others or from yourself. While adults were given the right to a quiet life, young people were, given their liberty back by regulating the peer pressure they faced that could lead them into acts that they would regret for a long time afterwards.

The various children's charities mentioned above, that opposed the curfew, appealed to a number of clauses within the UN Convention on Human Rights, which protected children's right to freedom of association, to leisure, and to families to be treated with respect. However, given these groups' acceptance of the problem of young people being at risk and of the abusive nature of the family, these arguments were somewhat contradictory with the idea of individual and family freedoms. For both those for and against the curfew, within the objectified 'at risk' framework the freedom of families to make their own decisions, and of young people to associate freely, was to a degree

seen as a problem in and of itself. Unregulated activities, after all, carry within them unpredictable outcomes and risks that make them, within a precautionary framework, intrinsically unsafe.

With newspaper polls suggesting that the people of Hamilton were heavily supporting this initiative, and with the understanding of communities being undermined by fear connected to antisocial young people, those arguing for these youth rights were depicted as being out of touch.¹⁰⁵ Rights as protection appeared, in this example, to have largely replaced the understanding and desire for rights as freedoms. Rather than the curfew being understood as an extreme measure, it was those who argued for civil liberties who were seen as extremists.¹⁰⁶

As Dolan Cummings has argued, in terms of the battle for rights as freedoms against the growing use of surveillance and regulation of public space in the name of rights,

Concerns about civil liberties, in as much as they represent opposition to surveillance, are now considered anachronistic and even damaging, the preserve of 'apologists for the criminal element'. Instead the important thing is that people are safe and that they feel safe (Cummings 1997: 4).¹⁰⁷

Indeed, whereas the rights of children were understood to be in conflict with adults' sense of safety, the right to be safe itself was presented as a universal human right that was fundamental to all the different groups of people within the curfew areas: equality being the equal right to be and feel safe.

Responsibility

The process of responsibilisation, or what Garland calls a responsibilisation strategy, describes a process whereby techniques and methods are used in society that incorporates an ever increasing number of organisations in crime control practices, while transforming the behaviour of the public accordingly: for example, publicity campaigns that target the public as a whole - rather than engaging simply with deviants - to raise the consciousness of everyone in relation to issues of crime and

safety (Garland 1996: 452). Fundamentally having been developed as an adaptation to the failure of the welfare state,¹⁰⁸ this process, Garland believes, aims to create a 'sense of duty' and to develop 'active citizens' who become involved in their own crime prevention strategy as individuals and through partnership work, a process that results in the 'reordering of the conduct of everyday life' (Garland 1996: 453-4). Part of this process, Flint notes, has come with the communitarian attempt by governments to 'attribute responsibility for community problems back onto individuals': this has developed, Gilling believes, within a New Labourite version of Margaret Thatcher's 'authoritarian populism' (Gilling 1999: 11).¹⁰⁹ Governing would now occur through 'regulated choices made by discrete and autonomous actors', human beings governed as 'individuals - who are to be *active* in their own government' (Rose 1996: 328-330).¹¹⁰

The idea of rights and especially responsibility, leading up to the 1997 election, was being forcefully presented by New Labour as a way to, as Labour leader Tony Blair put it, 'reinvent community for a modern age, true to core values of fairness, co-operation and responsibility' (*Guardian* 29 January 1996). Both the neo-liberal emphasis on 'choice, personal responsibility [and] control over one's fate' matched a similar focus by communitarians upon 'self-responsibility and self reliance in the form of active citizenship within a self governing community' at this time. As Rose observed, despite the ideological differences of these outlooks, both 'utilize similar images of the subject as an *active and responsible agent* in the securing of security for themselves and those to whom they are or should be affiliated' (Rose 1996: 335; Flint 2002: 624).

The idea of responsabilisation and responsibility are not identical.¹¹¹ However, both stress, to some degree, the role of the individual within this process, often with reference to neo-liberal and 'market' phraseology. However, as will be explored through the example of the curfew, despite the rhetoric of community and individual responsibility the meaning of responsibility had changed. Rather than individuals being encouraged to be 'autonomous' actors, they were responsabilised through a mediating 'third party'. Responsibility was subsequently widened and weakened at the same time.¹¹²

Examining the 'responsibilisation' process in housing management strategies in Edinburgh and Glasgow, Flint identifies a contradictory development with this process - and one which is similarly noted in respect to the curfew. Despite housing association attempts to make tenants more responsible for the behaviour of themselves and other tenants, by involving them in vetting potential tenants and organising meetings to help parents develop strategies for regulating the behaviour of their children, rather than 'individual responsibility' developing, tenants appeared to become increasingly reliant on the housing professionals. In this way, more trivial incidents were reported and issues that were seen as best resolved between tenants themselves were handed over to housing officers and the police to resolve. As Flint notes, one housing officer said that, 'In certain areas the first point of contact is often the police or housing association, even for trivial issues. These disputes should be easily resolved [between neighbours] but aren't' (Flint 2002: 632).

The curfew, like a number of subsequent antisocial behaviour initiatives developed under New Labour, was largely understood and indeed presented as a form of responsibilisation - where individuals were held to account for their actions with regard to others. However, while on the one hand there was an expansion of what being responsible meant, what was meant by responsibility was diminished at the same time. Here we explore the claims made by those promoting the curfew in relation to the idea of responsibility and responsibilisation to give an indication of the more fragile and risk averse ontological understanding of and relationship being developed by the local authority and police to the targeted population in Hamilton.

Responsibility was *widened* in relation to young people, who were now expected not only to refrain from criminal acts, but from behaviour that was understood to be creating fear amongst adults on the estate. Young people needed to be made *aware* of their responsibility for the anxieties of elderly adults, and become *self aware* of the risks they and their peers faced from their own and one another's actions. At the same time parents were now expected to internalise a greater awareness of risks posed to their children at night, and to likewise be aware of the fear their teenage sons and daughters could instil in others. In this respect, both young people and parents were

'responsibilised' based on an understanding of themselves and those around them as being fundamentally vulnerable.

Within the 'at risk' framework rhetorically promoted by the police and local authority, individual autonomous action was presented as being somewhat problematic, as the activities of especially young people were understood to involve what Beck would describe as 'unforeseen circumstances'. In essence a kind of precautionary principle regarding actions between people was adopted and promoted through the CSI, a principle that placed limited expectations upon the actions and responsibility that individuals were expected to take for themselves and others.

The representation of adults on the estates under curfew was of potential victims whose right to a quiet life was being undermined by rowdy youngsters. Understood as being both fearful and vulnerable, the expectation of autonomous action by these adults to resolve the disputes they had with these young people was noticeably missing from any statement by the police and the local authority. In this respect, rather than examining the claims *made* by those promoting or even opposing the curfew, in a sense what is being examined here is what claims, or more accurately, demands, were *not made* of the people in Hillhouse.

Within the prism of vulnerability, risks were understood to be best avoided rather than confronted, and the responsibility of adults to play a wider role in their community, indeed of taking individual autonomous action to resolve any problems they had - outside of locking themselves in their home and phoning the police - was actively demoted by those supporting the CSI. Rather a relationship of reliance was developed, where a more regular police presence replaced the possible activities of local people to deal with the largely non-criminal nuisance behaviour of young people.¹¹³ This process encouraged a transformation of the nature of relationships between people on the targeted estate and to help further formalise previously informal relationships.¹¹⁴ Rather than a 'neo-liberal' sense of individuality being promoted through the CSI, it was a more universal sense of the passive, risk-averse individual that was engaged with and encouraged. This can be seen most clearly with regard to the issue of child safety.

Examining the claims made about the CSI, based as it was upon the importance of child safety, typified with examples of young children 'wandering the streets at night', it is significant to note that in no speech or press release, nor in any newspaper article, did any of the individuals or groups promoting the curfew suggest that the adults within the community itself could or should play a more *active* role in ensuring the safety of children who were on the street at night. Within a more fragmented and individuated climate, the responsibility demanded of adults was to themselves and their own security and sense anxiety. The safety of children was both generalised as a concern for the whole community, and at the same time fragmented - with only the individual parents of children being encouraged to take an 'active' role and being held 'responsible' for the safety of their own child.

In respect of the concerns about young people being disorderly, a similarly *passive* role for adults was promoted. The image of the adults on the curfewed estates presented by the council, police, politicians and the media, was that of not only being under siege, but also being unable to deal with the antisocial behaviour of children. Despite a recognition by the police that elderly adults' fear of crime and young people was exaggerated, this was not challenged within the campaign. Rather, this initiative, like many others, encouraged local adults not to deal with young people but instead to phone the police. Fear in this sense was treated as an objective condition that was not contestable. Fear was understood to be a risk in and of itself, responsibility for adults being in relation to their own physical and emotional well being - something that was best protected through risk avoidance and the limiting of contact with young people at night.¹¹⁵

It is worth reiterating that the social problems being addressed here were not related to serious violent criminal incidents but to antisocial young people and their nuisance activities. Phoning the police was encouraged based on the fear that something 'may' happen, and as such the police were being called into action not in relation to criminal acts themselves, but based on the fear that individuals felt about a given situation. Rather than having any active engagement with the nuisance behaviour of young

people, people were encouraged to hand *responsibility* to the police, who would intervene on behalf of the conceptualised 'vulnerable' individual.

The image of adults as being fundamentally vulnerable and in need of support was equally applicable to the representation of young people in the Hillhouse estate, and helped to transform the nature of 'responsibility'. Through the prism of risk and safety, young people were simultaneously held responsible for the fears of adults, while being represented as ultimately incapable of being responsible for themselves. Within this framework, a diminished sense of expectations similar to that which was noted above in relation to adult responsibility was promoted in relation to young people as well. Young people were represented, especially by the tabloid press, as 'trouble-makers'. However, through the language of risk, young people were also portrayed by those both promoting and opposing the curfew as 'troubled' - and in need of regulation in the form of support and protection rather than punishment.

Of all the groups in Hillhouse, the main one targeted in terms of the need for greater responsibility was parents. However, while a responsibilisation process did occur, in terms of encouraging an individual awareness of risks and dangers for children on the streets and from young people misbehaving on the street, again the more informal idea of individual responsibility was transformed. In its place a more contractual and enforced notion of responsibility was promoted, while at the same time the idea that parents should have personal responsibility for decisions regarding their children was diminished. While denouncing irresponsible parents, there was also a sentiment expressed by those promoting the curfew that parents were not capable of controlling their children and that the police, in this respect, could act as a parent support agency. Parents were therefore responsibilised in terms of their awareness and need to restrict the independent activities of their children, while being encouraged to understand this form of responsibility with reference to the police, whose advice and action was as a form of surrogate parent.¹¹⁶

In Hamilton, responsibility was more of a pressure put on parents than something that they were expected to take and develop for themselves. This more communitarian sense of responsibility - or more accurately this post-liberal understanding of it (Reece

2003) - to some degree actively undermined the more classically liberal, and neo-liberal, idea of individual responsibility. One commentator noted that, 'Another objective [of the curfew] is increasing awareness of parental responsibility. Yet paradoxically, they seem to be taking decisions, and the authority to enforce these decisions, out of the hands of parents'.¹¹⁷

While promoting the idea of good responsible parenting in Hillhouse, parents were seen as being responsible for their children's behaviour in a way that broadened the meaning of responsibility within the framework of risk and safety, while also diminishing what responsibility meant. Children and young people who were 'unsupervised' and potentially at risk, and adults who were made to feel at risk from the presence of teenagers were all, to some extent, part of the problem of 'irresponsible parents'. A responsible parent was a risk-averse parent, who was *made* aware by the local authority and police.

Part of the reason given by the council and Strathclyde police, for the implementation of the Child Safety Initiative was a need to make parents more responsible. However, one of the basic responsibilities of parents - the decision about when and where to allow their children to go at night - was in part taken from parents by the activities and promotion campaigns of the police during the CSI. An example of how this responsibility became something decided by the police rather than parents was demonstrated on Halloween night. For this night parents and children were informed by officers going to all the schools in the area that it was OK for children and young people to go out for Halloween. But this relaxation of the curfew came with a warning from a Strathclyde police spokesman: 'We would like all parents to make sure that their kids are supervised and go out that bit earlier in the evening' (*Scotland on Sunday* 31 October 1997). The reason for this 'advice' from the police was that 'parents should be aware, whether it's Halloween or not, of the dangers of allowing their children out after dark without proper supervision' (*Hamilton Advertiser* 30 October 1997).

Discussing the use of curfews in the UK and USA, a *Sunday Mail* reporter noted that the use of curfews was a useful tool not only for the police but also for parents, as 'It

allows them to tell children what they should do - not because they want to lay down the law but because it IS the law' (*Sunday Mail* 15 August 1999). Rather than parents using their own authority to take responsibility for their children, here the authority of the law was *borrowed* by parents - the enforcement and ultimate responsibility for the 'in-time' of children becoming that of the police.

The population of Hillhouse as a whole was encouraged through the promotion of the CSI to change its behaviour, become more aware of the dangers and anxieties that existed in its community, and to understand itself and its children in relation to the risks it faced. Responsibility for the social problems addressed by the authorities was understood in relation to parents and young people, whose 'risky' lifestyles and activities undermined the security of the entire community. This process of responsibilisation both widened and weakened the meaning of responsibility. Through the precautionary framework promoted, responsibility was to the generalised risks portrayed by the authorities; awareness of this responsibility to others meant adopting a risk-averse approach to situations and experiences; with a greater understanding of the insecurities of others and the self leading to an expectation of caution and precaution. Within the rhetoric surrounding the curfew, therefore, the notion of being 'streetwise' was problematised - both in relation to children and young people - but equally in relation to adults themselves.¹¹⁸ Being *aware* meant being more fearful and replaced an expectation of individual *initiative*. Understanding of 'risk' replaced *action*, contact and confrontation between people. In essence, the promotion of the CSI sponsored a form of responsibilisation that would *formalise informal relationships*, by developing an internalised form of responsibility based on the doctrine of safety and caution, and by encouraging individuals permanently to mediate their relationships with others through the activities of the authorities.

Therapeutic legitimisation

The existence of fear and a sense of vulnerability across the UK is often interpreted as evidence of growing social problems facing the public. However, as Furedi notes:

Fears, which are an expression of psychic vulnerability, are often misleadingly seen as the product of a world that faces unprecedented dangers...Public perceptions of new risks and dangers are rooted in the sense of powerlessness circulated through therapeutic culture. This emotional script helps frame perceptions independent of any risk - invariably they tend to overwhelm any objective calculation of risk (Furedi 2004: 134).

This sense of vulnerability had increasingly become a basis for police action in late twentieth century life. As Garland argued, 'The police now hold themselves out less as a crime-fighting force than as a responsive public service, aiming to reduce fear, disorder and incivility and to take account of community feelings in setting enforcement priorities' (Garland 2001).

The emphasis so far within this chapter has been upon the issue of safety and the contradictory process of responsibilisation promoted through the CSI. Within this engagement with the *vulnerable public* a key justificatory framework took on a therapeutic form. The emotion of fear was understood to be central to the problems of individuals and to the community as a whole, and the attempt to relate to and *manage* these fears was engaged with. Ultimately, the success of the initiative itself was understood by the police and politicians in relation not to the reduction of antisocial behaviour itself, but more directly in relation to the fear of the public. Fear in this respect was understood as a universal emotion felt by the people of Hillhouse - something that had a sense of permanence and that formed the basis of the relationships between people on the estate and consequently provided the foundation upon which a connection could be made between the authorities and the public. Fears for and of children and young people were both related to and validated in the development of the curfew, and it was this generalised sentiment of fear - rather than the specific anxieties regarding particular activities of young people and children - that was being engaged with.

The notion of a therapy culture relates not to the specific activities of therapists, but to a cultural elevation of the significance of the emotional aspect of individuals - and in particular to an acute orientation to the public as being vulnerable to emotional

damage. Through this therapeutic framework, an orientation towards the people of Hillhouse was established, within which previously understood social problems were reinterpreted as emotional ones and new social problems - like antisocial behaviour - were understood to be problematic with reference to the emotional reaction of others. Through the therapeutic gaze of the authorities, social problems were reformulated and the meaning of *freedom* was redefined to mean the freedom from feeling fearful. 'Removing fear' was the way to 'return liberties', and the 'number one priority' of the curfew was to ensure the entire community felt safe. At the same time, the responsabilisation process attempted to engage with the fear that parents had for their children - and specific threats, like that of paedophiles, were promoted as an issue that should be of concern for those parents who allowed their children out at night. Similarly young people themselves were engaged with and encouraged to support the curfew, based on their own potential insecurities regarding other young people.

Crime and antisocial behaviour were understood to be, and projected as, social problems with reference to the individual's sense of 'well being' and the community sense of confidence established through a generalised mood of safety.¹¹⁹ The basis and reconstitution of the community in this respect related to the emotional self - something to be engaged with and reformed by the authorities. The common 'value' engaged with through the CSI was the fragmented individual's feeling of anxiety.

Moving young people away from areas where adults are concerned about their behaviour may not be a new development. However, the heightened significance given to the insecurities of adults - and indeed to the community as a whole - reflected a qualitative elevation adopted by both politicians and the police to the concern with the emotional reactions and fears of adults.¹²⁰

Transformed from individual cases of criminal or antisocial behaviour into a concern with a general sense of anxiety on these estates the 'social problem' of, as one newspaper labelled it, 'streets of fear', was engaged with (*Herald* 21 October 1997). This existing understanding of communities, indeed of society more broadly, meant that any example of nuisance behaviour of young people was interpreted as the basis for this universalised sense of fear.

The fear of crime has been an issue in criminology and politics in the UK from the 1980s. However, this fear was both contested and less central to the concern about crime and social problems affecting communities. As the following chapter will show, there were unquestionably issues regarding youth drinking and vandalism in the area, and as the police explained the curfew had been introduced in part because of complaints by adults. The question addressed here, however, is not the myth or reality of the antisocial activities of young people in the targeted areas - although as the police admitted, Hillhouse was not an area of particularly high crime rates - but rather the justificatory basis of the initiative, which was almost exclusively focused upon the sense of anxiety felt by the public.

Within the framework of being 'at risk', fear was itself constituted as a risk.¹²¹ Fear became an essential way of understanding the targeted communities and the individuals within them, and regardless of the objective basis of this fear, its very existence was the social problem that was seen as needing to be addressed.

In Hillhouse this fear was understood to be a problem for the whole community, each member of it subsequently being seen as a potential victim of crime but also an existing 'victim' of behaviour that created a dark cloud of fear.¹²² With this almost mystical sense of fear, which was understood to be hovering above communities, the basis for police intervention related to criminal acts was transformed into a more subjectively constituted defence of the public's emotional well being. This engagement with the sense of vulnerability of the public thus provided the justificatory basis for the curfew.¹²³

In a sense the community being engaged with was a community of vulnerable individuals, a community victimised by fear. This sense of victimhood was understood to be the common bond between individuals – and the basis of state engagement and legitimation. As Garland explains:

The symbolic figure of the victim has taken on a life of its own [and has become]...a new social fact. The victim is no longer an unfortunate citizen

who has been on the receiving end of a criminal harm, and whose concerns are subsumed within the 'public interest'...The victim is now, in a certain sense, a much more representative character, whose experience is taken to be common and collective, rather than individual and atypical (Garland 2002: 11).

Conclusion

The aim of this chapter has not been to show what actually happened with the introduction of the CSI in areas of Hamilton. Rather it has most centrally been an examination of the claims made and the justificatory basis upon which the initiative was promoted.

As noted in the first chapter, the cultural context within which the curfew developed was one in which fear had become a more ever-present framework of influence, one that impacted on not only a sense of global threats, but equally in relation to personal interactions between people. 'Moral' panics continued to have some influence at this time; but more generally 'anxieties' about social problems were understood and discussed within the 'amoral' discourse of safety. Within this climate, the tendency was for previously discussed issues of deviance and disorder to be understood not within the 'dog collar' traditional moral framework, but within a newly formed morality - or amorality - of safety.

The 'social problems' related to by the curfew were predicated on the previously problematised issues of child safety, the 'panic' about a 'yob culture', and the problematisation of relations between young people, which had resulted in the emergence, for example, of the social problem of 'bullying' and the developing issue of 'peer pressure'. Community safety was becoming an organising framework for local authority intervention into communities at this time, and the development of initiatives and practices like the vetting of youth workers and the emergence of CCTV and security around schools was emerging at this time and normalising the basis of safety as a framework for organising everyday life.

Structural changes at the time had also helped to develop a more fragmented society, with the decline of solidarity and collective organisations accompanying changes in the family. This process of individuation helped to strengthen the sense of vulnerability across society – something that Furedi argues was reinforced by a lack of clarity about what society's values should be (Furedi 2002: 68).

The justificatory framework for the CSI was consequently based around safety – with rights, responsibilities, freedom, liberty and what it meant to be a good citizen or parent all relating to this issue. As Furedi noted at the time in his opening line to *Culture of Fear*, 'Safety has become the fundamental value of our time' (Furedi 2002: 1).

The novelty of the CSI, compared with previous Strathclyde Police Zero Tolerance type initiatives that more overtly targeted 'spitting yobs' (Orr 1997: 110), was the incorporation of the issue of child safety as *the* dominant rhetorical theme - at least at a local level. This double-edged focus on antisocial behaviour and child safety can be seen as a synthesis of 'traditional conservative authoritarianism with leftist intrusion into the affairs of the individual' (Furedi 2002: 103).¹²⁴ Whereas politicians engaged more with the fear of adults and the issue of crime itself, the local police to some extent avoided the more exclusionary and confrontational language of 'yobs' by discussing the young people in Hillhouse as victims who were vulnerable. In this respect, the rhetoric of the local police who emphasised the issue of child safety was more 'inclusive', and a certain unity of purpose with the community could be established through a more victim-centred approach to the problems in Hillhouse. As Best notes, 'As long as we remain focused on victims, disagreement vanishes...[which helps] explain why the new-victim movements tend to gloss over the victimizers'. The problem being that, 'Once we start identifying victimizers, we are back in the messy, divisive business of trying to both understand and blame deviants. As long as we stay focused on the victims, we can hope to mobilize consensus' (Best 1999: 140-1). The basis of consensus was therefore achievable only through the rhetorical association with victims on the estate - but the role of the police could never be just to empathise with these victims, they were expected to act.

Despite the child safety rhetoric, as we will see in the next chapter, the real concerns of local people that had helped form the curfew, and the reality of the action of the police in practice, were largely related to the issue of 'youth' and their antisocial behaviour. Young people still needed to be moved off the street.

Whereas the Labour leadership was more engaged by the fear of crime as the issue of concern, the local council and especially the local police appeared to be more apprehensive about the negative connotations of a curfew in their area. However, despite these differences, the framework of vulnerability and the centrality of the issue of safety underlay both approaches.

Initially examined in terms of a moral panic, with reference to the first chapter of this thesis, the curfew should, in retrospect, more accurately be understood as a development based upon the emergence of a state of amoral anxieties. Safety rather than an alternative moral outlook or values underpinned the initiative, even in relation to the family. The only 'value' adhered to was that of safety, a safe parent being a good parent. The engagement with the community thus related to its general sense of anxiety, with the role of the local authority being to help the public become aware of and change its behaviour in relation to risk and fear. Discussing the psychotherapeutic emphasis on individuals' feelings and emotions in the formation of communities, communitarian Amatai Etzioni notes that, 'Expressive individualism assumes that the proper focus is on personal psychological well-being rather than social responsibility, not to mention commitment to values or raising a moral voice' (Etzioni 1997: 135). In this respect, the focus upon the emotional aspect of the fear of crime and the therapeutic engagement with the public's feelings of anxiety, despite the promotion of 'community', can be seen as something that was neither morally (or politically) based, or connected to a wider sense of social responsibility.

Similarly, with reference to the emphasis placed upon the victimised nature of the community, Etzioni also believes that the systematic understanding of victimology means that, 'While social systems factors are always important, and sometimes dominate the situation, when they are used to imply that the victims have no choice in the matter, which exempts the actors from moral responsibility for their acts, the

notion becomes highly damaging to the moral voice' (Etzioni 1997: 137). In the discussion about young people facing 'peer pressure', emphasis was placed upon the victim-based conception of these young people - something that, by implying a lack of choice, potentially undermined the notion of responsibility that the council simultaneously promoted.

Without the 'vulnerable' label being attached to parents, there was a level of responsibility expected of them in Hillhouse. However, even here, to a degree, the expectation of their autonomous accountability was limited by an initiative that presumed a certain degree of support was needed from the police for parents to control and care for their children.¹²⁵

A key element in the defining of moral panics has been the argument that the reaction to a social problem is *disproportionate*. As will be argued in the following chapter, especially in terms of the issue of child safety, this was clearly the case in Hillhouse - and even at the level of the problems related to young people, these were generally of a nature more accurately described as nuisance behaviour. However, at the more abstract and general level of engaging with fear within the community, and relating to a more *universalised* sense of vulnerability, the curfew was connecting to a *real* state of mind.¹²⁶

Despite police statements explaining that crime and antisocial behaviour was not especially high within the targeted areas, by relating to the broader sense of fear in these areas through the discourse of risk and safety there appeared at the same time to be a necessary exaggeration of the social problems being addressed. Instances of nuisance behaviour, helped in part by the language of 'antisocial behaviour', gave a more problematic and ever-present significance to occasional events.

Despite the aim of the CSI being in part to develop a sense of community, the justificatory rhetoric of the authorities related more directly to the fragmented and vulnerable individual, than to any sense of commonality - except, that is, with the 'common' issue of individual safety and the desire to feel safe. In the process of engaging with people in this way, rather than individuals reengaging with one another,

the connecting framework implicitly being established was between the political authorities and the individuated public.

It is at this level that the meaning of responsabilisation should be understood - less as a promotion of individual autonomous action, than as an encouragement of caution and an expectation of reliance upon third party intervention to help manage all the relationships between the people in Hillhouse.¹²⁷

Despite the promotion of the CSI as a community-led initiative with community participation, as discussed above, community action was at no stage promoted in terms of individual activity to resolve issues of antisocial behaviour or even child safety. In essence, the initiative in this respect not only engaged with a general sense of fear and desire for safety, but encouraged all on the estate to stop *acting* themselves to help ensure safety was maintained. Within an 'at risk' framework, where all independent interactions were understood to be potentially dangerous, rather than encouraging self-activity in the construction of the community, the aim of the CSI was to encourage 'self limitation' (Beck 1996: 29). The extent to which this developed in practice will be explored in the next chapter.

Chapter 7:

Curfew Interviews:

Analysing the Culture of Fear

Hamilton's pioneering child safety initiative has won a major community award. The project, which has attracted attention from as far afield as Japan and Australia, won a top prize in the 1998 Crime Prevention and Community Safety Awards, sponsored by insurance giants CGU. The awards were presented last Thursday by Home Secretary Jack Straw and Martyn Lewis, presenter of the BBC television programme "Crimebeat" (Hamilton Advertiser 15 October 1998).

Introduction

In the previous chapter, the claims made about the CSI and the legitimisation process, were explored. Here, the actual impact of the curfew on the targeted estate of Hillhouse is examined in detail, and the extent to which this initiative could be said to be simply attempting to resolve 'real' social problems that the public were concerned about is explored. Through the interviews with young people and adults in Hillhouse, the 'real' concerns as opposed to those promoted by the authorities are contrasted, while the more pervasive culture of fear is studied and related to the point of connection being made between the local authority and individuals on the estate. In essence the 'real' or objective risks that faced people in Hillhouse are here contrasted to the subjective sense of anxiety that impinged upon not only how individuals understood others, but also how they understood themselves. It was this cultural sense of insecurity, rather than any specific 'social problem' in the area, that, it is argued, can be understood as the basis of the initiative itself and the framework around which the authorities attempted to reengage the more risk-averse public.

What social problems?

From police reports, media coverage, and interviews with adults and young people in the areas of Hamilton targeted for the curfew, there were clearly some problems of crime and disorder. There was in Hillhouse, like many areas, a certain problem of

crime, drunken behaviour, graffiti and vandalism, while some children and young people were out on the streets at night 'after dark'. In this respect there were some 'real' problems that were being related to by the police and local authority that led to the introduction of the Child Safety Initiative.

However to understand the introduction of the curfew in this area, we must recall that for 'problems' to become 'social problems', at a particular time and with reference to wider social, cultural and political issues, requires the existence of claimsmakers who draw attention to these issues. As well as the reported complaints by local adults about the antisocial behaviour in their area, which suggests an element of grassroots support for the initiative, we must also situate the CSI within the context of zero tolerance policing, the politicisation of antisocial behaviour, and the fear of crime.

Unlike past panics about youth crime that were promoted by conservative groups and often dampened down by key politicians, the concerns about 'unsafe' young people in Hamilton can be seen as something that was promoted by the local authority and supported by the government. Zero tolerance policing, as formerly discussed, did not only focus police attention upon minor crimes, but also directly related petty criminal acts, and even non-criminal acts, to serious criminality and disorder (Orr 1997). Likewise, by 1997, the 'fear of crime' had become a widely recognised social problem, a problem that New Labour had helped to promote. The fear of crime had also been connected not only with crime but also antisocial behaviour, with the fear of crime across society being understood to be undermining communities.¹²⁸ In this respect the development of the curfew in Hamilton should be understood as relating to 'real' problems of the behaviour of young people, but also, and most importantly, to a broader political and policing agenda that elevated the nuisance behaviour of young people into a significant social problem for society as a whole.

With this in mind the actual impact of the curfew is explored below to assess the similarities, but also the differences, in the outlook and understanding of local people in the area of Hillhouse towards the problems being promoted and addressed by the CSI. For example, were the adults in Hillhouse living in 'streets of fear' and was this related to the behaviour of young people? Were children unsafe and parents

irresponsible in their dealings with these children? Were young people 'at risk' from their peers? Were they also living in fear and did they therefore support the curfew, as the police suggested? Or, as the children's rights groups maintained, were the police harassing these young people and creating divisions between teenagers and the police?

As will be explored, the issue of fear and concerns about safety were 'real' in terms of the existence of concerns by local people - although these concerns did not always match those of the authorities. The basis of these concerns, while relating in part to the local issues of young people's behaviour, also appeared to be linked to far broader social issues than the initiative suggested. Finally, with reference to the *Hamilton Advertiser* story above, the reasons why the CSI was understood to be such a great success will be addressed with particular reference to the political concern with the 'loss of a sense of community' and the need for public participation in government initiatives.

The lone voice of opposition

The *typical* example used in justifying the curfew, before, during and after the initial trial curfew period, was that of young children wandering the streets late at night. Being 'at risk', these children were apparently both unsafe and helping to make the community feel unsafe because of their antisocial activities. This group was important for the police in their attempt to depict the initiative as being both caring in relation to children and also connected to the issue of irresponsible parenting. This age group also took on a greater significance in relation to legislation dealing with antisocial behaviour in 1998, with the introduction of the Crime and Disorder Act. This Act, one of the new Labour government's first major pieces of law and order legislation included a provision for local authorities across England and Wales to introduce a curfew for under-10-year-olds between the hours of 9pm and 6am. The Hamilton experience was directly connected to the development of this legislation, and used as an example of how curfews can have a positive impact upon areas (*Independent*, 28 September 1998). The justification for the Labour government's curfew legislation targeted at areas and individuals was more overtly geared towards the problem of

antisocial children, rather than child safety, as the *Sunday Times* explained with reference to 'a seven year old thief, who had been arrested more than ten times':

The seven year old is just one of hundreds of problem under-10s across Britain who police and local authorities are considering placing under curfew using the new law. Such children cannot currently be prosecuted for their crimes as they are below the age of criminal responsibility (*Sunday Times* 6 September 1998).

In Hamilton, *typical* examples of the 'social problems' the police were addressing were given to the press a year after the curfew was launched. These included 'a four year old boy found cycling on waste ground some distance from his home. His grandmother who had been baby-sitting had not known where he was'. Another example was given of two young girls, 'one of them inadequately clothed', selling papers outside a bingo hall (*Hamilton Advertiser* 22 October 1998). These 'extreme' examples were relatively rare, but helped the *typification* process, presenting the curfew as something that was needed to keep young children safe.

These examples occasionally appeared in the Scottish national press.¹²⁹ However, in the local newspaper there was one occasion when a police story about a four-year-old found on the streets after 9pm was challenged by a parent. The *Hamilton Advertiser* headline, 'Angry Mum Slams Curfew Claims', gave one of the few media stories coming from someone who had experienced the police action and opposed it. In so doing, the somewhat faceless and one-sided image of 'at risk' children and 'irresponsible parents' was undermined, and in its place a story of everyday life emerged. June Golder, the mother of the four-year-old Jamie explained that:

This gives the impression that I'm a mother who doesn't care about my weans but that couldn't be further from the truth. We had been out all day and we arrived home at the back of eight, Jamie said he wanted to play out with his friends. I told him he could play out for 10 minutes then come in. I was in my front room and I could see him from the window (*Hamilton Advertiser*, 6 November 1997).

This example is noteworthy, not simply because it was unusual, but because the potential *issue*¹³⁰ of parents' rights reflected in this case had no wider public expression or representation in any organised opposition to the curfew. This is not to argue that there was a coherent desire or widespread opposition to this initiative - but the lack of an existing framework for questioning its introduction, or for allowing expressions of dissent cohered around *issues*, meant that where concerns did exist they could take no *public* form except as a lone voice within the local press.¹³¹

Social problems: myth or reality?

The curfew was presented as something that the community wanted, not only because of concerns about antisocial youth, but also, as council leader Tom McCabe had argued, because local people were also concerned about the safety of young people. The couplet of safety for children and safety of adults from children was central to this initiative. The police had similarly presented the CSI as an initiative that was largely introduced because of concerns about young children 'wandering the streets late at night', putting themselves at risk and potentially getting up to 'no good'. However, in the Scottish Office research *Evaluation of the Hamilton Child Safety Initiative*, a research document based on an examination of the impact of the curfew in its first six month trial period, it was noted following three group discussions with adults and young people that:

All three groups questioned the justification for deploying resources into the HCSI [Hamilton Child Safety Initiative] when they felt there was no real evidence that under 10s were causing crime or disorder problems on the streets, especially not in Hillhouse (McGallagly et al 1998: 60).

One of the groups also questioned whether the CSI could be expected to tackle problems such as 'bad parenting' and change the attitudes of 'one or two irresponsible parents who let their children out on the streets late at night' (McGallagly et al 1998: 60).

My research with children and adults on the estate also raises questions about the necessity of a curfew based upon the 'social problem' of young children 'wandering the streets at night'. Hillhouse Community Council chair Joe Parfery, for example, was unaware of any great safety problem, especially from strangers and paedophiles.¹³² He was equally unaware of any great number of young children wandering the streets at night. He explained: 'There are a few children who stay out, especially during the summer, till about 10.30pm but not many. But what's wrong with that anyway? I used to play out all the time when I was a kid'.

As well as the Scottish Office research finding that local people felt that the issue of antisocial under-10-year-olds was not an issue, and that the question of irresponsible parents letting their young children stay out late only applied to 'one or two' people, it also found that there was no evidence of wider dangers to children in the Hillhouse area. The summary of the research findings noted that:

Due to the small number of children who were the victims of crime or road traffic accidents in the 6 month period prior to and during the period covered by the CSI, it was not possible to assess the impact of the initiative on such incidents (McGallagly et al 1998a: 3).

In other words, the statistical impact of the curfew on the safety of children was found to be impossible to assess due to the limited safety issues that existed. Where comparisons were made with Hillhouse and a control area by the Scottish Office research, with reference to crime victimisation rates it was found that the CSI 'had little impact in terms of reducing child victimisation' (McGallagly et al 1998: 26). Finally, with reference to the 229 curfew interventions made by the police between October 1997 and April 1998, this research found that '20 [or 9%] were directly related to child safety issues' (McGallagly et al 1998: 17). Here again the 'ten year old child...selling newspapers', who was 'inappropriately dressed', was used as an example of the child safety approach of the police.

Despite the claims made by the local authority and, especially, by the police, that the CSI was being introduced to protect under-10-year-olds from the irresponsible parents

who allowed their children to wander the streets at night, the extent of this problem, the level of dangers present, and the impact the curfew had on the safety of children, are all questioned by the above findings.

Cotton wool kids?

Although within the promotion of the CSI the police and local authority were careful not to argue that the targeted curfew estates were 'problem areas' that were 'getting worse', the political climate, with its increasing focus on antisocial behaviour, the development of zero tolerance policing, and the understanding of the growing fear of crime, all meant that the curfew was interpreted as an initiative set up to deal with growing social problems associated with young people out on the streets at night. Indeed one could argue that the very introduction of a curfew in Hamilton, which was complemented with UK-wide curfew legislation, was based on an understanding of communities riddled with problems of crime and disorder - problems that were getting worse.

However, whatever the myth and reality of these perceived social problems, there was also a growing body of research suggesting that children, rather than wandering the streets at night, were in fact having their free time increasingly regulated by parents.¹³³ This research found that: the time children were allowed out was decreasing, as was the distance they were allowed to travel; children could play in fewer places and could travel less far from home than previous generations; there was a growth of children whose parents would define them as 'indoor kids' as opposed to 'outdoor kids'; and that children were engaged in more supervised as opposed to unsupervised activities.

Research by Gill Valentine and John McKendrick sums up the trends being identified by this research. With reference to the growing regulation of children's free time, they noted that:

In other words, a significant amount of children's outdoor play is taking place in 'private' space [or regulated space], rather than 'public' space, so that although children are spending a considerable proportion of their leisure time

'out-doors' most have very limited opportunities to play in or explore the public environment independently of adult supervision (Valentine and McKendrick 1997: 227).

This general trend of an increase in the regulation of children's lives, rather than a growth in 'street kids out at all hours', was replicated by my research with the 32 children living in and around Hillhouse. The latest any of the children said they were allowed to play out at night was 9pm, but this only applied to two 2 children - and the average 'in-time' was 7.30pm. A majority of the children interviewed were allowed to walk to school by themselves and could walk to friends' houses alone. However, further questioning of the children who went out alone at night – about where they went and where their friends lived – found that many of those who did travel to their friends' houses at night were allowed to do so only because they lived very close by or because their parents were able to watch them on their travels.

For example, 10-year-old Jane from Hillhouse explained that she was allowed to walk to her friend's house alone, but only because 'I'm not even a minute away, and my friend's parents watch out for me'. Similarly, Mark, who was 9 years old, was allowed to walked to his friend's house but only because 'he only lives next door'. Joanne from Hillhouse also explained that she was allowed out, but that 'Mum watches me go. My friend's mum watches me come, and mum phones her to let her know I'm on my way. But I've never had any bother'.

From these interviews and the research carried out by the Scottish Office, there was little evidence of children 'running wild' around Hillhouse. Indeed, around a third of children - similar numbers to those in the Wheway (1997) and Livingstone and Bovill (1999) research - said they were not allowed out of the sight of their parents. A quarter of the children said they were not allowed to play out after school hours and a third explained that they were not allowed to go to the shops alone. The majority of the children could play out for a time at night, but most of these children had significant limits imposed on where they could go and only two children said they could walk or cycle around the entire estate.

Rather than an overall 'social problem' of an increasing numbers of children being out late at night, the general trend towards the increasing regulation of children's 'free time', highlighted by various research projects in the 1990s, was suggested by the interviews with the children in and around Hillhouse. Indeed at a national level the concern about 'wandering children' has been raised by Fran Russell from the legal reform group, the Howard League. In conversation about this issue, she stated that 'no evidence has been produced to suggest young children wandering the streets at night is a serious or growing problem' (Waiton 2004: 65). Even within the police reports of the 'extreme' cases of young children being out late at night, these were few and far between. *In this respect, the curfew could be seen less as an artificial imposition of new rules placed upon parents, so much as a replication of existing parental practices based on a more pronounced precautionary approach to children who were understood to be 'at risk'.*

In terms of the irresponsibility of parents, with respect to the active involvement of parents in their children's 'free time', not only were many parents heavily involved in the regulation of children's 'street-life', but a third of parents also regularly took their children to and from school and to and from friends' houses at night. Three quarters of the children interviewed were also involved in organised activities after school and a majority of these children were taken to and from these activities by parents or older siblings. In other words, the idea that there was a serious problem of irresponsible parents who allowed their children to go out unsupervised 'at all hours' was extremely rare - with little or no evidence being uncovered by this or the Scottish Office research. Indeed the 'extreme' examples given by the police of children 'inadequately dressed' selling newspapers, or of a four-year-old on his bike on waste ground, would perhaps in previous generations, when children were more likely to be out at night, not have been understood as a 'social problem'. However, within a 'safety first' or an 'at risk' framework, these activities were reinterpreted as examples of wider social problems associated with irresponsible parenting.

The relatively high level of parental supervision of the children in Hillhouse, the somewhat limited time and space allowed to them, and the lack of statistical evidence

uncovered by the Scottish Office in respect to dangers facing children in this area, suggest that the notion that these children were 'at risk' was questionable.

Following the interviews with the children in and around Hillhouse, the lack of any significant dangers faced by these children was again shown. Almost two thirds of the children interviewed from Hillhouse said they had 'no bother' in their area; this was fewer than for the children living outside of the area. No child had been put 'at risk' by an adult and the home was seen as a safe place by all of these children. The main 'bother' mentioned by these children was from other children, and especially the general activities of some teenagers in the area. Three children mentioned windows being broken, two mentioned fights, and two others described a fire being started by young people. Those who mentioned having had some 'bother' themselves explained that they had either been chased or called names. Ten-year-old Steven told me: 'Teenagers drink sometimes and shout at me, I've been chased as well, but only once', while Tim said: 'Jamie hit me with his stookie [plaster cast], he's always picking on smaller children'.

There appears to be a situation where some older teenagers drink and are sometimes 'antisocial' at night in and around Hillhouse. However, the extent to which this could be understood as children being put 'at risk' is questionable. No paedophile or abusive adult was mentioned; teenagers sometimes chased or called the smaller children names, but overall there was no evidence that these children were facing more difficulties in their area than their parents may have faced when they were children. Interestingly, while alcohol was frequently raised as an issue throughout this survey, these children did not mention drugs.

A concoction of fear

As has been shown above, in any real sense the idea that children in Hillhouse were running around wild, or that they were being put at risk by irresponsible parents, was far from the truth - and yet this was the key justificatory basis for the curfew. Even in the Scottish Office research it was noted that of the 229 police interventions, only three 'special circumstances' were highlighted relating to poor parental supervision

(McGallagly et al 1998: 18). In this respect, the basis for the curfew can be seen in part as a concoction by the authorities based on a culturally-accepted set of anxieties and fears they already had about these issues, rather than a development based on real problems and specific local concerns.¹³⁴

On the other hand, however, in general terms concerns about child safety were shared by parents in Hillhouse, and the promotion of child safety was supported. In the Scottish Office research it was found that 'despite reservations' about the focus on under-10-year-olds, 'there was a general consensus that the police were right to address the safety of young children' (McGallagly et al 1998: 60). In discussion with three focus groups, it was also noted that, 'All three groups commended the HCSI for its concern with the safety of young children and showed considerable interest in this aspect of the Initiative' (McGallagly et al 1998: 63). In other words, despite there being little concern by adults about the reality of the problem of young children wandering the streets late at night, and also despite their being little evidence within the Scottish Office research or in the research of this thesis that young children were practically 'at risk', there was a more generalised acceptance that safety was an important issue for children, that children were indeed more generally 'at risk', and that action taken to promote this could only be a good thing.

Put more starkly, the reality of young children out late on the streets being 'at risk' was largely a myth and something that local people felt was not a serious problem, whereas the generalised *fear* for children's safety was real. As a generic sentiment, the issue of child safety was one that was accepted and lent support to the introduction of the curfew. However, rather than there being agreement between the authorities and the public about the practical dangers children faced, the agreement was about the *fear* felt for children. *In this respect the CSI was an engagement with, and promotion of, the culture of fear, rather than a practical initiative to resolve an objective problem.*

As discussed previously, child safety was here not only an unquestioned issue but was also understood as an unquestionably good thing. But rather than engage with fears related to specific issues, the engagement between the authorities and the targeted areas was an engagement with a more generalised sense of fear.

Discussing the successes of the initiative with a group of parents, the Scottish Office research noted that one of the positive factors had been that 'this parents' focus group considered that the HCSI had been effective in making parents more aware of the dangers for children out late at night'. *Here the success of the curfew was not only in its ability to relate to people's fears, but to enhance them.* Parents were now also believed to regulating their children more strictly because of these fears (McGallagly et al 1998: 78). For the local authority and police, the greater regulation of these children's time was seen as a positive move to make them safer - despite the reality of limited evidence of any dangers faced by the children. Child safety is here more of an absolutist 'moral' or amoral position than a reflection of, or attempt to resolve, 'real' social problems.

The success of the authorities was in engaging with and encouraging a culture of fear amongst parents. To be a fearful parent in this respect was a good thing and reflected a responsible attitude, regardless of the risks that existed.

Ironically, in the research carried out for this thesis, the main reason children gave for having to be home earlier since the curfew was introduced was that their parents were worried about them coming into contact with the police. This does not necessarily contradict the idea that most parents supported the initiative, but rather suggests that as well as raising awareness about 'child safety' issues in general, the practicalities of the curfew also led to an unintended fear about police involvement in their child's life. The elevation of fear regarding the police was not something explored by the Scottish Office research.

Having found little evidence of harm towards the children of Hillhouse, the Scottish Office research noted that 'over a third of those children asked felt unsafe when walking alone in their local area after dark'. This 'provides some justification for the present Initiative' (McGallagly et al 1998: 49). Here again the basis for the initiative was established not through real problems faced by these children, but in the fears they had about going out in the dark.

Most parents, as we have discussed, were 'highly responsible' in terms of the extent to which they regulated their children's free time. In this respect, the curfew was simply reinforcing an existing high level of parental supervision. Much research suggests that a major reason nationally for this high level of parental supervision is fear for their children's safety.¹³⁵ The curfew was reinforcing the idea that a fearful parent was a good parent, while targeting those parents who did not share these fears as problematic and a danger to their children and the community. A culture of fear was therefore not only expressed within this study, but reinforced by those promoting the curfew. There may be, in part, structural reasons for the development of this culture, but here we see a practical example of how a sense of anxiety was institutionalised, generalised still further, and promoted by the local authority - and subsequently, how this reinforces a local culture based more directly on an exaggerated sense of fear.

Taking this argument to its logical conclusion it could be argued that the problem the authorities had with the so-called irresponsible parents was not that they were making their children unsafe, but that they were refusing to join the *community of fear* - the new imagined basis for community and the framework around which the authorities were attempting to reengage the public.

Engaging fear through safety

As well as the CSI being introduced to make children safe, it was also an initiative that aimed to make adults feel safe, by stopping the antisocial and criminal activities of young people who were under 16 years of age and hung about the streets.

During the initiative, the notion that local people were living in fear was promoted by the police, local councillors, national politicians and the press. Community safety, it was argued by council leader Tom McCabe, was the community's number one priority and helped explain why they had called for a curfew.

As we saw in the previous chapter, the curfew idea had not come from the local Citizens' Jury, as had been suggested by local MP George Robertson. Community safety was a significant issue for the people of Hamilton - as was discovered by the

System 3 (1996) survey carried out by the council. However, although there was a general concern about community safety, this survey notes that when the public were asked about 'specific problems in their local area' rather than 'general problems', the issue of unemployment came out as the highest concern. Despite this, when establishing the Citizens' Jury, it was the issue of community safety that was put on the agenda first by the local authority, rather than the issue of unemployment.

Community safety was an issue for adults and also young people in the area. However, there appeared to be a tendency by the council to elevate this issue, even when it was not of great concern. For example, in a young people's Citizens' Jury set up by the council to look at the issue of leisure and entertainment, of the eight proposals made, community safety was fourth on the list of the report published. Yet this report notes that: 'The issues with regard to safety and security are varied. In general, the Jury did not view them as being overly important' (South Lanarkshire Council 1998). That an issue that was of little importance to the young people on this Citizens' Jury ends up as a top-listed priority suggests that the issue of community safety had become an established framework around which the council was organising its policies, rather than simply a reflection of public concerns.

A key reason for the curfew being introduced in Hillhouse had been the perceived problem of the fear of crime and antisocial behaviour. This concern about the 'fear of crime' was politically significant at the time and was an issue New Labour had promoted as being important since 1993.

In Hillhouse there was evidence of a level of fear of crime. However, the notion that this community was being undermined by fear due to young people's criminal behaviour is questionable. The Citizens' Jury, for example, when asked to isolate what it saw as the main problem to solve in the area, named graffiti as the key problem. Graffiti can have a negative physical and psychological impact on communities - however, compared with the idea of children running wild and young people making people's lives hell, the issue of graffiti appears to be somewhat less serious than the image of the area portrayed by the politicians and the media. If fear was being caused largely because of graffiti, it could be argued that this sense of fear was connected to

wider concerns that people associated with graffiti, like, for example, the sense of a loss of community. In this respect the concern about graffiti, while being a concern in and of itself, may also have had a metaphorical component (South Lanarkshire Council 1997a).

The Scottish Office research found, when interviewing adults from Hillhouse, that the main perceived problem of crime and disorder for the area was caused not by young people under the age of 16, but rather: 'It was generally believed that crime in Hillhouse was caused by a small number of 'older' young people who tended to be heavy drinkers or drug users and who were, for the most part, unemployed' (McGallagly et al 1998). If this was indeed the main age group committing crimes and being antisocial in the area, then clearly the basis of the curfew must again be questioned, as its target audience was all young people under the age of 16.

There were specific issues of concern in Hillhouse, regarding crime, the antisocial behaviour of young people, and young men who hung about drinking. However, these problems did not simply become 'social problems' because of the increased severity of them, but emerged within a political climate within which crime and the fear of crime had become general public concerns, assisted by the problematisation of youth crime by the Conservative government and by the transformation of Labour into New Labour in the early 1990s. The 'practical' concerns in Hillhouse, about a small number of young people whose behaviour was disorderly, was therefore supplemented by a broader climate of insecurity that gave meaning to the political promotion of a more general problem of a 'yob culture' and of 'streets of fear'.

Measuring the fear of crime in the area of Hillhouse, the Scottish Office research concluded that fear was an issue in Hillhouse, but that in certain cases the curfew had done little to resolve this problem. For example, while discovering that 65% of those surveyed had often or sometimes felt unsafe either in their homes or on the street, after six months of the curfew, 'this proportion had only reduced slightly to 60%' (McGallagly et al 1998: xi). Also:

Anxiety about groups or gangs of youths or young people remained strong, with three quarters of respondents saying that they found the presence of groups of young people on the streets frightening, both before the initiative began and after the first six months (McGallagly et al 1998: xi).

This research also found that 'more people were likely to avoid an area after the HCSI began (86%) than before (77%)' (McGallagly et al 1998: xi). But despite this, it was also found that 44% of those surveyed said they felt safer on the streets since the initiative was introduced - partly because of the lower number of young people on the streets.

One question that is not covered by this Scottish Office research is: What is it that the adults are afraid of? They are concerned about 'gangs of young people', but is this because these young people attack them, attack their house, or simply that they make them feel nervous? Also, if the fear expressed by this research related to a serious problem with young people, why were these problems not mentioned by the Citizens' Jury or identified as a problem of crime in the Scottish Office research?

From the discussions with adults in Hamilton and within the targeted area carried out for this thesis, it is difficult to assess statistically the various reasons for the fear of crime. However, from these discussions and with reference to wider research, the question of adults' sense of distance from young people is suggested as one possible explanation for this sense of fear. It is also possible that the issue of safety that had become all-encompassing in relation to children had actually impacted on adults in terms of how they understood children and their relationships with them, and increased their sense of anxiety in relation to young people and public space.

Alienating strangers

From the previous chapter, we can note that the police themselves were conscious of the exaggerated concern that many elderly adults have about young people. It was also noted that a number of conferences have over recent years addressed a perceived problem of the distance between generations. Following this issue, the amount of

contact that young people had with adults was assessed and the extent to which a fear of young people related to a change in the relationships between young and old.

Fear of crime, as Furedi (1997) has argued, is not simply related to the objective behaviour of people, but rather, like the broader culture of fear, is related to far wider social changes. In Strathclyde itself, despite falling crime figures at the time of the curfew, the police discovered that the public's fear of crime was continuing to rise. Frustrated by this, at the end of 1997 Strathclyde police launched a £150,000 advertising campaign to inform people that crime was in fact falling (*Scotsman*, 11 November 1997).

Fear of crime was understood by the authorities to be directly related to the behaviour of young people at night - something that made adults fear for their own safety. However, research suggests that not only do older adults fear for themselves - they are also concerned for the safety of young people. Barnardos research, for example, found that three in five adults think childhood today is worse than it was when they were children. The main reasons given for this, from a prompted list, are the 'level of crime' and 'availability of drugs'. More than nine out of ten of these adults agreed that the level of violence in British society is increasing, and a similar figure felt that 'children witness more crime these days' (Barnardos 1995a). These concerns may again relate to certain changes in young people's lives: however, there is also a sense expressed in this research that these adults are relating not just to objective changes in young people's lives but to a world that they feel has changed fundamentally.

Previously, it was noted that the fear of crime is often a reflection of fear generated by wider social changes, rather than a reflection of an increase in crime itself. In discussion with adults in Hamilton town centre, the issue of how times have changed emerged in relation to the sense of distance many older people have in relating to other people within their community. An often-expressed sentiment within these discussions was the feeling that local people, and young people in particular, could not be trusted anymore. Most of these adults recognise that 'there have always been bad kids from bad families', but as a 67-year-old grandmother explained, 'In the past you knew who the bad ones were, but you also knew that the rest were good kids'. This

she contrasts to 'today', where 'you still know who the bad families are but I guess I just don't know if the rest of them are OK are not'.

The Scottish Office research similarly found that adults' concern about young people related to broader sentiments about how 'things have changed', with there now being a 'lack of respect' of adults (McGallagly et al 1998: 61).

To assess the extent to which adults had contact with young people in the Hillhouse area, young people were asked about who talked to them in the street. Of the 26 young people, aged between 12 and 15 years, a large majority said that they had been spoken to by a local adult about their behaviour, while half of these young people said that it was local adults rather than the police who normally spoke to them at night. The adults who spoke to these young people about their behaviour were usually adults that were known to the young people. However, once these teenagers went out of their own streets into areas where they knew fewer adults, the likelihood of coming into contact with adults decreased and the level of contact with the police rose. While half of the young people explained that adults they didn't know had at some time in the last six months spoken to them about their behaviour, over half said they had been spoken to by the police – this figure increased to over two thirds for those teenagers living in Hillhouse.

The majority of young people living in and around Hillhouse had more contact with adults than with the police regarding their behaviour when out at night. Much of this contact with adults may well be 'negative' contact, where groups of teenagers are simply being told to move on. But it is still the case that, for a third of the young people living in Hillhouse, there was more contact with the police than there was with adults, and once these teenagers moved to areas they were less well known, this level of contact with the police, compared to adults, increased dramatically.

Direct knowledge of young people appeared to mean that some adults continued to relate to young people they knew who hung about the street. However, once a young person moved from their direct neighbourhood there appeared to be a trend for adults to avoid contact with them. This may relate to the reduced sense of community that

allowed adults in the past to relate to all young people within a certain accepted framework of behaviour.

The concern expressed above, about not knowing who the 'bad families are', was telling in its reflection of a growing sense of distance felt by certain adults to others in their community. In a similar vein, a lack of a sense of group norms was expressed by a Mrs Boyle, who had lived in Hamilton since 1940 and explained how, in her youth, 'everybody' went to the dances and 'you felt like you knew everyone'. This compares with 'today', where it was felt that 'everybody does their own thing' and 'people seem to come and go', so that you, 'never know who's who'. Mrs Boyle clearly didn't know everyone in Hamilton in the past, but nevertheless had a sense of commonality that meant that she felt more trusting and secure in her relationships with people she met. A lack of a sense of commonality felt by some adults in Hillhouse could result in suspicion being something no longer felt just for the 'bad families' but more broadly, in relation to all those adults and young people with whom there was no longer any contact or shared social or cultural norms.

Research by Furedi and Brown has also raised the significance of a declining web of meaning held by adults in their relationships with young people. In this study, not only was contact between generations limited but, the authors noted, 'there is no foundation in existence for intergenerational contact for those who do not have grandchildren' (Furedi and Brown 1997). Two significant relationships between the experience of isolation and the intense consciousness of vulnerability were identified. Firstly, the 'lack of contact and familiarity with the ways of the young tends to inflate the sense of difference between the generations'. One aspect of this process is that many elderly people feel inadequate about the task of rearing or educating children, and in some cases, 'a lack of familiarity with the ways of the younger generation creates a disposition towards accepting negative images of the young'. Secondly, the 'feeling of irrelevance and lack of familiarity with the ways of the young helps to accelerate the loss of confidence that comes with ageing', which leads to caution and distrust dominating elderly people's perception of youth (Furedi and Brown 1997).

A self-reinforcing trend is identified here that could apply to Hamilton, whereby cautious behaviour serves to isolate the elderly from new social networks and this, in turn, exacerbates feelings of vulnerability.

Despite the myopic focus upon antisocial behaviour by the authorities in understanding adult insecurities in the area, the issues that influenced the adult feelings of insecurity regarding young people were complex and ranged far beyond the mere behaviour of the young people concerned. Indeed the fear of antisocial youth at one level related more to the changing relationship between adults and young people. A certain distance, literally, culturally and socially, between young and old, and a change in the recognised position of adults vis-à-vis young people, appeared to have helped to undermine adults' surety about their engagement with the young people in their area.

Ironically, through the interviews with children under the age of 12 it was found that the issue of safety may itself be another barrier between young and old. For example, when asked 'if you were out at night and needed to know the time would you ask an adult you don't know who was passing by?', two thirds of those asked explained that they would not ask an adult the time. As Linda explained, 'You don't know what they might do'. This compared with 100 per cent of children who said they would be happy to ask a police officer. Similarly, when asked whether or not they had ever visited a house of someone they didn't know very well - for Halloween or to raise money, for example - well over half of the children said they had not done so. Two thirds of the children felt that 'talking to adults was a good thing', but a third said it was not, and of those who felt it was a good thing many explained that it was only a good thing 'if you knew them'.

The question of stranger danger, of adults not being people in your estate you could spontaneously rely on and of children's self-conscious recognition that approaching adults was a potentially problematic thing, again raises questions about the informal trusting relationships between children and adults.

These wider social and cultural problems were not of concern to the authorities, which promoted the curfew and understood the conflicts on the estate through a narrow prism of crime and safety. However, understanding the various tensions between adults and children must in part relate to the sense of distance and alienation that is felt between the generations - not because of the behaviour of children in and of itself, but in context of a changing web of meaning within which community relations take place. Communities are more fragmented or individualised, as Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (2002) have described, and they are also arguably less certain about the basic informal rules that govern people's contact with one another. In this sense, the behaviour of the young people in Hillhouse could be of secondary importance to the changing, more fractured relationships that have emerged between generations and between the more individuated people living on this estate.

This may help to explain why, despite the relatively high level of policing in the area, the sense of security - or perhaps more accurately a sense of surety - did not develop in Hillhouse during the curfew. Discussing the curfew with George, a pensioner in Hillhouse, he explained that he was pleased that the young people had been moved away from his street, but he recognised that this did not make him feel any more relaxed about approaching young people himself. Even where the immediate concern was removed from the streets, the broader fragility of relations between people remained, and would most likely continue to be expressed in future relations.

In this sense, the impact of the curfew was to institutionalise the sense of anxiety that existed between people.

Freedom versus safety

As part of the interview process with the young people aged 12-15 years living in and around Hillhouse, the actual impact of the initiative was analysed to assess the level of contact with the police and the changes the CSI had upon young people's night-time activities.

Looking firstly at the actual impact of the curfew on young people's night-time activities, it was found that most of the teenagers in and around Hillhouse still went out at night, but half of those living in Hillhouse itself believed that their parents were now more worried about them going out in case they came into contact with the police. It was also found that the curfew had not substantially altered the amount of contact the teenagers in Hillhouse had with the police – with many young people having had more contact the previous summer, when they were out later and when there was no curfew in operation. The young people felt harassed and confused about why they were being stopped by the police – which occurred largely when they were in groups. They were equally confused about why adults felt the need to phone the police when they were out, rather than talk to them themselves.

Almost all of the young people from Hillhouse hung about the streets at some time in the week, with around two thirds going out almost every night. This had not changed with the introduction of the CSI. Most of the 12-13 year olds from in and outside Hillhouse had to be home by 9pm. Most of the 14-15 year olds from both areas had to be home before 10.30pm and only two teenage boys – both aged 15 – were allowed to stay out after 10.30pm. In other words, few of the young people interviewed were allowed to wander the streets 'at all hours'.

The number of police interventions relating to young people in Hillhouse during the first six months of the curfew that occurred after 10pm equally suggests that few young people were out very late at night. For example, between 8pm and 9pm there had been around 160 interventions; between 9pm and 10pm there were 66 interventions; and after 10pm there were fewer than ten interventions (McGallagly et al 1998).

Only two of the young people from Hillhouse had had their home-time changed since the introduction of the curfew, but almost half of these young people believed that their parents were now more worried about them going out, in case they came into contact with the police. As 14-year-old Laura from Hillhouse explained, 'At weekends I have to be in half an hour earlier now in case I get picked up by the police'.

The young people interviewed who lived in Hillhouse felt harassed and confused about why the police moved them on or told them to go home at night. Over two thirds of these young people had had contact with the police since the introduction of the curfew, compared to less than half of those who lived in other areas. A third of the Hillhouse teenagers had been told to go home by the police, and another third had been told to move on. None of the young people interviewed had been taken home by the police since the curfew was launched.

Diane, a 13-year-old from Hillhouse, told me, 'I was sent home on the first day of the curfew, but that's all'. Fifteen-year-old Richard said, 'I've been moved on, told to be getting in for the curfew, but not much'. A number of the young people who had been spoken to by the police during the curfew were concerned that simply standing around with friends often led either to complaints from adults or to action by the police to move them or split up their group.

However, as mentioned, for a number of these young people the amount of contact with the police had been more in the previous summer than during the curfew. Fourteen-year-old Laura explained, 'They move us on a lot in the summer. The police tell us there's been complaints, but no one complains to us which they should do 'cos we're never up to much. I guess they're scared of us 'cos we're a big group. There's about 15 of us. They think we'll hit their windows or something if they speak to us – but if they spoke to me I'd tell my pals we'd better move'. Angela, Laura's classmate from Burnbank, said, 'The police have stopped us a few times and said there's been complaints. We'd not had anyone complain to us – if they had we'd be quiet. It usually happens when we're in a big group', while 15-year-old William felt that the police used the excuse of adults complaining to do what ever they wanted to. 'They shift us all the time', he said. 'They say there's been complaints, but that's not true'.

The Scottish Office report evaluating the impact of the Child Safety Initiative after six months found that all of the boys in their survey had had contact with the police compared to only half of the girls. These young people felt that the level of policing was more than ever before. One respondent explained: 'Before the "curfew" I had been searched once but now it's about every weekend'. This report found that girls

appeared to avoid contact with the police - one girl explaining that, 'If we see them coming we run and hide up the closes' (McGallagly et al 1998).

None of the young people interviewed expressed a concern about peer pressure. Also few described having had 'serious bother' in their area. Where issues of 'bother' were raised, other groups of teenagers of a similar age to themselves were mentioned.

A safe generation

The expectation of some of those groups and newspapers that questioned the curfew was that its impact on young people would create a greater sense of 'us and them' - especially for young people who felt harassed by the police activities. However, in analysing the thoughts of the young people in Hillhouse, the extent of this concern is questionable. Rather than the curfew alienating young people from the police, the teenagers in Hillhouse appear to be part of an 'alien nation' within which other people are treated with suspicion, and where there is a greater readiness to understand freedom less in terms of individual liberty than in terms of the freedom to be safe.

Following the interviews with young people in and around Hillhouse, it was clear that, despite the resentment at being targeted by the police, these teenagers were generally more concerned about the need to control other young people. Subsequently, as the police themselves had suggested, most young people actually wanted more, not less, policing.

The concern felt by adults about the nuisance behaviour of young people, and the need to involve the police in the regulation of this behaviour, was reflected by the young people themselves. This desire for more regulation of others meant that the young people had a contradictory attitude to the police. Personally, many young people had experiences of being moved on by the police that frustrated them, but despite this there was still a desire for more regulation of other teenagers. Similarly, while there was an acceptance or even support for more regulation of young people's time, there was some evidence that these teenagers were accepting more limits on their own freedom at night.

Asked whether or not they supported the curfew, over half of the young people interviewed from in and around Hillhouse said they did support it. However, when broken down into areas, it was found that while over three quarters of those living outside Hillhouse agreed with the curfew, only a minority, or 38%, of those in Hillhouse supported it, with 54% against. Similarly, the Scottish Human Rights Centre's research, based on interviews with 66 young people on the streets of Hillhouse, found a quarter of these young people supported the initiative and 55% opposed it (Springham 1998).

However, despite the fact that the majority of Hillhouse young people interviewed for this thesis opposed the curfew, a third of these teenagers opposed it simply because they felt that it was ineffective. For example, Donna believed that 'It doesn't change anything', while Christopher said: 'No one's going in at 9pm anyway. It's a waste of time'. Likewise Steven felt that 'It makes no difference, people just run away from the police'.

Before and indeed during the curfew, it was argued, especially by the children's charities and those opposing the curfew, that young people were also opposed to it. The implication, which was also drawn out by newspapers like the *Scotsman*, was that young people were against the increased policing of public space and of their freedom. To assess this in more detail, the young people who opposed the curfew were also asked whether they thought the police should be given some powers other than the curfew to deal with the young people in their area. Here it was found that two thirds said they should be given alternative powers.

This meant that, of the young people interviewed, only seven percent were against the curfew *and* against any other increase in police powers to deal with young people in their area. Those young people who were opposed to any increased regulation were also the only ones interviewed who mentioned their rights, or their parents' rights, being infringed by the curfew. For example Ann from Hillhouse, who was 14, thought that 'the age' the curfew targeted 'is wrong', and that, 'It should be just for younger ones 'cos I want more time'. Fifteen-year-old Richard from Hillhouse was annoyed by

the police initiative and explained that, 'They take away our freedom and boss us around'. Fifteen-year-old Leanne explained that, 'It should be up to your mam and dad'.

The Scottish Office research in the area also found conflicting views regarding freedom, with one teenage boy forcefully stating that 'William Wallace fought for fuck all, we don't have freedom here' (McGallagly et al 1998). However, this was the exception rather than the norm, and made up a small percentage of the young people, the vast majority of whom were in favour of some increase in policing of the area.

The limited opposition to the curfew or alternative forms of policing may in part reflect the age of the interviewees and the tendency for younger people to give the 'right answer' to questions asked by adults. In this respect it would be expected that the older teenagers would be more inclined to demand freedom rather than more policing. However, the majority of the 15-year-olds from in and around Hillhouse were in favour of more policing of other young people.

Continuing with this theme, the young people were asked if they would like to see more policing in their area. Almost a third of the young people from Hillhouse wanted fewer police in their area, but over two thirds wanted more or no change to the amount of policing that their area received. Therefore, for the majority of the young people living in Hillhouse, it was found that the level of policing undertaken during the curfew was either supported, or thought to be not enough. Despite the fact that many of these young people were not convinced that the curfew was either fair or effective, there was no overall opposition to more policing itself.

Studying the gender difference in the support for the curfew, it was found that there was no gender difference in the level of support for more police, or more regulation of young people who were out at night. Looking again at age differences in general, it was also found, that there was little difference in the attitudes of the younger and older young people towards the police. It was expected that the younger teenagers, who were less independent and would be out on the street at night less, would have a more conservative, pro-regulatory attitude towards other young people. However, while

there was some evidence of this, it was also the case that the majority of the older teenagers had a very similar pro-regulatory approach to other young people, despite their own negative experiences of the police in their area.

Examining similar research into young people's attitudes to the police, it was also found that despite bad personal experiences of policing, young people still wanted more of it. In a survey carried out in Stirling, for example, of the 16-25 year olds surveyed, only one percent of respondents felt they were treated well by the police and yet three quarters believed the police should make their area safer (Stirling Council 1997: 106).

Research examining the experiences and attitudes of 12-15 year olds in the British Crime Survey found that 'the stereotype of young people as anti-authority – and more specifically anti-police – does not hold'. The report went on to explain that 'the overwhelming majority of young people recognise the need for the police, and many look to them for protection'. In conclusion the report noted that young people – many of whom are stopped by the police and sometimes searched – 'may come to expect a degree of monitoring from the police, and not always judge them any worse for it' (Maung 1995: 57).

The general relationship between young people and the police appears therefore to be a contradictory one. As the Stirling research concluded, 'Young people seem to have quite contradictory views on policing' (Stirling Council 1997), or as the Scottish Crime Survey found, 'young people [are] unsure about how they perceived the police' (Anderson and Leitch 1996: 88).

In Hillhouse, the young people had a similarly contradictory attitude towards the police. For many young people, their personal experience of the police was generally negative. Having been stopped and moved on by the police at night – often for simply hanging around – these young people were frustrated by police attitudes. The young people felt that it was unfair to be moved by the police for standing about with friends. However, despite these experiences, the young people in and around Hillhouse were generally in favour of the increasing regulation of public space – and in favour of the

increased regulation of young people who hung about the streets. As we have seen, few of these teenagers argued about their *right* to move around their estate without police interference, or about the right of their parents to decide upon the time that they should be allowed out at night. In terms of the general support for young people's freedom to use public space in general, fewer still were concerned about the rights of all the young people in the area, and, like the adults they often criticised for contacting the police, they too were keen to have the police deal with young people. The police were understood by these young people not as a body that dealt with crime but more particularly as a body to deal with regulating the petty 'antisocial' behaviour of young people on their estates and to ensure their safety.

Regulating others

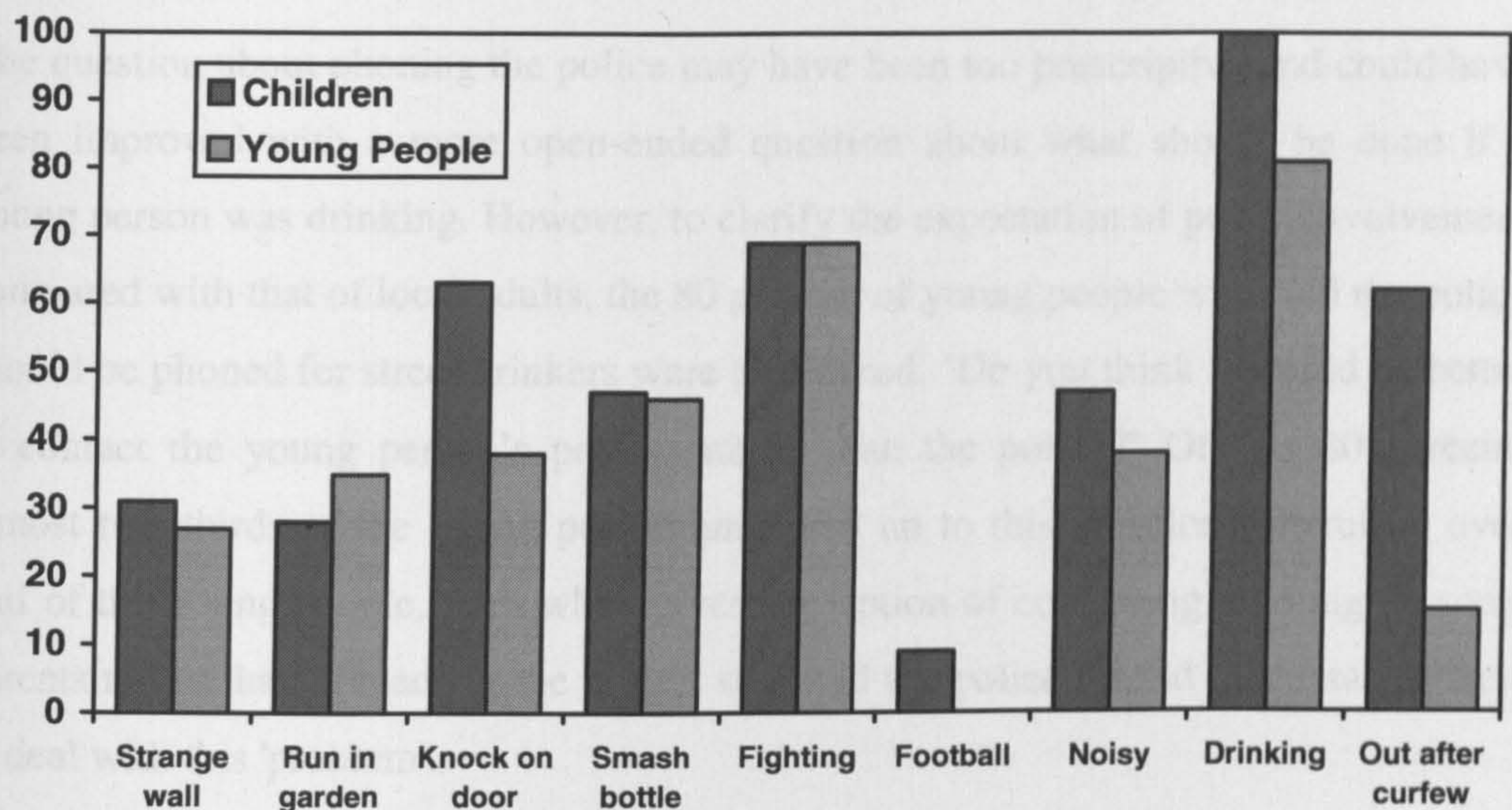
To assess the extent to which both children and young people had come to recognise the police as the people to deal with young people's nuisance behaviour in public space, they were asked a series of questions related to this.

Given a variety of 'nuisance' activities that young people might be involved in, the children and young people were asked if the police should be contacted to deal with these problems. These activities were:

- Sitting on a stranger's wall?
- Running in a garden?
- Knocking on a door and running off?
- Smashing a bottle in the street?
- Fighting in the street?
- Playing football in the street?
- Being noisy in the street?
- Drinking in the street?
- Going out after the curfew time?

The level of support for phoning the police if a young person was involved in these various activities is shown below.

Figure 1: Number of children and young people in favour of phoning the police in different circumstances (%)



The most significant finding from this table is the large number of primary school, but more significantly high school, pupils who were prepared to phone the police for minor offences. Indeed, apart from the disparities in the answers of the children and young people regarding knocking on someone's door and being out after the curfew time, the percentage of children under 12 and the young teenagers who would call the police is very similar. There was no equivocation in particular about calling the police if a young person was seen drinking under age.

Whether or not young people would actually phone the police themselves is unclear, but there is a significant minority of young people who said the police should be called for almost any 'offence' and a large majority who said the police should be involved if young people were fighting or drinking. This appears to reflect a certain attitude and a desire to have other young people moved off the street for activities that would be defined as nuisance or 'non-criminal' by the police.

Despite the fact that some of these young people admitted drinking themselves, the assumption regarding 'street drinkers' was that they would 'get into a fight', 'cause trouble', or 'go a bit nuts' – and so deserved to be picked up or moved on by the police, just in case.

The question about phoning the police may have been too prescriptive and could have been improved with a more open-ended question about what should be done if a young person was drinking. However, to clarify the expectation of police involvement compared with that of local adults, the 80 percent of young people who said the police should be phoned for street drinkers were also asked, 'Do you think it would be better to contact the young person's parents rather than the police?' Of this 80 percent, almost two thirds of the young people answered no to this question. Therefore over half of the young people, even when given the option of contacting a young person's parents rather than contacting the police, still said the police should be contacted first to deal with this 'problem'.

The reason for this attitude towards other young people who drink on the streets at night is varied and relates in part to experiences of 'street drinkers' who sometimes cause trouble and can be rowdy. It may also reflect the simple fact that drinking is something young people know they should not do. It is likely, however, that these young people had also been influenced by the high-profile police campaigns and new laws that banned street drinking in many areas of Scotland in the years running up to the introduction of the curfew. Generally, it reflected a view held by most of these young people that the nuisance or antisocial behaviour of other young people was something that should be dealt with by the police. The chance that young people drinking may result in rowdy behaviour was seen as enough justification for involving the police and moving these young people off the streets.

While possibly representing a more intolerant attitude towards other young people, the approach by many of the teenagers in Hillhouse to the issue of freedom in public space could be seen as representing a more risk-averse attitude, predicated upon a more limited expectation of their engagement with potential risks.

Regulating the self

The extent of the personal difficulties facing young people in Hillhouse was assessed to ascertain the myth and reality of the idea that they were 'unsafe' in their neighbourhood. While over half of the young people interviewed thought that Hillhouse was an area with 'a lot of bother', only one in eight had personally had any 'bother'. The trouble mentioned consisted of fights (by three females), a gang fight, and some teenagers being noisy at night. Fourteen-year-old Carol mentioned that there had been a young man stabbed and killed a few years earlier in a fight. However this was clearly the exception rather than the rule to life in Hillhouse, and does not explain why these young people had come to accept, even expect, the high level of regulation of public space in their area.

The intolerant attitude that many adults have towards young people is here replicated by many of the young people themselves, who despite their own personal experience of the police appeared to be keen to have any *potential* troublemakers cleared off the streets. This desire for a more regulated environment could reflect a changing expectation of freedom within public space, and may also result in young people having a more limited expectation of themselves, of what people they are prepared to have contact with, and of what situations they are prepared to deal with, without police back-up. In this respect, the desire by teenagers for greater freedom and independence as they get older is potentially conflicting with the desire for more safety and regulation of others, and ultimately of themselves. In a survey of young people carried out by the South Lanarkshire youth council planning group, for example, when given ten options to choose from as a priority issue, 21% of respondents chose 'crime, violence and personal safety', compared to only 15% who chose 'youth rights'. *Like the transformation of rights discussed in the previous chapter, here, too, the right to be safe was arguably winning the battle against the right to be 'free'.* As 15-year-old Simon from Earnock explained, 'If someone's drinking in my street, it's my *right* to phone the police if I want to.'

This desire by teenagers for safety and more policing of other young people was also found to be the case in Stirling. Here, it was found in a study of young people that half

of those surveyed wanted more police on the street; a fifth wanted CCTV to be introduced on their estate; and a quarter said a good way of making the streets safer would be to make sure young people stay off the streets at night (Stirling Council 1997) Similarly, the attitudes of the young people in and around Hillhouse reflect a broader move away from what could be described as libertarian values, and a move towards a more authoritarian or regulated environment.

Looking at the 12th report of the British Social Attitudes Survey, a chapter entitled 'Libertarianism in Retreat' assesses the attitudes of the British public towards different forms of policing and surveillance and concludes that, 'Four years ago, we described the British public as "fainthearted libertarians", and our latest data give no grounds for questioning this judgement' (Jowells et al 1995: 204). The report also noted that the support for the use of video cameras on housing estates to detect vandals, for example, had significantly increased from 53% in 1990 to 70% in 1994. As with the desire for more policing of street drinking in Hillhouse, the authors of this chapter of the BSA survey believe that this move to accepting more surveillance cameras on estates is partly to do with the public becoming used to these new forms of policing. Once established as the norm, it is less likely that people will view new forms of policing as problematic and will therefore potentially come to expect a more regulated environment.

This expectation of a higher level of regulation of public space reflects not only the normalisation of this process, but also an attitude to life that elevates the issue of safety and therefore protection above that of autonomy and individual freedom.

Safety First

What this research suggests is not only that young people have a more pro-regulatory attitude and level of support for police involvement in public life than young people would perhaps have had previously, but that more generally, their relationships with and negotiation of other young people in public space has been influenced by a culture that elevates safety and frames relationships more within a prism of being 'at risk'. As such the interactions and conflicts between young people which often occur in public

space were understood to a degree within a more problematic framework and the basis of support for 'antisocial behaviour' initiatives appeared to be already in existence.

For those promoting the curfew, the issue of safety was one they felt was as relevant for young people as it was for adults in the area. Groups opposing the curfew questioned this safety promotion as being, in part, a PR exercise to hide the more authoritarian and anti-young people aspect of the initiative. Within this promotion the idea of young people needing protection from other young people and indeed from themselves had a paternalistic quality to it – one which would be unlikely to be replicated in how young people saw themselves. However, for a significant minority of young people in and around Hillhouse, safety was something they saw as central and was something which influenced their activities and relationships with other young people. At the same time, for most of these young people the question of safety was one they clearly were conscious of and, to some degree, engaged with in their understanding of themselves and others around them. In this respect, the issue of safety promoted by the authorities was indeed one which young people adhered to.

Discussing whether or not young people felt safe on the streets, travelling around Hamilton, and in their dealings with other young people, what was most noticeable was that every young person asked these questions understood what was meant by being 'at risk' and being 'safe'. Also, nobody asked, for example when discussing feeling 'safe' on their estate, 'Safe from what?' The category of being and feeling *safe* was one that young people both engaged with and understood.

Within a cultural climate which, as discussed in the previous chapter, understood and represented young people within the framework of safety, abuse and vulnerability, and also living in an environment where safety initiatives were highly visible and normalised, it was likely that this would impact not only on young people's activities but also on the image that these young people had of themselves and others.

Despite the differences between the understanding that adults in Hillhouse had of the risks and dangers in the area compared with those promoted by the local authority and police, there was a general understanding of children, young people, and indeed of

adults themselves, as being potentially unsafe and vulnerable. Parental concerns for the safety of their children, for example, in this respect reflected a common culture of fear that was being engaged with and supported by the CSI.

The extent to which the young people in Hillhouse did understand themselves as being 'vulnerable' is difficult to ascertain. However, there was evidence that in terms of independent travel, going out at night, and travelling to friends' houses, a substantial minority of young people, between a quarter and a third, led highly regulated lives - in part because of safety concerns that they or their parents had. These concerns were rarely based on any personal experience of problems in the area, but rather represented a precautionary approach to dealings with other young people.

Discussing her experience of travelling to a friend's house, Lucy explained that, 'it's a fifteen minute walk so mum takes me for my safety'. Fifteen-year-old Lillian remarked that, 'If it's Hillhouse I get a lift. I'm scared to walk by myself - I don't know everybody there'. This concern for safety, which is arguably not new, especially for girls, was replicated by a number of fifteen-year-old boys in the area, who gave such explanations as: 'I get a lift when it's dark, my parents would worry if I didn't', and 'My mother doesn't like me walking in the dark'.

The majority of young people in and around Hillhouse did go out at night. However, as discussed, they also, at least in part, understood their activities more generally and perhaps more acutely in terms of the safety and danger posed. More particularly it also appears that these potential dangers were understood less as practical issues to be negotiated and overcome, but as risks that simply should not be faced, or issues to be managed by others. When discussing the reasons for supporting the curfew, for example, a number of young people spoke of their own safety but also that of young children. Paul believed that it would, 'Keep younger kids in when drink's about', and Tracy supported the curfew because it 'saves young ones from danger'. The CSI in this respect could have elevated the awareness of safety and dangers that existed on the Hillhouse estate - despite the limited evidence of any real dangers, especially for the children in the area.

This awareness of dangers and of safety issues could explain the contradictory relationship that young people in Hillhouse and elsewhere appear to have with the police. As the Stirling research noted:

Many young people do not feel the police respect young people and are therefore suspicious and distrustful (if not hostile) towards them, however they also argue for increased policing and a more visible police presence to increase their feelings of safety (Stirling Council 1997: 106).

For young people, like the adults in the area, a 'feeling' of safety appeared in part to relate to their awareness of themselves as being vulnerable, an awareness predicated upon a precautionary consciousness of safety first.

This safety first framework was something that was becoming an influential cultural trend at the time of the Hamilton curfew - reflected for example in the 'Safe Clubbing' movement which developed in nightclubs across the UK. Studying this development in young people's leisure activities, Amis noted that in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s the main perceived danger for young people who went out clubbing came from going to 'dodgy' clubs in 'rough' areas. Here young people would make a conscious decision whether or not to go to these areas, aware that there may be trouble. Today, by comparison, he explained, clubs that have 'Safe Clubbing' campaigns treat *all* young people as potential victims not only of violence, and sexual harassment but, more significantly, as being at risk from the 'harm adolescents might do to themselves through abuse of alcohol and/or drugs' (Amis 1997: 11). The implicit assumption, Amis believes, is that the young clubbers are not capable of making their own assessment of what, if any, risk is involved in their activity. 'In effect,' he states, 'consumption of drugs and/or drunkenness are seen as manifestations of victimhood where people have lost their self-control and have succumbed to temptation' (Amis 1997: 12).

Like the concern for young people within the CSI promotion, that they would become victims of peer pressure and criminal influences, here the activities of young people are similarly seen within the prism of the 'at risk' youth. As Amis argued:

In the 1990s, the notion of conscious choice has been diminished in a number of ways. People are seen as less in overall control of their lives and more as victims of circumstance or chance. It is in this context that adolescents and young adults who go out clubbing are increasingly seen as being “at risk” from circumstances they are perceived to be no longer capable of controlling without outside intervention (Amis 1997: 15).

While many young people would challenge the notion that they are passively accepting a more regulated environment, Amis notes, they appear to have taken on board the idea that they are ‘at risk’. In Hillhouse, there was some evidence of this more risk-conscious outlook of young people, although as we have seen the tension between being protected and being ‘free’ remained an issue for many of these young people.

Partners in crime

A year after its introduction, the curfew was announced to have been a great success and a declaration was made by the police that the CSI would be expanded to cover the whole of Hamilton. To emphasise the safety aspect of the initiative, the curfew was renamed the Child and Young Persons Safety Initiative and the police were now - possibly to overcome the ‘curfew’ label - said to be enforcing this initiative both in the daytime and at night.

Before the CSI was launched, Henry McLeish, the Scottish Home Affairs Minister, explained that, ‘This initiative fits in with the Government’s push for partnership between families, the people and local authorities to create a safer society’ (*Scotsman* 3 October 1997). One year on, a key reasons for the CSI being seen as a success was the ‘partnership’ with the police and local authority, but most significantly with the public themselves.

In October 1998 the curfew received a ‘top award’ from the Crime Prevention and Community Safety Awards scheme, and Chief Inspector John Orr explained that the

award was 'testament to the importance of working in partnership'. Nigel Whiskin of Crime Concern, who organised the awards, similarly said that: 'The Hamilton initiative shows what can be achieved with local partners to tackle crime and antisocial behaviour', especially when the solutions were 'based in the community' (*Hamilton Advertiser* 15 October 1998).

The community involvement in the CSI had been a key aspect of its promotion by local politicians before, during and after its initial trial period. As we have seen, consultation had taken place with people in Hamilton to assess public concerns and subsequent research was carried out in schools and with local people in Hillhouse to gauge the impact of the CSI. The desire to show that the new initiative was something generated by the public themselves even led local MP George Robertson to claim incorrectly that the idea for a curfew had come from the Citizens' Jury - another consultation group set up specifically to look at the issue of community safety.

Following the publication of the Scottish Office research into the CSI, it was unclear whether the initiative had been a success or not - even in terms of the categories of success stipulated by the police. As discussed above, the safety aspect of the CSI was not proven – this was something one of the researchers noted in the local paper, saying that 'It is difficult to state categorically at this stage whether it has been a success or failure in relation to the safety issue'. However, he noted that 'there is some evidence to suggest a reduction in juvenile crime in the intervention area' (*Hamilton Advertiser* 22 October 1998). The evidence for this reduction in crime was, however, also not clear and the research document examining various aspects of crime and disorder had conflicting findings (McGallagly et al 1998). Indeed, despite the fact that crime had fallen in the targeted areas by 23 percent compared with the six months prior to its introduction, when comparing the same time of year in the year before the CSI was introduced it was found that crimes had actually increased by 17 percent (*Hamilton Advertiser* 22 October 1998).

This may, as John Orr noted, reflect an increase in reporting of crime. However it was *despite* the research set up by the police and the statistics they provided that the initiative was said to be a great success. Dismissing the significance of these findings

in the report, Orr simply stated that, 'I am not going to get hung up on figures' (*Hamilton Advertiser* 22 October 1998).

Indeed regardless of the statistical evidence of the usefulness of the CSI, the act of engaging with the public was clearly seen by both police and especially the local politicians as a success in and of itself. That local people were anxious and supportive of increased policing across the whole of Hamilton appeared to be proven by the local newspaper's opinion poll. The poll questioned whether or not people would support the CSI being extended across the whole of Hamilton and resulted in 1556 or 93 per cent of callers saying they would support it. In Hillhouse itself, the Scottish Office research found that 68 per cent of those surveyed said they would support the curfew's continuation, although interestingly 54 per cent of the men asked said they would not support this.

Despite the often contradictory evidence of even the Scottish Office research about the curfew - its success, its impact of feelings of safe, the basis of its introduction in relation to young children wandering the streets and the impact on crime and safety - the authorities felt that it had been a great success, and indeed it won an award not only in the UK but also in Europe. As well as having some impact 'on the ground' of the targeted areas, it was the engagement made between the authorities and the public itself around this safety initiative which appeared central. At a certain level, the actual impact of the curfew was secondary to this developed relationship and the support of the public for the safety initiative.

However, the nature of the 'partnership' is itself telling both in terms of the fragile basis of legitimacy it suggests and also the more passive nature of the 'involvement' of the community. That consultants were initially used to assess the concerns of the public suggests a certain lack of surety and direction by the local authority, as does the constant attempt to show that the initiative was the product of public concerns and demands. It also reflects a certain sense of distance between the local politicians and the public, who rather than acting as their representatives by nature of the vote, felt the need to survey their public to understand their needs and desires. To a degree the legitimacy and the responsibility of the CSI was handed over to the public themselves

and to 'experts' who could impartially analyse public concerns. However, despite the general sense of anxiety that did appear to exist amongst the public, the curfew was not something that they felt actively engaged by - it was not something that people felt was theirs. Indeed the top-down nature of the initiative was expressed by the focus groups in the Scottish Office research, where rather than feeling part of the process of developing this initiative, they 'expressed confusion over the purpose and targets of the Initiative - which age groups it would apply to and when it would operate' (McGallagly et al 1998: xi).

Despite the consultation, local people in Hillhouse were not part of an active 'movement' to develop this initiative, while on the other hand, local politicians were attempting, in part, to distance themselves from it by locating its emergence within the community. Not only were the authorities, to a degree, attempting to relinquish responsibility for the curfew's introduction in this way, they were also attempting to 'de-politicise' it by using surveys to give a statistical justification for their focus upon community safety. Rather than situate the curfew within a broad political programme, legitimacy was gained, as discussed previously, from the vulnerable public.

As Heartfield notes with reference to the form of engagement developing under the 'Third Way' project of New Labour:

The Third Way connected with the electorate, not on the basis of their collective purpose, but instead playing upon their individuation and the anxieties that arose from it. The voters were no longer represented in the polity as the collective subject of the democratic process. Instead they were recognised by the state as the isolated and persecuted victims of events beyond their control (Heartfield 2002: 199).

Politicising fear

At a national level, Labour politicians were less defensive about the attack on antisocial behaviour, and the MP for Hamilton, George Robertson, prioritised the 'right to a quiet life' ahead of concerns about representing the curfew as a child safety

initiative. Similarly, as was noted at the start of this chapter, by October 1998 the British government had introduced the Crime and Disorder Bill, which gave powers to local authorities to introduce 'curfews' for under-10-year-olds across the country. This was not something that the government quietly introduced, but was presented rather as a flagship initiative symbolising Labour's tough stance on disorder.

The legitimacy for this development may well have come from 'borrowing' the authority of the victim, but was something that national politicians, the home secretary and the Prime Minister felt they could actively promote and place at the centre of their crime policies. Like the chief inspector of Strathclyde police who was not going to get 'hung up on figures' that questioned the curfew's legitimacy, national politicians were similarly confident in their understanding of the public as being generally victimised and in need of support. At this national level, politicians were more in tune with the general or abstract sense of the victimised public and more vociferous in their attempt to reengage this public through this representation of them.

That on the anniversary of the Hamilton curfew, the Crime and Disorder Bill was passed, allowing local authorities to introduce curfew for under-10-year-olds across the country, indicates that the developments in Hamilton were part of a wider political process.

In this chapter it has been shown that there was often a different response by local people to the initiative, to do with their understanding of the problems in their area and to the measures needed to overcome them. The curfew, for example, was not supported by most young people in the area and the extent that children were unsafe was not agreed upon. However, whatever the myths and realities of the 'at risk' nature of the Hillhouse estate, there was a general sense of insecurity which the initiative tapped into. Whatever the safety risks for adults and young people there was a sense of being unsafe, and while the curfew was not fully endorsed by all sections of the public there was again a general desire that safety should be 'provided' by the authorities and that this was a 'right' that was expected by much of the community.

The curfew and the concern with antisocial behaviour related both to public insecurities but also, and perhaps most significantly, to the concerns of the political elite. In this respect the study of the curfew in Hamilton was also a study of these concerns and of the newly developing relationship between the political authorities and the 'victimised public': a relationship that was therapeutically reforming around the 'feelings' of insecurity and the 'community of fear'.

Conclusion

Ignoring for a moment the intricacies of the curfew and the various justifications for its introduction and its actual impact, what is under study at the core of this thesis is the relationship between the state and society - or perhaps more accurately, between the state and the individual.

In examining the curfew, we have been studying in part the arguments used to legitimise the state and through this, attempted to uncover the nature of the contemporary 'subject' both within politics and at the level of the individual: a subject that is less a 'reflexive' individual (Giddens 1991) or a greedy individual (Lea and Young 1984) than a diminished subject.

In this respect, if at a more narrowly focused level, this thesis is attempting to address the problem raised by C. Wright Mills when he asked, 'What varieties of men and women now prevail in this society and in this period? And what varieties are coming to prevail? In what ways are they selected and formed, liberated and repressed, made sensitive and blunted?' (Mills 1967: 13).

In Hamilton, where 'child safety' was understood to be a significant issue by the local authority, there was no demand or expectation that the community should, or even could, do something about this themselves. This is perhaps the strongest example of the diminished expectations of local people. Despite the unquestionable moral or amoral absolutist position that child safety had in society, no independent action of an individual or collective nature was even contemplated by the local authority. But then, the very process of engaging with people as fundamentally vulnerable already

mitigates against a more robust sense of individual action. This vulnerability was expressed most acutely in the promotion of the problems of child safety itself - a problem that in objective terms appears to have had little if any validity, indeed that was, at a general level, a myth.

The attempted engagement, as discussed, between the authorities and the individual was within the prism of safety and as such related to a more fragmented insecure public at an individual level. Community safety was, however, not simply a public preoccupation but was also something that was a political priority at the same time.

At a local level the role of politicians was important in helping to frame the arguments for the curfew, and at a national level the significance of antisocial behaviour made politicians the dominant claimsmakers in relation to this social problem.

One reason for the previous and subsequent examination of political processes and rhetoric within this thesis, is the centrality of politics in the sphere of subjectivity and subjective action. While there are underlying social and economic developments that have led to the situation in Hamilton, in particular with the fragmentation of communities, as Heartfield notes, the examination of politics is of value because 'politics is the realm of subject formation' (Heartfield 2002: 204). By this Heartfield means that, whereas economic and social changes provide the background for changes in society, the 'final determination of events' comes from the reaction of significant groups and individuals within the realm of politics.

Despite subjectivity being discussed here as having been diminished, this does not signify that the role of subjectivity is less important, but rather that the examination of this diminished subjectivity can help to unearth and explain the increasing significance given to community safety and antisocial behaviour initiatives by the authorities themselves.

In terms of the CSI and the diminished level of responsibility and action expected of the local people, discussed in the previous chapter, it is important to note that not all of the people in Hillhouse reflected the vulnerable individual that was represented by

the authorities. Some of the young people - if a minority - remained more 'streetwise' and dynamic in their engagement with public space, and a number of adults were still involved in regulating the behaviour of young people in their area. Indeed, that only just over half of the local men questioned in the Scottish Office survey supported an extension of this initiative could suggest that they felt it unnecessary, possibly because the problems being engaged with were ones they felt able to resolve themselves. Whatever the reasons for this, it was clear, in discussions with the local community council chair and others, that not all of the adults in the area were as engaged by the problems of crime, safety and antisocial young people. This is not to argue that fear and a level of insecurity was not significant in the area - and certainly in terms of child safety there appeared to be no disagreement with its importance in general. However, as Nolan has noted in relation to therapeutic awareness training within the workplace that, 'take[s] the most thin-skinned, chronically offended person in a group as the norm' (Nolan 1998: 294), in Hamilton the CSI was similarly based upon an understanding of the local adults as being 'chronically' vulnerable, and terrorised by the activities of local children and young people. As Garland has noted, in terms of how the state relates to its citizens, 'The victim is now, in a certain sense, a much more representative character, whose experience is taken to be common and collective, rather than individual and atypical' (Garland 2002: 11). It was this image of the subject which dominated the promotion and implementation of the curfew.

That local adults were understood to be 'living in fear' was not simply a figment of the authority's imagination, indeed a 'culture of fear' did appear to both surround adults lives and also that of children. However, that this fear was a direct product of crime and antisocial behaviour is extremely contestable. As we noted in interviews with the children and young people, Hillhouse was far from being a ghetto where young people or adults were seriously 'at risk'. Indeed, looking not only at broad social and economic changes, but also at the level of the different generations and their interactions with young people, there appears to be far wider reasons for the level of insecurity and lack of surety felt by adults in their relations with the young.

However, despite these wider considerations it has been politicians and, most noticeably and currently, the New Labour Party that has not only reacted to public

insecurities but helped to generate them by engaging with and promoting the politics of fear. In his book *The Unfinished Revolution*, Labour Party moderniser Philip Gould, for example, self-consciously recognised that fear had emerged due to broad social changes, but nonetheless believed that New Labour must reconnect with voters with policies that are 'tough on crime' (Gould 1999).

This development, rather than reflecting simple political opportunism or a conspiracy within the Labour ranks to engage with public fears that the politicians themselves do not hold, expressed an emerging political elite that, for different reasons than the fragmented public, also had an exaggerated sense of social disintegration, in part because of a diminution of a belief in its own capacity to influence social developments.

As the curfew was approaching its first year in operation, Prime Minister Tony Blair expressed this sense of social instability in a world where subjective intervention appeared not only as inadequate but as part of the problem. Speaking at the Labour Party conference in Blackpool, Blair explained that,

People are posing questions far more fundamental than about what is in a manifesto. How can I be sure about my job, about my family's safety, about the future prosperity of my country? This is the challenge: finding security and stability in a world pushed ever faster forward by *the irresistible forces of history and human invention* (*Guardian* 30 September 1998 (my italics)).

History and human intervention, understood as an 'irresistible force' somehow beyond control, has here resulted in a conservative preoccupation with 'security and stability' at the international and national level.

The focus on community safety seen in Hamilton was, in this respect, less to do with local fears and the activities of the local youth than with the loss of a sense of subjective political capacities of the political elite themselves - something that was reflected at the local level. In South Lanarkshire and in Hillhouse itself, the somewhat myopic and persistent focus upon community safety in the interpretation of surveys

and the setting up of the Citizens' Jury reflected this internal political preoccupation with and organisation around safety and security.

However, while the 'culture of fear' has broad cultural routes, it is the development not only of relevant claims that promote certain social problems, but perhaps more importantly the institutionalisation of these problems.

The institutionalisation of the CSI, for example, had an impact not only at a local level but at a national and indeed international level, in promoting the idea that children were 'at risk' and that communities are being undermined by the antisocial behaviour of young people. In this respect this initiative not only related to the culture of fear, but helped to reinforce it and form the framework of understanding the problem of fear in society.

Ironically, in relation to how social problems are constructed or how they are ignored, it was within the development of the CSI that a very different and alternative response by local politicians was illustrated – with the development of the Universal Connexions youth café.

This £3 million pound development was part of the CSI package – not only to remove young people off the streets, but to give them something to do and somewhere to go. However, the subsequent gathering of young people around this centre and the various 'antisocial' activities they 'got up to' led to a significant number of complaints from local adults. Rather than react to these complaints with another curfew or a similar community safety initiative, the council leader Tom McCabe denounced those people complaining and rejected their calls for a 'quiet neighbourhood'. Frustrated by these complaints and the fact that the council had spent so much money on a new youth resource, McCabe swept aside the local concerns and stated that the area was 'never that quiet anyway' (*Hamilton Advertiser* 24 December 1998).

Chapter 8: The Meaning of ‘Antisocial Behaviour’

Antisocial: opposed to the principles on which society is constituted (Oxford English Dictionary in 1885).

Antisocial: Contrary to the laws and customs of society; causing annoyance and disapproval in others: children’s antisocial behaviour (New Oxford English Dictionary 1989).¹³⁶

Introduction

The term 'antisocial behaviour' has existed for many years, and indeed many of the issues addressed today within the parameters of antisocial behaviour are often similar to those addressed in the past.¹³⁷ However, despite these similarities, it would be a mistake to understand the issue of antisocial behaviour - especially in terms of its significance to politics and society more generally - as simply a continuation of past concerns. Not only has the meaning of antisocial behaviour changed somewhat, as reflected in the dictionary definitions above, but the number and variety of forms of behaviour and actions that are today so labelled has increased, and continues to increase. Old social concerns have been relabelled as antisocial, while new 'crimes' and forms of problem behaviour have been discovered and branded within the rubric of 'antisocial behaviour'.

Having discussed so far the rise of amoral panics and the development of the politics of antisocial behaviour that led to the introduction of the Hamilton curfew, here the increasing concern with antisocial behaviour since this initiative was introduced is explored more fully.

In 1997, when the Hamilton curfew was introduced, many issues that have become associated with antisocial behaviour were at this point in time not defined as being 'antisocial'. Subsequently, the rise in the significance of 'antisocial behaviour' to public and political life has been established to the extent that it has become one of the

most discussed social problems. But why is this, and why has the term ‘antisocial behaviour’ come to be used to explain myriad social problems? How does this relate to the nature of politics, the engagement with the vulnerable public, and what does it tell us about the individual and about society?

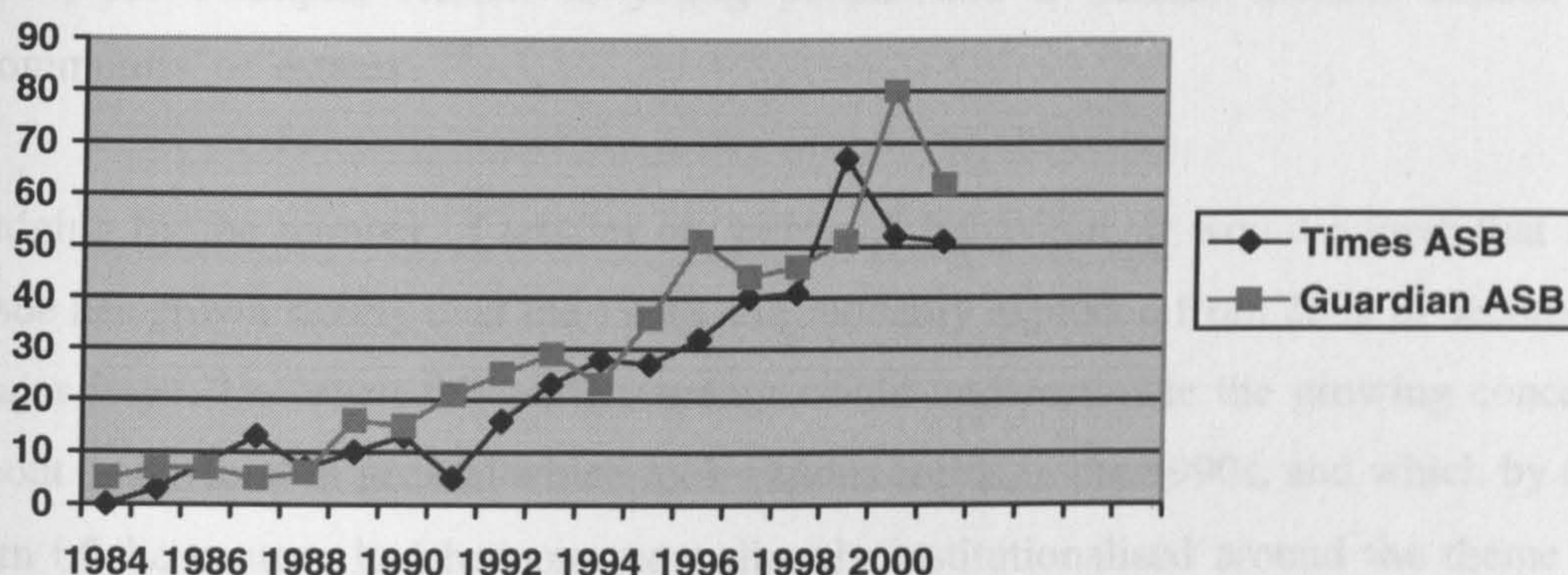
As we will see, the use of the term antisocial behaviour has grown significantly in recent years, within the media, within academic research and particularly within the more psychologically framed forms of research and criminology. In much of these discussions about antisocial behaviour, it is not simply that old issues have been re-branded as antisocial, but rather that new forms of behaviour have been problematised and old issues reinterpreted through a more therapeutic gaze. Why such issues can be understood as both *antisocial* and as a form of *behaviour* is examined to understand how the themes discussed so far in the thesis can be seen within the very meaning and understanding of modern day antisocial behaviour.

The rise of antisocial behaviour

So prevalent is the term antisocial behaviour today that it is difficult to imagine that this ‘social problem’ had little public/political existence just a few years ago. Today, ‘antisocial behaviour’ is a significant issue in the media, politics, law and research. In social policy, in local government, and within the activities of voluntary organisations, antisocial behaviour helps to direct myriad initiatives; while within the public domain and even in popular television culture issues associated with antisocial behaviour have become an area of significant concern and focus. This popular and political concern with antisocial behaviour is also reflected to some degree within academia – especially within the more psychologically-oriented forms of sociology and criminology.

Examining the media articles addressing the issue of antisocial behaviour, for example, we find that from the 1980s, when there were few such articles, the concern with antisocial behaviour has increased significantly through the 1990s and into the twenty-first century.

Figure 2: *Times* and *Guardian* searches for 'antisocial behaviour' (ASB) up to 2001¹³⁸



From a consistent increase in articles related to antisocial behaviour up to 2001 – as shown above – a further and more rapid increase occurred. For example, whereas the number of such articles in 2001 in the *Guardian* was 80, this increased to 273 in 2003, and then to 574 in 2004.¹³⁹ This increase reflected in part the institutionalisation of initiatives to address issues of antisocial behaviour – like ASBOs (Antisocial Behaviour Orders),¹⁴⁰ and the concurrent political focus on this issue by the Labour government.¹⁴¹

The Hamilton Child Safety Initiative was one of the first major local initiatives, following the election of New Labour, to deal with issues associated with antisocial behaviour, and this has been followed by a number of significant pieces of legislation including the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act, the Antisocial Behaviour Act (2003) and the Antisocial Behaviour Act (Scotland) 2004.¹⁴²

Politicians have also helped to make antisocial behaviour into a 'social problem', expressed in their speeches and laws. This can be illustrated by the number of articles where politicians discuss or comment on the issue of antisocial behaviour. In 1985, for example, there was only one such article in the *Guardian*, with 9 in 1994 and over 170 in 2004.¹⁴³

'Antisocial behaviour' has increasingly, over the last decade (in terms of newspaper coverage), become associated with 'communities' and 'estates' - and with working class youth in particular. Over half of the *Guardian* articles on antisocial behaviour in 2004, for example, related to young people and a similar number related to 'community' or 'estates'.¹⁴⁴

Judging by the number of articles on antisocial behaviour, it would appear that the issue has grown slowly over the 1990s and suddenly exploded from 2002 to become a major issue. However, this understanding would underestimate the growing concern about 'behaviour' in general which took various forms in the 1990s, and which by the turn of the century had become more directly institutionalised around the theme of 'antisocial behaviour'.

The media coverage of antisocial behaviour related to both the political and institutional focus upon this social problem - but concern about this type of behaviour is by no means simply an 'elite' concern. Phone calls to the police, for example, about 'nuisance' (i.e. non-criminal behaviour) of young people, had been noted to be a major issue for the police in 1996,¹⁴⁵ and before this in 1992, the British Crime Survey had also noted that one of the reasons for the rise in their crime statistics was due to the increased reporting of 'less serious' crimes, due to the 'increasing public sensitivity' to crime related issues (Home Office 1992). More recently the MORI poll *What Place for ASBOs in an Era of Respect?*, has noted that 'antisocial behaviour is an issue which resonates with the public at a 'local level'.¹⁴⁶

Within the social sciences, issues associated with antisocial behaviour have also become more significant as an area for research. This has developed in part with the increased focus within criminology on victims of crime and concerns with harassment and abuse,¹⁴⁷ but perhaps most significantly within the field of psychology and research focused upon psychosocial risk factors.

Examining research related to the issue of antisocial behaviour, and in particular the increasing use of this term, very similar results were found to the newspaper searches, with a huge increase in journal articles in the International Bibliography of the Social

Sciences (BIDS) containing the term 'antisocial behaviour' or 'anti-social behaviour' in the late 1990s and early years of the twenty-first century.¹⁴⁸

Table 4: BIDS search for 'antisocial behaviour' or 'anti-social behaviour'.

Year	Number of hits
1951-55	3
1956-60	1
1961-65	1
1966-70	0
1971-75	5
1976-80	7
1981-85	6
1986-90	8
1991-95	28
1996-2000	154
2001- April 2005	120

Part of this increase reflects the increasing number of journals searched within BIDS. However, it also reflects the greater number of psychologically oriented journals, which, in part, have helped focus more research on issues associated with antisocial behaviour.¹⁴⁹

In relation to policy developments associated with crime and antisocial behaviour, the growth of the psychologically-based developmental criminology has also been significant in focusing attention on issues of 'behaviour' within criminology and also in helping to set the parameters within which these problems are understood. As a leading figure within developmental criminology, David Farrington, notes: 'Developmental criminology advanced enormously in the 1980s and 1990s', in the study of 'the development of offending and antisocial behaviour' (Farrington 2002: 658). This approach to crime and antisocial behaviour has, in the 1990s, encouraged an 'enormous increase in the influence of risk-focused prevention in criminology', an

approach which was 'imported into criminology from medicine and public health' (2002: 660), and that, as Farrington argues, sees offending as 'part of a larger *syndrome* of antisocial behaviour that arises in childhood and tends to persist into adulthood' (2002: 658 my italics).

Through the 1980s and 1990s, as Hollin states, 'criminological psychologists became sufficiently confident in their subject to begin to produce a string of textbooks on the topic of psychology and crime' (Hollin 2002: 163-5). As this confidence grew, so too did the 'increasing harmony between criminologists and psychologists in the UK', assisted in large part by the Developmental Criminology of authors like David Farrington (2002: 166).

Antisocial behaviour has unquestionably grown as a 'social problem' and focus for concern within public life, within politics, and in research, while the media coverage of issues labelled as being antisocial has risen sharply over the last few years. However, as discussed previously, a number of issues had already arisen and helped lay the foundations of this focus upon problematic *behaviour* between people in society often associated with crime and abuse. Issues of abuse had emerged, especially in relation to children, in the 1980s; youth crime had emerged as a political priority from 1993; the issue of 'irresponsible parents' had developed as a major concern regarding antisocial young people; and the fear of crime and focus on victims within crime had become an accepted priority by the mid-1990s. Also areas of concern like that of 'community' - as a place of focus, and in terms of the sense of 'community' - had become issues for governance (Rose 1996), while notions of 'risk' and 'safety' had become more influential at this time (Furedi 2004: 127).

How these issues inform the understanding of antisocial behaviour, and more specifically, what the conceptual issues are that link them together under the banner of antisocial behaviour, will be discussed more fully below. Before developing this thesis on antisocial behaviour, however, it is worth examining in more detail how antisocial behaviour is related to the couplet it is often paired with - crime.

Crime and antisocial behaviour

Antisocial behaviour, at the time of the Hamilton curfew, was often given significance with reference to more serious crime, with for example the popularity of the broken windows theory of disorder leading to criminality espoused by Strathclyde Chief Constable John Orr. However as the issue of antisocial behaviour has itself become more accepted as a serious problem in its own right, this association with crime has become less necessary.

Some of the most recent crime statistics, and the reactions to them, are telling in understanding how the socially constructed nature of crime is addressed today. Despite headlines like 'Overall crime down by 44% since 1995', the high levels of fear of crime amongst the public and the reaction to this fear by politicians remains intense (*Guardian* 1 December 2005).

Crime figures that would in previous historical periods have led to a sense that society was improving and that crime problems were falling have not accompanied this 'quite extraordinary and historically unprecedented' statistical fall in crime. Rather, the focus of newspaper articles, television debate programmes and most political commentary on these figures in 2005 was to focus in on any possible negative figure available. Statistics on violent crime, for example, showed an increase and became the focus of media and political concern, despite Home Office experts strenuously denying that this increase was 'real' (*Guardian* 21 July 2005).¹⁵⁰

With crime being a universally accepted political priority, and with all political parties attempting to gain support by relating to this 'problem', both the Liberal Democrats and the Conservative home affairs spokesmen targeted these figures on violent crime, relating it specifically to the problem of 'binge drinking', a form of 'antisocial behaviour' the government had itself helped make into a social problem.

Here, as in many discussions about crime today, the issue of 'violent crime' became a discussion of problem behaviour: 'binge drinking', something that is not itself a crime, but has become directly connected with it. Regardless of the reality that violent crime

- if measured using methods used in 1997 - has actually fallen, and the recognition that the statistical increase in 2005 is due to changes in reporting and recording of these crimes, objective statistics appear to be almost irrelevant to the sense that crime is on the increase and to the way politicians and the media relate to issues of crime and antisocial behaviour. Politicians from all sides continue to demand further regulations of problem behaviour, while the government continues to look for ever-more forms of regulation to make society even safer - like the proposal to ban replica guns, following the significant fall in real gun crime.

Within concerns and discussions about crime and particularly antisocial behaviour, there appears to be a declining significance in the 'objectively' measured reality of these problems for both politicians and the public - helped in large part by the focus not on crime and antisocial acts themselves, but on the fear and anxiety expressed within society.¹⁵¹ Rather than engaging with 'real' social problems and processes, the trend within politics and the press is to engage with this subjective sense of fear. Crime policies and discussions in this respect become less about actual crime than about engaging with people's perceptions, anxieties, and 'loss of confidence'.

As the MORI Poll *What place for ASBOs in an era of Respect?* notes with regard to the development of ASBOs, 'Antisocial behaviour orders are a symbol of action - thereby helping to increase public confidence on an issue which resonates' (MORI 2005).

The relationship between crime and antisocial behaviour continues today. However, the emphasis of concern has shifted to focus increasingly upon antisocial behaviour as *the* problem. In the example of 'violent crime', 'problem behaviour' like binge drinking is directly associated with more serious crime; however, the issue of binge drinking is also understood to be a serious problem of 'antisocial behaviour' in and of itself - and has become a focus for political intervention. Whereas antisocial behaviour in the mid-1990s was often highlighted as being a significant problem within, for example, 'Zero Tolerance' police initiatives, by associating petty crimes with serious crimes, today, the issue of 'antisocial behaviour' is a recognised social problem in its own

right. There is no longer a need to associate antisocial behaviour with 'serious' problems of crime: it is itself a 'serious problem'.

Secondly, like the positive crime figures in 2005 that are generally interpreted negatively in society, despite the statistical evidence to the contrary, antisocial behaviour needs little or no objective verification as a social problem. Indeed, rarely, if ever, do speeches, new laws and initiatives about antisocial behaviour come with a statistical justification. Where previously crime initiatives would often have been developed in relation to statistical 'evidence', today the problem of antisocial behaviour is simply accepted. 'Antisocial behaviour' as a social problem is in this respect related to as an almost entirely subjective problem, and one that politicians engage with at the level of fear, anxiety and confidence.

The issue of antisocial behaviour - while having already been isolated as a topic of concern, for example in the Labour Party document *Partners against crime* - has increasingly become understood as the most significant issue in relation to this sense of fear and anxiety in society.¹⁵² With falling crime rates in the last ten years, and particularly since New Labour came to power, but with no similar fall in the anxiety about crime and disorder, the focus upon antisocial behaviour has further intensified, and been understood as the key problem affecting communities and society more generally.

Finally, despite the fact that the problem of 'antisocial behaviour' is often related to non-criminal or petty criminal activities, it is understood to be a problem that is serious - indeed to some extent more serious than crime itself.¹⁵³ To engage with the issue of antisocial behaviour is to relate both to the fear in society and the broad sense of social disorder. *In this respect it is not so much that antisocial behaviour is given significance in relation to crime, but rather that crime is seen as significant as an expression of antisocial behaviour.*

Whereas crimes like burglary, for example, which were a major focus for analysis in the 1970s, had a certain objective (economic) image and were recognised to be rare events for most people, antisocial behaviour has a more generalised air of permanence

and is understood to be a more 'irrational' or 'random' (Best 1999) occurrence - a wider problem of 'behaviour' and one which is ever-present. Even burglary, in this respect, is discussed most frequently with reference to drug addicts - the issue of concern being less on the crime itself than on the problematic lifestyle and behaviour of heroine users.

'Liquid' morality

At a time when antisocial behaviour has become a key theme in politics and society, this development can appear to be a reflection of a government determined to enforce 'social' and 'moral' norms within society. However, in fact the opposite is the case. The rise and rise of concerns with antisocial behaviour today reflect the loss, not the enforcement, of moral and political beliefs.

Comparing the original use of the term 'antisocial' - *opposed to the principles on which society is constituted* - with the definition cited at the start of this chapter in 1989, we find a shift in emphasis of the identified antisocial actor. The first use of the term, in 1802 and subsequently in 1844, is highly political and referred to the moral and political standpoint of Republicans, who were perceived to be a threat to society and its social and religious/moral norms.¹⁵⁴ This definition of antisocial therefore privileges the beliefs of society against those who actively oppose them. In contrast, the more recent definition of antisocial has added to the idea of challenging the norms of society the following: *causing annoyance and disapproval in others: children's antisocial behaviour*.¹⁵⁵ Taking the extremes of what these definitions relate to, whereas the original use of the term antisocial was a conservative denunciation of revolutionary Republicans, the modern equivalent is related to the misbehaviour of children. Also, where the first definition in denouncing Republican activities as antisocial sets up an alternative sense of the correct moral and political 'social' outlook, the latter meaning lacks this wider political or moral content.

Concern about antisocial acts both past and present evolved within a political context. However, the transformation of the meaning of antisocial behaviour reflects, in part, the shift from the politics of the past to the micro-politics of today. The original use

of the term antisocial emerged at the time of the French Revolution - a time when the ideas of 'left and right' developed, pitting ideas of change and rationality against the conservative demand for tradition and morality. Comparatively, the modern growth of the concern with the antisocial has come about precisely when we have gone 'beyond left and right'. In other words, whereas the original use and meaning of the term 'antisocial' reflected a clash of ideas of left and right, and alternative meanings of what it meant to be 'social' as opposed to 'antisocial', today this has emerged at a time when this clash of ideas has largely evaporated, and with it any systematic defence of absolute 'social' norms. This would suggest that the very meaning of what it is to be antisocial today has been transformed.

Rather, what it means to be social as opposed to antisocial today relates less to absolute 'social' norms and values of society, than to the offence and harm that antisocial individual acts may have upon other individuals. The 'social' content of the meaning of antisocial has largely been lost and been replaced by a concept that privileges and defends the individual from others. Rather than seeing this as the re-moralisation or re-politicisation of *society*, this change reflects the politicisation and moralising of *individual interpersonal interactions*. The emergence of the concern with being antisocial has therefore occurred at a time when the content of what it means to be social, political and moral has significantly declined.

The concern with social order expressed in today's preoccupation with antisocial behaviour is not new. Indeed, nor is the anxiety about the loss of values and beliefs a late twentieth century occurrence. Emile Durkheim for example, writing at the end of the nineteenth century, was largely motivated in his sociological study of religion to understand the moral vacuum left with the decline of tradition and religion. However, despite Durkheim's pessimism about the emerging individualism in society (Morrison 1995: 146), he maintained that 'there is something eternal in religion'. For Durkheim, this eternal something related not to religion as such, but to the centrality of society and the fundamental need for people to 'reaffirm the collective feelings and ideas that constitute its unity and its personality' (Durkheim 2001: 322). Where traditional forms of collectivity were in decline more secular forms would emerge. Indeed Durkheim was himself a French patriot, a firm defender of science, and is described as a socialist

- in this respect he embodied many of these secular forms of 'religion' that gave a collective coherence to much of twentieth century life and subsequently undermined the sense of a loss of social order which dogged Durkheim himself.¹⁵⁶

Today the sense of a loss of social order in Britain and the concern with antisocial behaviour has re-emerged and become more universal because of the collapse of these 'secular beliefs'. This sense of disorder amongst the elite has also been encouraged by the decline of traditional morality - reflected in the confusion of 'moral language' and the inability of conservatives to promote a 'back to basics' outlook discussed in previous chapters. The concern with antisocial behaviour has emerged within the elite not in terms of its acting as the landlords of society, but rather, as Bauman argues, as the elite acting as 'absentee landlords'. The 'new elite' lacks both traditional conservative values and 'secular religions' to cohere a society that it senses is out of their control - an antisocial society. This sense of society being out of control is a reflection of the elite itself, who have abdicated the responsibility of being the 'pilot' of society. This elite, 'rule without burdening itself with the chores of administration, management, welfare concerns, or, for that matter, with the mission of 'bringing light', 'reforming the ways', morally uplifting, 'civilizing' and cultural crusades' (Bauman 2000: 13). Where past rules were set down by the 'captains' of society and 'displayed in bold letters in every passageway' - rules that could be followed or challenged - today, in comparison, 'the passengers of the 'Light Capitalism' aircraft...discover to their horror that the pilot's cabin is empty' (2000: 59).

In this sense, the feeling that society is somehow out of control - something which is increasingly related to the activities and 'behaviour of children' - is more a reflection of the 'behaviour' of the 'global elite' itself. Unlike the time when the term antisocial was first used, a time of emerging and fundamental political contestation, today no such contestation exists. Concurrently, where the label of 'antisocial' was given to Republicans, this definition would have been contested and rejected by those on the left. Today, however, there is no such challenge, and it is this loss of opposition to conservative concerns with social order that has allowed the idea of antisocial behaviour to become a universally accepted problem.¹⁵⁷

In the 1980s, when politicians attempted to label someone as being antisocial, it was done to reaffirm an alternative moral order and was, in many cases, questioned or challenged by those on the left. Indeed this contestation laid the basis for both moral panics and the reaction to them. Where the right would denounce the antisocial activities of muggers or militants, the left would both challenge this label and throw it back at the then Conservative government. Even at the level of concerns with the behaviour of school children, for example, which were aired in the 1970s and 1980s and often within a traditionalist demand for 'decency', the question of school discipline and the control of young people was challenged within a radical political framework.¹⁵⁸

Today, by comparison, there is a more generalised acceptance of the problem of 'antisocial behaviour' in and of itself. The particular activity or outlook of an antisocial individual is no longer needed to elaborate upon this problem: we are increasingly, according to certain polls, aware of the 'problem of antisocial behaviour' and in general support government attempts to deal with it.¹⁵⁹ However, the emergence of the concern with antisocial behaviour and a concern with social order does not simply represent a 'move to the right' in any traditional sense. As noted previously, the rise in the concern with antisocial behaviour has occurred at a time when traditional moral authority has declined. Rather than reflecting a rise of traditional values and beliefs, the concern with antisocial behaviour has been re-moralised and re-politicised on a different basis.

What unites the approach by those on the 'left' with those on the 'right' is a move away from a social basis of legitimation (within a moral or political framework) and a shift towards a focus upon the individual in understanding social problems. Whereas antisocial behaviour in the past was understood as an affront to the values and institutions of society, today, even within the definition of 'antisocial' itself, the concern is not with society as such but with 'behaviour' of individuals and the harm done to individual 'victims' of this behaviour. Legitimation is subsequently gained in attacking antisocial behaviour, not with reference to a wider moral or political point of reference, but within the defence the victim. The society or 'community' that is being defended is, in effect, a conglomeration of individuals rather than a unified whole

based on 'social' (whether morally or politically constituted) values and norms. (As Eric Hobsbawn notes, the word 'community' has become increasingly used at a time 'when communities in the sociological sense' have become 'hard to find in real life' (Hobsbawn 1994: 428)). Values have become relativised and few 'absolute' norms are accepted, except the 'moral' value of individual safety.¹⁶⁰

Concern with problematic 'behaviour' emerged most systematically at the same time as the discussion about the 'underclass' (around the early 1990s), and this preoccupation with the values and attitudes of the poorest sections of society has continued today and forms a key element within the concern with antisocial behaviour. However, it is not the language and outlook of the moral right that predominates in today's discussion about, for example, the underclass, but rather the more morally neutral, 'scientific', language of risk and safety. Indeed the use of the term underclass, while still remaining, is more problematic today and often used in inverted commas or replaced by the idea of the socially excluded.¹⁶¹

More appropriate for today's discussion and understanding of antisocial behaviour are the 'risk categories' used by criminal psychologist David Farrington, who has incorporated many of the underclass 'categories' of concern but added various structural risk indicators into his predictive model of antisocial and criminal behaviour. Here individual behaviour and relationships are problematised, but outside of any totalising moral framework.¹⁶² As we will go on to explain, the loss of a social sense and a moral or political relationship and engagement with activities understood to be antisocial has seen the emergence of a more psychologically, indeed therapeutically, oriented understanding of types of individual 'behaviour'.

Today's concern with antisocial behaviour is predicated upon the end of any secular or moral 'religion'. Indeed, the political focus on antisocial behaviour in the modern form it takes is helping to institutionalise this amoral and asocial basis of engaging with society.

The issue of antisocial behaviour is a central element within the politics of fear - a more limited politics that attempts to create consensus around the 'morality' of risk and risk avoidance.

Antisocial behaviour in a culture of limits

Within a period of history when not only the individual, but society itself, is understood more generally to be 'at risk', the tendency is to look not to the creative potential within the individual but the destructive impact that individuals' actions and very existence embody. The rise of the concern with antisocial behaviour clearly reflects this more misanthropic understanding of the essence of human action.

Discussing the consequential limiting of horizons within the political imagination with the loss of belief in alternatives to the market, Marxist theoretician Istvan Meszaros notes that:

If it is true, as they say, that 'there is no alternative' to the structural determinations of the capitalist system in the 'real world', in that case the very idea of causal interventions - no matter how little or large - must be condemned as an absurdity. The only change admissible within such a vision of the world belongs to the type which concerns itself with some strictly limited negative effects but leaves their causal foundation...completely unaffected (Meszaros 1995: xiii).

The limited sense of social possibilities described by Meszaros above has become reflected within social policies and also impacts upon how the individual is understood. Consequently, *issues* have increasingly vanished in a sea of *troubles*.

At the level of politics and the 'elite', today's culture of limits not only results in the focus upon 'little things' like antisocial behaviour, but the purpose of governance itself changes from a transformative process to one in which the prevention of harm becomes the aim and objective of intervention. Within society the loss of a social imagination results in a similar transformation of how issues of everyday life are

understood. Our concerns not only become more 'local', but the solutions to these problems lose both a social perspective and an active engagement with the problems themselves. *As society is understood to be a product of forces beyond our control, so too are the lives of individuals, who become conceptualised as mere 'products' of their environment.*

'Risk' indicators within this environment emerge not simply as a 'scientific' mechanism of predicting 'behaviour' but as the way in which the culture of society engages with the individual more generally. Here tackling 'crime and the causes of crime' takes on a meaning devoid of structural content, and the causes of crime increasingly come to relate to individuals and their behaviour. In a sense there is no cause as such - at any social level - that can be transformed, and the perception of overcoming even relatively minor social problems become limited.

For example, the international authority on child development, Sir Michael Rutter, believes that 'major advances have...been made in *prevention and intervention research*, leading to a tone of cautious optimism'. Having examined all of the potential mechanisms for identifying the causes of antisocial behaviour, and studying methods for resolving them, Rutter, in *Antisocial Behaviour by Young People*, concludes that, 'given the multiplicity of causes and the complexity of human behaviour', the typical impact of initiatives to prevent antisocial behaviour will be 'in the order of a 12% reduction'.

From previously held beliefs in the 'perfectability of man' or the positivist potential for social change, here we find the understanding of society hidden under a 'multiplicity' of causes. The discovery by Rutter, in practice, that just over one in ten 'at risk' individuals will overcome their antisocial behaviour and avoid a life of criminality, mirrors the cultural sense not that 'nothing works', but that almost nothing works. That Rutter can interpret this with 'cautious optimism' reflects well the diminished horizons embodied in social policy within the culture of limits (Rutter et al 1998: 383).

The potential, or even the aspiration for, 'culture', universalism or a sense of nationhood and commonality, today is drowned in an avalanche of what are

understood to be crime, knife, gun, binge drinking and yob *cultures*. Meanwhile the focus upon 'community' as a resolution to problems of antisocial behaviour embody a similar sense of limited possibilities. As Bauman notes, the 'communitarian cult' holds out the possibility not of social harmony but of peace within the narrow parameters of the walls and gates surrounding their frightened inhabitants:

The vision of community, let me repeat, is that of an island of homely and cosy tranquillity in a sea of turbulence and inhospitality. It tempts and seduces, prompting the admirer to refrain from looking too closely, since the eventuality of ruling the waves and taming the sea has already been deleted from the agenda as a proposition both suspect and real (Bauman 2000: 182).

Similarly, regarding the elite's loss of a sense of purpose, Christopher Lasch in *The Culture of Narcissism*, writing in the late 1970s about 'American life in an age of low expectations', observes that:

Hardly more than a quarter-century after Henry Luce proclaimed "the American century," American confidence has fallen to a low ebb. Those who recently dreamed of world power now despair of governing the city of New York (Lasch 1979).

New York may now have seen the successful governance of a 'zero tolerance' approach to 'squeegee merchants', but this city, which once represented the dynamic self-confidence of American capitalism, appears to be more inclined to promote itself as a 'safe city' than as part of a nation striving to 'rule the waves and tame the sea'. At the local level, for even those who, by virtue of wealth (who can create gated communities) or state intervention (can have noisy neighbours removed) and are able to find their island of tranquillity, the sense of isolation and estrangement remains in the regulated communities that have been developed, communities that 'feel more like orphanages, prisons or mad houses than sites of potential liberation' (Bauman 2000: 182).

The problematisation of behaviour

The problematic behaviour of different groups - the residuum, criminals or deviants, for example - has been a concern for sections of the elite for many years. However, where previously these concerns were often more common amongst conservative sections of society, the anxiety about problematic forms of behaviour has become more all pervasive today. Indeed, whereas previously issues of problem behaviour were generally confined to certain defined 'deviant' sections of society, today the 'problem of behaviour' now incorporates almost all aspects of life.

Antisocial behaviour in this respect is just one of the many issues that relates to a broader concern with human behaviour, within a 'problematised' framework - a framework within which issues of everyday life are increasingly understood to be part of a society undermined by myriad toxic relationships (Furedi 2004: 77).¹⁶³

Such is the extent of the problematisation of behaviour that it is hard to find an area of life that is not understood to be troubled with 'issues' of behaviour. From the family to school life and work relationships, issues of bullying and abuse¹⁶⁴ have become a major concern, while travelling to and from these areas of life issues of stalking, road and air rage have come to light in the last decade.

While many of these 'social problems' relate to various forms of 'aggressive behaviour', more generally still, issues of personal habits and lifestyle have become problematised and defined as 'unsafe' for both 'other people' and for individuals themselves - with passive smoking, binge drinking,¹⁶⁵ unsafe sex, and obesity, for example, all being modern socially-constructed problems of *behaviour*.

The 'strictly limited negative' aspects of society have, at a time of TINA, increasingly been understood within the realm of individual 'behaviour', with the 'causal interventions' (Meszaros 1995: xiii) similarly being engaged with through the *Politics of Behaviour* (Field 2003).

With this growing focus and problematisation of individual behaviour, psychologically-oriented explanations of social problems have become more prevalent, as has social policy concerns related to 'psychosocial' risk factors (Asquith 1998).¹⁶⁶ As significant, therefore, as the term 'antisocial', in relation to the growing prevalence with the concern with 'antisocial behaviour', is the politicisation and problematisation of *behaviour* itself.¹⁶⁷

This concern with the 'problem of behaviour' comes with a growing focus upon relationships, and can be seen within the social sciences itself. There has been a certain orientation within some sociological journals towards a more psychological approach – as, for example, with the emergence of the journal *Addiction*. Within a number of psychological journals the reverse is the case, and they have become more oriented to examining 'social' problems. Within both, more areas of life and interpersonal relationships have been problematised and studied as part of the social problem of antisocial behaviour.¹⁶⁸

Contrasting articles in the influential *Child Development* journal over time, for example, it is noticeable that unlike papers in the 1960s that were more concerned with examining cognitive developmental processes of young children, papers in the mid-1990s had a more 'psychosocial' focus: problem relationships between adolescence, and between parents and children, being far more prevalent for example. From a less problematised psychological examination of child development, the focus has become more on the psycho 'social problems' like the various 'addictions' discovered amongst young people.

The problematisation of behaviour has taken many forms over recent years, but perhaps the most prevalent has been with the pathologisation of emotions.

Examining the propensity in America for discovering therapeutic problems with 'behaviour', Christina Hoff Sommers and Sally Satel note that:

The propensity of experts to pathologize and medicalise healthy children en masse has gotten way out of hand. The past decade has seen a cascade of

books and articles promoting the idea that seemingly content and well-adjusted Americans - adults as well as children - are emotionally damaged (Sommers and Satel 2005: 1).

For Sommers and Satel, the significant growth and influence of therapeutic professionals over the last decade or so has helped to transform the way behaviour - especially the behaviour of children - has become reinterpreted as a social (or more accurately a psychosocial) problem. Part of this development has helped to focus attention further onto the perceived problem relationships between people.

Within the media and in popular culture, problems of behaviour have become a growth industry - most clearly expressed in the various Oprahesque chat shows and reality television programmes that invariably come with the resident expert psychologist. Even within education, issues of behavioural management associated with bullying, but also with relationship education and emotional awareness training, there is a certain psychologisation and pathologisation of 'problems' that until recently were not understood as needing professional guidance.

The issue of 'behaviour' has been of concern in relation to children for centuries. However, whereas previously there was an expectation that through a process of socialisation young people would 'grow up', in today's more pessimistic climate, the process of socialisation is itself more readily understood to be the problem. As Furedi notes, in terms of the growth of the perceived 'addicted society', addiction that was once seen to be the exception is increasingly depicted as the norm. When 'society itself' is understood to be 'inherently addictive', the problem of *behaviour* - not only within children but adults as well - can be seen to have become highly problematic (Furedi 2004: 124). That this outlook has emerged in some quarters today is predicated upon a more fatalistic interpretation of human behaviour.

The passive subject of antisocial behaviour

Within the definition of *antisocial behaviour* discussed above, it is noticeable that the modern emphasis is upon the *behaviour* of children, rather than the *actions* of adults.

This new definition diminishes the conscious element within this form of behaviour. Where previously antisocial behaviour was understood to be acted out by conscious political adult subjects, today it has also come to relate to the relatively unconscious misbehaviour of children. This more subject-less understanding of antisocial behaviour makes sense at a time when social processes and human action more generally is understood to be beyond our control.

The definition of behaviour within the Penguin Dictionary of Psychology is: a generic term covering acts, activities, responses, reactions, movements, processes, operations etc., in short, any measurable response of an organism. (Reber 1995: 86). Like this definition, which in part reduces behaviour to the reactions of an organism, the subjective human element within the understanding of behaviour is today largely missing within the understanding of antisocial behaviour. We consequently no longer *act*, we *react*; we no longer produce our environment, we are products of it; we no longer determine our own fate, we are determined beings. And in this respect it is less the thoughts and beliefs that we challenge in labelling someone as 'behaving' in an antisocial manner, but rather their 'thoughtlessness' - or their diminished capacity to think before they act.

Children, in everyday language, have often been described as 'behaving badly', but bad behaviour was generally a term not used in relation to adults, who were understood to be responsible for their *actions* rather than their *behaviour*. Today this is less the case. Indeed, unlike terms that differentiated adult *criminal actions* from young people - who were labelled *juvenile delinquents* - today we have no equivalent term in common usage that differentiates the actions of adults from children's deviant activities. Rather, it is more the case that adults, like children, can be defined with the catch-all term 'antisocial behaviour'. Where the term juvenile delinquent separated adults from the world of children, privileging the idea of the adult subject and subsequently allowing a certain space for young people to be seen as 'behaving' in a manner related to their age and immaturity, today, through the categorisation of 'antisocial behaviour', we have an infantilisation of adult 'behaviour' and at the same time a more serious criminalisation of children.¹⁶⁹

Within the previously defined 'juvenile delinquent', we had both labelling of a type of person, but also a sense of the capacity, with age and maturity, for a *progression* from 'abnormal' to 'normal' behaviour: a sense of *progress* embodied both within society and its capacity to socialise the young, and within the individual itself. This sense of social progress reflected in the individual is today more limited, at a time when 'causal interventions' must be 'condemned as an absurdity' (Meszaros 1995: xiii).

The distinction between subjective intentions and *behaviour* has been muddled and a more deterministic understanding of humanity has emerged, giving both a more limited sense of the individual's capacity to act consciously, while at the same time giving a more static sense of people and their capacity to change themselves or to be transformed by and transform society itself.

The underlying message within the discourse of antisocial behaviour is, despite the 'cautious optimism', that of 'find me the antisocial child and I will show you the antisocial adult of the future'.¹⁷⁰ Rather than deviant actions being understood in part to be discrete immoral acts by individuals, today we are increasingly discovering 'types' of people whose behaviour is understood to be a permanent aspect of what they *are*.¹⁷¹

As Findlayson has noted in relation to the politics of today, the political elites simply *react* to social facts. Likewise, individuals themselves are equally understood to *behave* rather than to *act* in relation to their environment.

Within Rutter and Farrington's risk model of behaviour, people no longer make considered decisions before they act, but rather are simple products of their environment - responding as organisms within a scientifically defined risk model of behaviour. As such, it is less the conscious individual who is engaged with in relation to his or her moral outlook, than various stimuli or 'risks' that need to be managed. This approach to the *behaviour* of both adults and children helps to explain the significant focus on the lives of young people, who are deterministically understood to be the product of their environment and relationships. 'Peer pressure', for example, as discussed in relation to the Hamilton curfew, is understood to be a one-sided force that

makes young people act antisocially. Subsequently, the 'politics of crime' itself becomes more about reacting to understood risk factors in childhood than a battle of ideas and morals within the adult population. Rather than challenging the destructive *will* of Republicans, for example, today's conservative political elite attempt to manage and modify the problem *behaviour* of children.

This deterministic understanding of individuals, as Furedi notes, goes way beyond that of classical social theorists like Marx and Weber, or thinkers like Freud, Mead and Dewey, all of whom recognised the constraints of society and culture in forging an individual's identity, but equally emphasised the 'element of interaction where individuals could exercise a degree of individual choice, though often in circumstances not of their own making'. In comparison, today's model of interaction 'has given way to an outlook where the individual is one-sidedly presented as a mere social product, whose action is almost never the outcome of choice, but of compulsion' (Furedi 2004: 124).

Like the behaviour of the antisocial individual, the victim of antisocial behaviour is also understood within a more diminished framework. As discussed previously, the idea that people are fundamentally vulnerable has helped to inform the issue of antisocial behaviour. Within the definition itself, the sense of human frailty is introduced in the modern meaning. The original meaning of 'antisocial' made no reference to damage being done to the individual: indeed as noted previously, there was no reference to the individual within this meaning, but rather to society and the beliefs and morals being challenged by antisocial Republicans. Within the modern definition of 'antisocial', however, the victim of this behaviour is privileged - in fact, what it is to be antisocial is directly related to the 'annoyance and disapproval in *others*'. Antisocial behaviour, in this respect, relates less to the actions of the perpetrator than to the subjective experience of those on the receiving end of it. To a degree, even the definition that was introduced into the Oxford English Dictionary in 1989 could be said to be somewhat out of date in relation to the significance given to antisocial behaviour, which is today seen as being far more damaging and 'terrorising' to the individuals who live amongst 'neighbours from hell' in our imagined 'yob culture'.¹⁷² Taken to its extreme - an extreme which often informs political

understandings of antisocial behaviour - a more accurate definition of 'antisocial' would relate not to the 'annoyance' but to the 'terror' caused by this behaviour.

With the decline in the 'social' and any positive sense of social change, the understanding of the individual has also been diminished and the understanding of their capacity and resilience to deal with conflict within everyday life has been weakened. This sense of individual and indeed public vulnerability is at the heart of the growing concern with the more petty aspects of behaviour within society. Seen less as *actors* in society than as being *acted upon*, today's understanding of antisocial behaviour relates to the *object* of this behaviour, rather than the *subject* who is acting in an antisocial manner.

The understood fragility of the individual within society has helped to make 'antisocial behaviour' into the key political and public issue that it is today, and it has come to replace the more robust understanding associated within the definition of nuisance behaviour that preceded it. As Scott and Parker note:

Common law nuisance is any conduct which causes "serious disturbance or substantial inconvenience to a neighbour". It must be "more than "sentimental, speculative trivial discomfort or personal annoyance" and it should be looked at in the light of general social conditions in the neighbourhood (Scott and Parkey 1998: 328).

However, this definition is much too robust for today's world, in which 'sentimental, speculative trivial discomfort or personal annoyance' are understood to be far more significant and damaging to individuals and to society than was previously believed.

Nuisance behaviour in the above definition also gave some significance to the 'general social conditions in the neighbourhood'. More deprived neighbourhoods, for example, where a greater level of noise and rowdiness was more the norm, may not have had the same definition of 'nuisance' used within it as quieter areas. Today, however, when victimhood is a more generalised indeed universal framework for understanding all

individuals, as Garland argues (Garland 2002), then fragility and vulnerability becomes the bench mark for all in relation to 'antisocial behaviour'.

This socially-constructed understanding of the 'vulnerable' is, however, not simply foisted upon the gullible public, but engages with a more isolated individual. The individual today, Bauman notes, lacks the 'solid modernity' of old and experiences 'the body' (or the emotional self, as will be discussed below), as 'becoming safety's last line of trenches, trenches which are exposed to constant enemy bombardment, or', which is felt to be, 'the last oasis among wind-swept moving sands' (Bauman 2000: 183-4).

The meaning and understanding of antisocial behaviour discussed above, despite the limited relation that it has with a wider moral or political understanding of social problems, is not *value free*. In the nineteenth century, the term antisocial emerged as a condemnation of radical political beliefs and actions and a defence of opposing ideals. Today, the focus of concern within the new definition is with *behaviour* seen to be a problem *to* the *individual*. The modern meaning of antisocial behaviour privileges the *passive* recipient of the behaviour. The 'moral' weight of the term, and the legitimacy gained by those opposing it, comes with reference to the protection of the individual who is suffering at the hands of antisocial behaviour. In this respect the term antisocial behaviour today privileges not just the individual, but what has come to be understood as the *individual victim*. The wider meaning carried by the term antisocial behaviour relates less to the actions of the antisocial themselves than to the reactions of the vulnerable individual. However, at the same time, in addressing the antisocial actor, he himself is understood less as a conscious active agent than as a mere product of his environment and the 'behaviour' of those around him.

Within a society where a more diminished or passive subject is the expected norm, responsibility for antisocial actions, despite the political vilification that accompanies this issue, is difficult to pin upon the individual who is understood to be more an organism that *behaves* than a conscious moral subject. Likewise, where previously 'trivial discomfort or personal annoyance' would have been understood as something that members of the public would be expected to resolve themselves, today it is seen

as a far more significant and debilitating problem - and as such is not something that society can expect the vulnerable public to suffer, let alone resolve.

Therapy culture and antisocial behaviour

Above, we have seen how the understanding of antisocial behaviour as a social problem has developed most significantly with the emerging understanding of the vulnerability of the individual in society. Psychological explanations of 'behaviour' have also become more influential in describing the somewhat deterministic actions of individuals deemed to be antisocial. Within this deterministic framework there is also a cyclical interpretation of this behaviour, with, for example, Farrington's research, which suggests that the antisocial behaviour of mothers who drink and smoke while pregnant will result in the creation of antisocial children (Asquith 1998: 5).

As well as the *physical* damage done by antisocial mothers, even more important in understanding the rise in the concern with antisocial behaviour is the rise of a therapeutic culture that both privileges the 'emotional self' but also understands the individual as being *emotionally vulnerable* and emotionally damaged. Rather than biological determinism, the dominant conservative understanding of humanity is developing around a belief in *emotional determinism*.

As Lasch argued in the late 1970s:

The contemporary climate is therapeutic, not religious. People today hunger not for personal salvation, let alone for the restoration of an earlier golden age, but for the feeling, the momentary illusion, of personal well-being, health, and psychic security (Lasch 1979: 7).

Lasch believed that, 'Having displaced religion as the organizing framework of American culture, the therapeutic outlook threatens to displace politics as well, the last refuge of ideology' (Lasch 1979: 13). In the UK, the accelerated development of a therapeutic culture grew on the back of 'the thinning out of community attachments, the decline of systems of moral meaning', and was 'reinforced in the 1980s by the

demise of politics and social solidarity' (Furedi 2004: 100). Subsequently, social problems have been increasingly recast as emotional ones. Two decades on, Lasch's prediction appears apposite. This does not mean, however, that politics and religion simply disappear, but rather that they have mutated within a therapeutic sensibility, with religion (and indeed politics) becoming increasingly 'new age' and focused upon the emotional self.¹⁷³ Even welfare, within this therapeutic climate, becomes about 'fostering psychological as well as economic benefits' to the individual (Giddens 1998: 117).

This concern with the emotional well-being of the individual, however, is not simply of concern to the 'elites' and social institutions, but equally relates to the more fluid and isolated individual within society. As Bauman notes, compared to Durkheim's sense of individuation, which in hindsight appears to be grounded in a 'the land of solid modernity', today the individual and indeed 'the body' appears - in comparison with almost all social institutions and bonds of solidity - to be the 'last shelter and sanctuary of continuity and duration' (Bauman 2000: 183). However, the focus inwards onto the emotional self has not emerged because of structural changes in society, but has been encouraged by a therapeutic culture.

This therapeutic turn not only transforms the understanding of the individual and society, but the in-built belief in the fragility of this emotional 'state' leads to the presumption of the need to protect people from an increasing array of potential harms. In fact, through engaging with the fragile, emotionally constituted individual within a culture of fear, almost all relations, with parents, peers, neighbours, workmates and so on have become understood as sites of harassment, harm and abuse. In this respect, antisocial behaviour is all around us. As insecure individuals, increasingly buried within our fragile emotional selves, we increasingly relate to the world as a sea of turbulence and inhospitality - of relationships and interactions that need to be mediated, regulated and policed.

For Bauman, having lost the solidity of the past, liquid modernity attempts (unsuccessfully) to engage with and relate to the individual as a 'body' within a 'community', both being 'the last defensive outposts on the increasingly deserted

battlefield on which the war for certainty, security and safety is waged daily with little, if any respite' (Bauman 2000: 184).

Through today's therapeutic culture, 'well-being', as Hoggett argues, 'is defined essentially in mental-health terms'. This, Furedi argues, results in the citizen being 'transformed into a patient', and the 'private feelings of people [becoming] a subject matter for public policy-making and cultural concern' (Furedi 2004: 197).

The objective measurement of 'breaking the law' is, to a degree, by-passed in an attempt to engage with the emotional feelings of the victim, and laws develop to encourage 'respect'. Part of the 'respect' offered by the state is increasingly to accept that if an individual 'feels' that there is a problem, then there is one. Antisocial behaviour subsequently becomes, not about objective actions defined as 'illegal' by society, but more about the subjective sense of the victim.¹⁷⁴

Rather than a rise in traditional morality, within this therapeutic culture, and in relation to antisocial behaviour, we find a remoralisation of behaviour in relation to the emotional sensitivities of the public. 'Antisocial behaviour' relates less to conventional criminal acts - to economic damage or physical harm - than to issues understood to disrupt the sensibilities of the individual and the 'community'. Graffiti, for example, may still be a problem of criminal damage, but its significance for the governing of communities is with the sense of disorder - felt most acutely at the level of the individual victim's emotional state of well-being.¹⁷⁵

Even the definition of the term antisocial behaviour and the implementation of initiatives to tackle the problem recognise that what is deemed to be antisocial is often dependent upon subjective factors and interpretation. The Crime and Disorder Act defines antisocial behaviour as 'conduct, including speech, which has caused, or is likely to cause, alarm or distress to one or more persons'. *Being anti 'social' therefore, and somewhat ironically, relates not to wider social norms as such but more particularly to the impact that this behaviour has upon the feelings of vulnerable individuals.* The correct form of behaviour for individuals is therefore predicated upon this concern with the 'well-being' of the vulnerable public. The wide scope for the

defining of what is antisocial behaviour is predicated upon the focus on the vulnerability of individuals - actions taken by authorities developing accordingly to protect the public from such behaviour. Antisocial behaviour is therefore often measured in relation to the level of fear, anxiety or stress that is (or is assumed to have been) felt by the vulnerable public. The subjective component of the meaning of antisocial behaviour, coupled with the centrality of vulnerability, gives it a high level of flexibility and means that an ever-greater array of forms of behaviour can be interpreted as being antisocial.

At the level of social policy, then, the aim in tackling antisocial behaviour is not connected to *creating* a positive sense of the 'social', but rather in allowing individuals to be 'liberated from fear'. The positive 'sense of community' comes about not through political or moral purpose and unity, but via the collection of individuals' feeling of safety - with this being accomplished, it is assumed, by the eradication of antisocial behaviour.

Elite sense of disorder

The issue of antisocial behaviour can be addressed at various levels. Generally it is understood and analysed in relation to issues of crime and the collapse of community. Above however, it has been situated more broadly within a focus upon *the problem of behaviour* of people more widely.

In the previous chapters, the rise and rise of the 'social problem' of antisocial behaviour was also located within the political elite itself. The *Politics of Behaviour*, as the Labour MP Frank Field argues, has indeed become a key defining aspect of politics in the twenty-first century, and relates not only to action that is specifically labelled as being 'antisocial behaviour', but incorporates myriad other forms of *problem* behaviour like bullying, stalking, binge drinking, drug taking and even smoking or 'irresponsible parenting' - all of which can be understood to one degree or another as issues of, or associated, with *antisocial behaviour*.

Antisocial behaviour is therefore an issue that, through the use of ASBOs in particular, relates most often to concerns with 'sink estates', 'neighbours from hell' and 'neds' or 'chavers'. It also, however, has a far broader remit, in that it helps frame a host of discussions about the behaviour and relationships between people in public space, workplaces and private life. In both uses it oscillates around a sense of a loss of social order that resonates within today's culture of fear.

This chapter has attempted to explain why 'antisocial behaviour' has emerged as a significant social problem today - and also why this term itself is particularly useful for defining social problems as they are understood. Antisocial behaviour has been a term used for decades; however its significance, and indeed its very meaning, is historically specific and relates to the transformation of how 'society' is understood, and equally how the individual or subject is conceptualised within contemporary modernity.

The problem of the *antisocial* that arose in the 1990s, while often referring to particular problems in 'sink' estates, also incorporates myriad forms of behaviour across society and in almost every area of life. Its centrality to politics today reflects a sense that people 'out there' are acting in a disorderly manner that is opposed to principles upon which society is constituted. However, that problems of litter and fly tipping, for example, have become issues of central government concern reflects a diminution of what 'moral' behaviour has come to mean, while equally reflecting a sense of fragility of the social order and the ease with which it can be disrupted.

The concern with the *antisocial* in this respect reflects less the activities in question than the real problem of a loss of political leadership in society, and also the problem of the loss of a *public* and the capacity of the political elite to engage with and be part of a wider 'social will'. The disjuncture between politics and changes in society leaves the political elite prone to exaggerate and to see within various forms of behaviour the problem of the *antisocial*. As argued previously, in essence the concern with social order reflected through the discussion about antisocial behaviour represents the disengagement of this elite from social processes that are felt to be beyond its control. Beyond its control, that is, except within a more socially and politically static form of

managerialism that attempts to change, not the consciousness of adults, but the *behaviour* of adults and their children. In this respect, both the words *antisocial* and *behaviour* are particularly useful for an amoral and apolitical elite that senses disorder but is only able to grapple with the problem at the level of the *behaviour* of individuals.

The term 'antisocial behaviour' today lacks specific moral or political depth and has a quasi-scientific psychosocial meaning. In the recent past, social problems of disorder were grounded in political and moral language often promoting 'traditional values'. The problem behaviour of the black 'mugger' who wanted 'something for nothing', for example, was seen as being literally alien to an alternative and morally upstanding, 'British way of life'. Alternatively when the term antisocial was first used in the early nineteenth century, it was done so not with reference to 'behaviour' in the abstract, but to a specific political and moral outlook that was deemed to be antisocial in its opposition to alternative specific conservative values and beliefs.

The more 'trivial' forms of antisocial behaviour, like noisy neighbours and young people hanging around, were of little significance to the Conservative government in the 1980s because they lacked political content: although as the collective opposition to the government declined, these more trivial issues of 'behaviour' - like 'lager louts', an issue of concern for the Conservative government in the late 1980s - began to become more of a focus for attention.

As the 1990s progressed, so too did the politics of fear. Now insecurity more generally, outside of any specific political contest, helped inform the nature of crime panics, and issues of antisocial behaviour emerged more systematically. This was assisted by the more 'liquid' relationships between people themselves - the working class in particular - providing a more fluid and less stable basis for relationships and personal interaction. More fragmented, and without a 'solid' social framework for interacting, relationships between adults and children, for example, become more confused (Waiton 2001: 123).

Today, rather than using specific terms like 'mugger' that are 'value added', or defining the specific immoral beliefs underlying those being antisocial, we simply get 'antisocial behaviour' as an ill-defined thing in itself. The term 'antisocial behaviour', which has grown within political discourse over the last decade, is devoid of a wider political, moral or even social meaning. No substantial framework for what it means to be 'social' – or pro-social – is reflected within this term: rather, 'moral' weight is given simply to the act of *not* being antisocial. In this respect the term antisocial behaviour refers not to what you should do, but rather to what you should not do. To be good is to be *not* antisocial. It is a negative concept based upon the need to *prevent* action rather than to instil an alternative belief. The limit of any positive demand placed upon society is confined to telling the public to be polite, to be thoughtful of others, and not to drop litter – mantras which sound more like what parents and teachers say to small children than a set of values for society.

At the heart of government policy in the twenty-first century is not a projection of a moral or political framework of operation. Rather the aim is the prevention of incivility and the maintenance of order. Order, not disorder, is the cry, with no value added content. Within the language of 'risk' this reflects, like Beck's concern with the damaging potential of human action at a global level, government concern at a local and personal level of the need to prevent 'human bad' rather than to create 'human good'. Instead of engaging the 'energy of society' to move forward, the aim is to stop a static society from moving back. 'Stop being antisocial' is a cry in the dark by a hollow elite that no longer holds the rudder of society.

The problem of living in a 'moral vacuum', as Tony Blair described it following the James Bulger killing, is thus overcome not by filling the vacuum with an alternative moral code or through social meaning, but by sidestepping this ideological problem and reposing the issue as one of individual incivility – or of 'antisocial behaviour'. With the decline of the welfare 'dream' (Pitts 1988: 26) – social policy has developed with a lack of purpose to directly regulate the behaviour of the fragmented public.¹⁷⁶ *The problem of 'antisocial behaviour' as it is understood today is a direct reflection of the diminution of the political will.*

The rise of concern within the political elite with 'antisocial behaviour', especially post-1993, arose not because of a rise in morality, but the opposite - a decline in the sense of moral or political purpose. Indeed the strength of the term 'antisocial behaviour' is not only in its flexibility but also in its lack of moral and political specificity that could lead to dissent and opposition. To say that someone is antisocial in the 1980s would have had little political meaning, as the question would have related to competing views of, for example, the militant striker and the black mugger. In effect, to use the term antisocial behaviour at this time would have required an association with a particular morally or politically reprehensible actor - the antisocial behaviour 'of muggers' or 'of demonstrators'. The acceptance of what 'antisocial behaviour' was, at this time, was contested, as were the labels associated with them - such as mugger (Hall 1978).

The term 'antisocial behaviour' could only become a generalised term to describe a loss of social order once ideological points of opposition were lost and when everybody agreed that 'order' was a good thing and that there was a problem of disorder.¹⁷⁷

Divorced of wider meaning, concern about 'antisocial behaviour' within a culture of fear was given legitimacy by the amoral panics and concern about abusive individuals, relationships and criminal behaviour that emerged within sections of the left and feminist thought in the 1980s. Left and right were increasingly in agreement that there was indeed a problem of *behaviour* in society, with New Labour most fervently giving expression to the sense that this problem behaviour was reflected in the 'loss of a sense of community'. Like the loss of opposition, especially in political life, to the problem of crime, the 'social problem' of antisocial behaviour has faced few opponents.

In the same way that the term *antisocial* has become more significant, the problematisation of and the use of the term *behaviour* could only become more central to political discourse once the purposeful *action* of individuals was no longer linked to moral or political values - or more precisely to the question of consciousness and beliefs. Rather than *acting*, today's diminished subject is understood to be *reacting*. Rather than acting immorally, people have syndromes, addictions and rage. In the past

only children *misbehaved* - adults *acted* immorally. Today the distinction has been diminished and individuals of all ages are increasingly judged on their good *behaviour*. The understanding of *actions* across society, as forms of *behaviour*, represents the infantilisation of the subject.

With the increasing focus on *behaviour* rather than beliefs, the logical necessity for government is to direct ever more attention onto the lives and relationships of children: the paediatrician rather than the politician becoming the key player in the creation of a non-antisocial society.

Farrington's influential developmental criminology incorporates many of the concerns of underclass theorists while incorporating structural factors within the 'grab-bag' term of psychosocial risk factors, thus giving an appropriately neutral and apparently scientific explanation of antisocial behaviour.¹⁷⁸ This approach is particularly appropriate today, with its emphasis upon things *done to you*, especially as a child, which are beyond your control. Whether the antisocial adult's *behaviour* has been genetically, emotionally or structurally determined, this determinism of humanity represents the actions of antisocial adults and children alike as being semi-conscious and set in stone. Farrington's methodology of examining what happened to individuals in the past to explain their actions in the present reflects well the cultural sense of powerlessness - which is itself a reflection of the political sense of powerlessness felt by the political elite. The future within this model is not made by conscious action but has already been made and ingrained within our *behaviour*, behaviour that stems from our damaged past.

Conclusion

Historically, then, the recent preoccupation with 'antisocial behaviour' has come very much with the politicisation of this term, based on a more generalised concern with order and the location of this problem at the level of individual *behaviour* that is experienced by the vulnerable public.

The growth in the use the term antisocial behaviour in recent years is a reflection of the increasing development of policies aimed at preventing antisocial behaviour in society and especially on working class estates. However, lacking a political or social component, it is unlikely that the sense of the problem of disorder and fear that grips the political elite and to a degree the public themselves will be dissipated. The attempt to develop state legitimation in relation to antisocial behaviour initiatives therefore appears to be highly problematic, as in the very use of this relatively 'value free' term the problem of a lack of social meaning which underpins the sense of disorder remains unresolved. Indeed the focus upon the problem of social order at the level of problematic individual behaviour has helped to create a spiral of concern with ever-more forms of antisocial behaviour, which can only develop further as the state continues to relate to the public in relation to its sense of vulnerability.

The term antisocial behaviour has ultimately emerged and grown in significance in recent years with the increasing sense of social disorder within the depoliticised political elite and also within the individuated public. The rise and rise of the social problem of *antisocial behaviour* is a reflection of this loss of politics and the subsequent exponential increase in the 'politics of behaviour'.

Social problems are rarely just myths that have no basis in society, and many of the problems related to via ASBOs and other antisocial behaviour initiatives like the Hamilton curfew connect with 'real' concerns. However, the issue of antisocial behaviour also contains a metaphorical dimension. For an elite that lacks even the capacity or will to 'dream of world power', there remains the problem of its inability to engage the public in defining and enforcing 'social' order at home - a problem that can only remain when any attempt to morally uplift or civilise the public has been abandoned. Whether antisocial behaviour were increasing or not, there would remain, for the political elite and to a degree the public, a sense that we were all living in a, 'sea of turbulence' (Bauman 2000: 13).

Finally, one of the ironies with the growing preoccupation with issues of antisocial behaviour is that, despite the repeated concern with a loss of respect and responsibility in society, through the more therapeutic forms of intervention values related to the

emotions of the individual themselves further relativise ideas of moral right, while diminishing the idea of individual personal responsibility. In a world of vulnerable individuals, a call for 'respect' amounts to little more than a demand that we be nice to everyone, just in case we undermine someone's self esteem.

As Sommers and Satel note:

Therapism tends to regard people as essentially weak, dependent, and never altogether responsible for what they do. Alan Wolfe, a Boston College sociologist and expert on national mores and attitudes, reports that for many Americans nonjudgementalism has become a cardinal virtue. Concepts of right and wrong, good and evil, are often regarded as anachronistic and intolerant. "Thou shalt be nice" is the new categorical imperative. (Sommers and Satel 2005: 6)

Chapter 9: Conclusion

Societies that are able to project a positive vision of the future do not need to employ fear as a currency in public life (Furedi 2005: 134).

Three key developments in society have been examined in this thesis: the relationship between the individual and the state, expressed through the relationship between the public and the political elite; the development of amoral rather than moral panics; and the nature of the individual being constructed through the prism of vulnerability and diminished subjectivity.

The changing relationship between the state and the individual is one that, in essence, has been depoliticised and demoralised. The political elite's inability to engage the public with a wider set of values has resulted in a new form of 'public' engagement at the level of the individual, expressed most clearly in the rise of the therapeutic and highly regulatory 'politics of behaviour'.

This development has undermined moral panics, as the capacity to promote absolute moral – or indeed political – values, has declined. In the place of moral panics, what has been described as a form of amoral anxiety has arisen – a more permanent and universal form of anxiety that engages people as fragmented individuals through issues of safety.

Central to these developments has been the changing nature of the individual and the emergence of a more diminished form of subjectivity. This cultural development has material roots in the decline of ideologies, of collective organisations and institutional practices, and has been reinforced by the self-limiting subjective outlook within contemporary modernity. With vulnerability and an 'at risk' framework becoming a cultural norm, despite calls for 'responsibility', the expectations society places on individuals has in reality declined.

The outcome of this process - seen clearly through the example of the Hamilton curfew – is that the meaning of rights has been transformed from a promotion of freedom and forms of action by individuals, to a form of protection of individuals by the state. Likewise the meaning of responsibility has been widened but, more significantly, weakened, as personal safety and feelings of safety come to represent the highest form of responsible behaviour. Ultimately, by organising society around the conservative amoral theme of safety, the communities in Hamilton, and indeed more generally across the UK, remain fragmented and have been made more passive and reliant upon third party intervention.

Permanently disconnected

By engaging with individuals' fears, the modern political elite has been able to tap into the broad sense of insecurity in society, but this new 'morality' of safety lacks the capacity to connect people with a wider sense of meaning. Rather this development has helped to reinforce the disconnection that exists between people today and so maintain the cultural climate that encourages a sense of fear.

We live in a world of panics, but not a world of moral panics. Attempts to promote traditional morality do not lie at the heart of modern-day panics and anxieties. Rather it is the collapse of a coherent web of meaning once provided by morals and by secular 'religions' – or politics – that explains the rise of amoral panics.

Today, through the amoral absolute of safety, the political elite is bypassing any attempt to reconstitute a web of social meaning that binds people together. Instead it engages with the more fragmented public and intervenes on its behalf to manage the behaviour of individuals.

A sense of social meaning has historically related to religion and later to secular 'religions' of the right and left – nationalism and socialism in particular - and has been supported by major institutions and organisations that enjoyed widespread public support. The rise of democracy, of politics and of competing systems of belief has, for the last two centuries, helped frame the lives of individuals but also the outlook of the

political elite. Whether based on tradition or a more radical belief in the future, this sense of social meaning upheld an ideal that gave a certain sense of purpose to the elite and the public alike. It is the loss of this sense of purpose on both the left and right that has resulted in a society that is not only more prone to panic, but which has institutionalised the anxiety expressed within these panics.

As we observed earlier, in previous times panics about crime and youth crime in particular were often counteracted by significant elite individuals and groups, like Baden Powell, or the Conservative Home Secretary Henry Brooke, due in part to the sense of purpose felt by the elite itself. So long as those running society felt able to engage the 'energy of society' - or indeed the energy of youth - in a project to 'civilize', social problems could be addressed within this positive sense of social progress. But having lost this sense of meaning and purpose, the directionless political elite has developed a tendency to panic and today aims to simply conserve things and to regulate society more directly.

Without a system of meaning with which to direct social processes and include the public, institutions across society backed up by myriad social policy initiatives have instead attempted to engage with the individual through the micro-politics of *behaviour*. Rather than reconnecting individuals with a social project, the role of politics has become the management of everyday life as an end in itself. Fragmentation within society, coupled with a growing distance between individuals and any system of social meaning, has resulted in a more insecure and anxious electorate emerging. Consequently individual safety has become the more limited goal for society and one that the political elite has both engaged with and encouraged. With new laws and initiatives like the Hamilton curfew, the fragmented individual is in theory made to feel safe - while in practice is left isolated, and disconnected from society.

Asocial politics

Significant long-term trends helped to stimulate the emergence of recent moral panics that grew out of the 1960s and also resulted in the amoral safety panics of the late

1980s and 1990s. Discussions of the *End of Ideology* (Bell 1962) and the *End of Utopia* (Jacoby 1999)¹⁷⁹ give some insight into the decline of the 'great' ideologies associated with the left and right that have in part led to the various panic reactions in post-war Western societies. These broader theoretical considerations have been somewhat beyond the remit of this thesis but have informed its development. However, these 'trends' do not have a life of their own, but have been implemented and given concrete expression by a variety of claimsmakers and activists who have helped to create and recreate new crimes and new social problems over the last two decades.

Most significantly, issues labelled as forms of antisocial behaviour have emerged within the major political parties particularly from the early 1990s, as politics moved from an engagement with the social or a belief in the individual subject. Rather than representing opposite ends of a political spectrum of left and right, the decline of social or collective beliefs and institutions has seen the simultaneous decline or diminution of the active subject as the basis for social life and government policy initiatives. Micro-politics has developed with an increasing rapidity to manage the *behaviour* of individuals, replacing the ideological political battle for the conscious support of the public. A fight over the beliefs of adults through the promotion of morals and politics has subsequently been replaced by an attempt to manage the emotions and behaviour of adults and especially children and young people.

'Realism' emerged on the left and the right in the 1970s and 1980s, giving expression to the idea that 'there is no alternative' to what already exists in society. Within criminology, the belief in the capacity of society to overcome crime was abandoned, and through the left realist and feminist promotion of the defence of 'vulnerable groups', crime control was given a radical edge and began to be a priority issue for Labour councils. More generally, the 'victim' became a new cultural icon at this time, helped by both right-wing but especially left-wing thinkers, whose role became one of an advocate for newly discovered victims in society. The significance of the 'done-to victim' could only fully emerge as a dominant understanding of people when the active engagement of political subjects was no longer relevant to public life. From the

early 1990s a new relationship was consequently established within politics, in local authorities and unions, with a newly understood vulnerable public.

Whatever the changes in the 'antisocial behaviour' of the public, the rise in the concern with individual behaviour was predicated upon this transformation in the public and within politics – something that was given added weight by the radical and realist claimsmakers of victims of crime and antisocial behaviour. A wider cultural sense of fear emerged with the political and social changes of the time, but was engaged with at the individual level of problem behaviour – especially on working class estates.

Within this framework, social problems in the 1990s were increasingly understood with reference to individual 'behaviour', rather than to social or structural factors or to an understanding of the 'conscious action' of the individual. Predicated on a more static and conservative outlook about both society and the individual, risk factors discovered by psychological criminologists like Farrington helped to develop a framework for intervention into community and family life. This more behavioural and deterministic approach to individual and community development was influential at the time of the election of the New Labour government and the introduction of the Hamilton curfew. Attempting to manage risk factors, this academic and 'scientific' approach to antisocial behaviour sat comfortably with the shift in politics to manage the behaviour of individuals outside of a moral or political framework: managing risks and providing safety for the public being the 'ultimate liberty' on offer from the government.

Creating safe communities

The election of the Labour Government in 1997, which preceded the introduction of the Hamilton Child Safety Initiative, brought a new Prime Minister to power who had cut his teeth on the slogan of fighting crime and the causes of crime. Creating safer communities was something that could relate to a more fragmented and insecure public, but was not part of a wider ideology or social movement – rather it was the result of a loss of one.

In the curfew-targeted area of Hillhouse, local people were 'involved' and had their voice made public through media campaigns, phone-in polls and council-run surveys. In the Citizens' Jury set up with council support, run by professional facilitators around a pre-set agenda of community safety, a handful of local people were encouraged to 'participate' in a process that in the end was not of their making. The resulting curfew initiative had not been the idea of this jury, as was claimed by the local MP, nor did the people of Hillhouse feel any great sense of ownership or even understanding of what was taking place. Rather than the demands of local people being reflected as a *public* voice through their political representatives, consultants, pollsters and facilitators were employed to help give the local politicians a sense of what local people wanted.

That a Citizens' Jury was felt to be needed by the Labour-run South Lanarkshire Council to relate to the public gives a sense of the loss of connection between politics and 'citizens' at this time. The 'old' Labour Party was a mass political organisation that grew out of the labour movement with a socialist ideology and helped create the welfare state. New Labour, by comparison, had neither a vision thing, nor a movement. Contrasting a time when politicians had a sense of future possibilities, Furedi notes how Roosevelt's New Deal speech came with the famous statement that the 'only thing we have to fear is fear itself' (Furedi 2005: 135). How different a world of politics from that of the Hamilton curfew, where the only thing it appeared that politicians could engage with was, in fact, fear itself.

The Hamilton curfew was a panic reaction to what were unexceptional *troubles* on a working class estate in Scotland – but a panic that was able to tap into the insecurities of local people. Without a wider sense of purpose or social meaning, New Labour nationally and locally engaged with people's fears through the value of safety - with rights, responsibilities, freedom, liberty and what it meant to be a good citizen or even parent all relating to this new amoral absolute.

Despite claims that community safety initiatives would help to rebuild communities, in Hillhouse there was no sense of this developing – indeed with the emphasis on

awareness-raising about the variety of risks facing adults, young people and children in the area, it was perhaps unsurprising that fear within the community was not dissipated. Rather than people being reconnected with one another, the curfew did the opposite, by promoting a new etiquette of safety based on the suspicion and fear of other people in the area.

Rights and Responsibilities

The issue of antisocial behaviour has elevated the significance of generally non-criminal offences into a key social problem for communities and society more generally. In part this represents an attempt to create a more legally-based form of regulation of relationships between people, an enforced code of conduct. Introduced at a time when a wider system of meaning in society that helped to direct relationships between people had been lost, antisocial behaviour and community safety initiatives replicated in public space the codes of conduct and harassment codes that had been introduced in workplaces. As health and safety at work and in union practice, for example, moved from a collective form of protection of the workforce from employers towards a protection of workers from one another and from the public, so community safety initiatives developed to regulate the conflicts between individuals in communities (Wainwright and Calnan 2002: 143). Both developments reflected to some extent the more distant relationships between individuals and a loss of a sense of solidarity: however, by developing practices predicated upon the assumed vulnerability of people, third party intervention increasingly became the norm and a more limited expectation of individuals was institutionalised.

In Hamilton, the Child Safety Initiative was promoted as a defence of people's rights, yet the meaning of 'rights' was here downgraded and came to mean the protection of individuals from those around them. The 'right to a quiet life' in practice meant the right of adults to phone the police if young people were hanging around the streets and the responsibility of young people and parents to others in the community was to 'be quiet'. In essence a code of conduct was promoted in Hamilton predicated on the understanding that communities were being undermined by fear generated by young people out at night – and also predicated on the assumption that adults could not and

should not attempt to resolve these problems themselves. Indeed even the question of child safety was understood to be an issue that the community had no active role in resolving.

Since the curfew was introduced, a raft of new laws and initiatives have developed to regulate further the relationships between people on estates across the UK, with the development of community wardens, for example, potentially leading to a semi-permanent mediation service between people. Labour MP Frank Field, disillusioned with the state of parenting in society, has ultimately proposed that the police should become surrogate parents and take a more direct role in the regulation of children's bad behaviour (Field 2003). As the expectation of adults to act to resolve problems themselves declines – a development that is encouraged by these new safety initiatives - an increasing burden is placed upon the police to become the creators of 'community' or even the responsible parents of the future.

However, despite the talk of rights and responsibility by Labour politicians like Field, this development should be seen as a relinquishing of political responsibility by the political elite, which has given up on developing a framework of social meaning that can reconnect individuals. As problems have become understood to relate to individual relationships, so too have the solutions to these problems. However, rarely, if ever, is there an expectation that individuals can resolve problems themselves, and consequently a framework of reliance has been established in the last decade between the public and state institutions that both encourages a more passive engagement with society and communities.

The experience of antisocial behaviour

Finally, an area of interest that this thesis has said little about directly is why antisocial behaviour is such a major concern for individuals themselves. Why do the issues raised by the government – of graffiti, rowdiness and incivility of youth connect so much with the public? Here, by incorporating the themes addressed so far, a brief attempt is made to answer this question.

Following the 2005 general election, Prime Minister Tony Blair launched the 'respect agenda', which elevated the significance, not simply of antisocial behaviour, but of politeness, as a serious social problem. Within this thesis the emphasis has been placed on analysing the political elite and claimsmakers who have helped to construct the problem of antisocial behaviour, but as was noted in relation to the Hamilton curfew, support for community safety initiatives amongst the public is high. Indeed as Squires notes, by 2004 Labour election co-ordinators were of the opinion that antisocial behaviour was the number one issue on the doorsteps (Squires and Stephen 2005). But why is this?

At a broad cultural level, the climate of political cynicism, which has seen the fall in voter turn-out, the huge decline in party political activists (Heartfield 2002: 202), and the development of these parties as some of the least trusted organisations in society (MORI 2001), has helped to create a climate of pessimism about the future and a diminished sense of collective and also individual possibilities. As Furedi argues, the significance of the collapse of politics reflects not simply a form of apathy on an otherwise healthy civil society, but rather: 'Cynicism and suspicion towards politics ultimately represents cynicism and suspicion towards one another' (Furedi 2005: 2).

This 'cynicism and suspicion' of others has resulted, for example, in the increasing concern amongst parents and grandparents about 'what the future will be for our children'. Part of the more pessimistic view about life for the next generation has come from an increased fear of crime and antisocial behaviour that is understood to be blighting children's future (Barnardos 1995a). But this fear has also resulted in a more negative image of young people themselves, an image that preoccupies the imagination both here and abroad. A recent survey on public attitudes to youth and youth crime in Scotland, for example, found that despite the statistical fall in youth crime, of those interviewed 69% believed that youth crime had increased and only 2% believed it had fallen.¹⁸⁰ Describing the misanthropic outlook towards young people in the US and the fear of 'violent youth', Zimring notes that:

A modest expansion in the size of the youth population is regarded as unqualified bad news. It is never alleged that more than a small proportion of

this population will be involved in serious criminality, but this is the only subject to be considered in congressional debate. From this perspective, an entire generation of future adolescents is considered to be bad news, so that the larger the size of the cohort, the bigger the social and government problems will result (Zimring 2000: 179).

This more cynical and pessimistic sense of the future has arguably transformed the way young people in particular are understood – as without a positive sense of social meaning and developing possibilities, the lives of the future generation comes to be seen as more directionless and out of control. In the past, when there was a greater understanding of where young people would fit into society and also what the role of adults was in this process (Furlong and Cartmel 1997: 110), a more relaxed attitude was taken to forms of behaviour that are today seen as being antisocial. Without a sense of social progress or a view of the future, the trend in politics and society more generally has been to lose the optimistic belief that young people will ‘grow out of crime’ (Squires and Stephen 2005: 21), or that their energy will be harnessed in socially useful ways – within the workplace, by ‘serving their country’ or in looking after themselves and their family. Even the language used to describe young boys and men in particular has changed, as ‘mischievous’ and ‘boisterous’ behaviour has become reclassified as aggressive and antisocial, while being tough and assertive has become ‘macho’ and ‘abusive’.

In a society that lacks a positive vision of the future, and is preoccupied with preventing harm rather than creating good, the ‘bad behaviour’ of young people has become exaggerated as a social problem. *It is not the behaviour of young people itself that has necessarily changed, but that within this more pessimistic cultural climate the image of the ‘antisocial yob’ has become a metaphor for a loss of social control in a society that lacks direction and purpose.*

‘Behaviour’ is a big issue today, both in politics and on the street, but whatever the problem of misbehaving youth, the sense that all young people are running wild is exaggerated. However, the problem of behaviour is real, not in the way it is often understood – with young people simply being seen as ‘yobs’ – but rather in terms of a

breakdown in the informal relationships between members of the public and in particular between adults and young people.

The public has become disconnected from society, and from the myriad institutions within it, but they have also become disconnected from one another. The informal rules that help people to navigate their day-to-day encounters have broken down, leaving people more anxious and unsure about how to respond to one another. People may still have a sense of what is right and wrong, but the rules of the game can no longer be taken for granted. Adults are no longer sure if they should intervene to regulate young people's behaviour, nor are they clear about whether or not they should help a distressed child.

Today the sense of right and wrong has become more fragmented. Parents may each have concerns about issues of antisocial behaviour, but when problems of their own child's behaviour are brought to their attention by neighbouring adults they are more inclined to defend the child than back the adult. The more privatised nature of the family has assisted this development, but the awkwardness adults feel in relating to young people today has also been reinforced by the developing 'politics of behaviour'.

Through the myriad community safety initiative over the last ten to 15 years the message has been sent out that the regulation of young people is no longer an expected role for adults. The more distant relationship this encourages between the generations has also been encouraged by the concerns over child safety. The recognition amongst both the adults and children in Hillhouse for example that children should not talk to strangers, expressed well the framework of distrust that has developed in communities – something that has been encouraged through the promotion of child safety both at a local and national level. The result of this development has led to what is today being described as a walk on by society, where adults turn away from children who need help, unsure what others might think if they dare to lend a hand.

Society may be more fragmented, but this fragmentation and disconnection between people has been facilitated by the child and community safety industry that has both

physically and mentally lubricated this process of dislocation. The message being sent out to communities today, is that it is the job of professionals rather than local adults to engage with, discipline or even care for the children in your area.

Outside of children in your immediate family, it is no longer clear what the role of adults should be in relation to young people and their misbehaviour. *Given this situation, when young people are 'antisocial', it is not simply the behaviour itself which we find so upsetting but our own sense of impotence and confusion about what our role as adults should be.*

Adults, perhaps more than at any other time, are concerned about young people's behaviour and support, even demand, something be done about it. But at the same time – there is little expectation within the adult population itself that they should be involved in regulating this behaviour. The result is that adults and young people have become disconnected from one another, while informal relationships are formalised. CCTV cameras on estates have increasingly become the technical way to watch over young people, replacing the watchful gaze of even the old 'curtain twitcher', while troublesome young people are given behaviour contracts by the police rather than being socialised through spontaneous encounters with adults. Where adults do intervene they often do it alone, receiving little support from those around them, and frequently decide that next time they will leave it to someone else. With little support from one another, potential confrontation with young people's parents, and discouragement from the authorities to get involved, the active men and women of communities are a dying breed.

Given this situation, this vacuum of adult authority, it is likely that the behaviour of young people will become less predictable and potentially more problematic. Thus the cry that 'something must be done' by the authorities gets ever louder, and the breakdown of informal relationships spirals ever downwards.

Finally, the pressures on adults not to 'get involved' when young people misbehave also helps to raise the level of anxiety about antisocial behaviour. Because by not acting to resolve these problems, we undermine our own sense of adulthood. People

feel both anxious and frustrated today, not only at the young people who misbehave, but also with themselves because they have relinquished responsibility for something they sense they should be able to sort out. *What individuals experience from their inaction in relation to antisocial behaviour is a sense of their own diminished subjectivity.*

Ultimately, the loss of connection between people is a significant problem today – but one that is rarely addressed politically. Politicians and local authorities feel more comfortable tapping into the public sense of fear and insecurity and do so through promoting safety campaigns and launching ever-more antisocial behaviour initiatives. However, the result of this is that it reinforces a sense that young people are indeed out of control and it further discourages adults from having anything to do with these young people. Today's antisocial behaviour initiatives send out the message that it is the role of the police, of the housing department, or of community wardens, to deal with youngsters, rather than local adults. This both promotes passivity and literally helps to reduce still further the contact that different generations have with one another.

Future Research

As the thesis 'goes to press', a report by the Institute of Public Policy Research has been printed (Margo and Dixon 2006). Making the headlines on a number of issues, two key points made in this research relate to the findings that British adults are both 'scared of young people' and that compared with their European counterparts, they are less likely to intervene when they see teenagers misbehaving. The research in Hamilton provided some evidence of this. The argument made here has been that in effect the community safety initiatives developed from the mid 1990s have actually encouraged this 'walk on by' approach by adults. However, a weakness of the research in Hillhouse was that relatively few adults and especially parents, were interviewed. What were their thoughts about the child safety message, did they intervene in their community, and if not why not? It appears in retrospect that despite the focus of the curfew appearing to be on young people, perhaps more significantly it was parents and parenting that was central to the Child Safety Initiative. With the

focus on young people, in terms of interviews, the voice of the adults in the area were relatively underdeveloped here.

As antisocial behaviour initiatives and child safety issues become further institutionalised, more research is needed into the understanding that adults have of themselves and their role in their communities and especially with children and young people.

Conclusion

Many of the trends identified in the thesis related to the Hamilton curfew in 1997 have developed and become more pronounced today. Antisocial behaviour has become an increasingly significant political issue, and as crime figures fall and the fear of crime remains high, the focus on antisocial behaviour has intensified further. The search for the elusive cause of fear in society is drifting ever downwards onto the minutiae of everyday life and relationships between people. The promotion of the 'politics of behaviour' (Bleas 2004), which in the recent past would have been more problematic, is now becoming an accepted and indeed promoted role for government, with how and where people smoke and drink, or what they eat, for example, increasingly understood to be a legitimate political issue of public safety and individual responsibility. Meanwhile the police – an organisation that today has far greater public legitimacy than political parties (MORI 2001: 12) – has become more relied upon to resolve an increasing array of social issues. As the *Guardian* editorial commented in relation to the Dimbleby Lecture by Sir Ian Bell, the Metropolitan Police Commissioner, in November 2005, 'policing may once have been marginal to much ordinary life, but today it is closer to the centre' (*Guardian* 17 November 2005). Developments that would previously have been understood as a move towards a police state are today endorsed by even liberal newspapers and academics, as fear becomes an accepted framework for political action.

In the case of the Hamilton curfew, it was noted that despite there being some real issues regarding young people's behaviour in the area, in general the fear expressed by local people was less to do with any particular safety issues than with a more

generalised sense of insecurity: a sentiment that led to a high level of support for the community safety initiatives being introduced. Fear of young people and fear for children were both significant issues promoted and engaged with at this time. Since 1997 when Labour came into power, the engagement with fear has become normalised and institutionalised to such an extent that the culture of fear is today even more ingrained in everyday life. Antisocial Behaviour Orders are being used at an accelerated rate, institutionalising the more therapeutic protection of the public, not from crime, but from anything that the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 defined as being, 'likely to cause harassment alarm or distress'. Local radio stations in Scotland today advertise antisocial behaviour laws to encourage people to use these new powers, and sound no more out of place than an advert for cereal or washing powder; while new rules under Disclosure Scotland¹⁸¹ introduce, with the support of public sector unions, ever-more intrusive forms of vetting of adults working with young people.

Safety is today's amoral absolute and the modern framework for the state to relate to individuals and communities. But rather than communities being developed, they are being further undermined by this process. A key to the creation of communities at a local level is the development of relationships between adults and children, and the experience of bringing up the next generation of adults. Unfortunately, the more society is organised around fear and safety, the more fragmented and distrusting will these communities become, creating a truly antisocial society.

Notes

¹ See the *Guidance on Crime and Disorder Act: local child curfews* (1998).

² For an over-view of this period see Joel Best's *Deviance: The Career of a Concept* (2004).

³ The trend towards 'radicals' accepting the social problem of crime developed with feminist writers in the 1970s followed by New Realists in the 1980s. However, it was not until the 1990s that the 'social problems' of both crime and especially antisocial behaviour became mainstream. This topic is addressed further in Chapter 5.

⁴ The British Crime Survey was initially seen as an alternative source of information of crime and has over time become increasingly used in tandem with the official crime statistics to give a more accurate picture of crime in the UK. (See a review of the BCS in the *British Journal of Criminology* 1984, Vol. 24, pp195-205).

⁵ Jenkins, in his critique of official crime statistics, argues that 'the first thing to say is that police statistics are totally useless, either as a true record of crime or as a measure of its movement over time. They are simply a record of police station activity' (Jenkins 1994: 83).

⁶ See also Coleman and Moynihan (1996).

⁷ See also Bob Holman's *Children and Crime: How Can Society Turn Back the Tide of Delinquency* (1995), a tide of delinquency that the leftwing Holman finds to be contradicted by the same conviction statistics.

⁸ See also Cohen's *Images of Deviance* (1971), Jock Young's *The Druggakers* (1971) and Ian and Laurie Taylor's *Politics and Deviance* (1973).

⁹ Until 1997 the Labour Party had never made law and order a central part of their general election manifestos. See Downes and Morgan (1997).

¹⁰ The problems of 'harassment and abuse', for example, that have often been highlighted within feminist research, are central to the definition of antisocial behaviour.

¹¹ The seriousness with which 'antisocial behaviour' of young people is taken today suggests that the use of the term 'mischief' to describe these petty misdemeanours will, if it hasn't already, become obsolete.

¹² See the Antisocial Behaviour Acts in both Scotland (2004) and the England and Wales (2003).

¹³ In a local area of Airdrie, for example, £6 million was set aside for community safety work by the council, targeted at a population of fewer than 10,000 people.

¹⁴ Beck's 'Risk Society' is different to O'Malley and Simon's, being more 'real' as opposed to a developing 'technology of power'. However, here the idea of risk is highlighted more generally to illustrate the changing analysis of society that situates risk and risk management at its heart, which elevates concerns about events that have often yet to occur.

¹⁵ 'Outsiders' are defined by Best as those groups of claimsmakers outside of the main political and social institutions of society (Best 1993).

¹⁶ Also see Rose (1999).

¹⁷ In the *Guardian* 19 January 2006, for example, the children's commissioner for England argued that the problem of disorder was not about young people not showing respect but was in fact a problem created because adults do not show young people enough respect.

¹⁸ Here the notion of victimisation is used to depict the understanding and representation of all of the affected groups in the curfew-targeted areas as victims.

¹⁹ The idea of 'cotton wool kids' refers to concerns about the over-protected and limited nature of children's lives and free time, concerns that have been explored in detail through various publications and research projects. See for example Hillman, Adams and Whiteleg (1990).

²⁰ Cohen's work on Mods and Rockers was developed from labelling theory that emerged in the USA in the fifties and sixties (Lemert 1951; Becker 1991(originally printed in 1963)). Labelling theory, rather than taking the deviant as a given by his actions and studying this, looked at how the very process of labelling came about, and what impact labelling an individual or group had on the accused.

²¹ This, he argued, in the 1960s was something felt most acutely by the lower middle class, as the 'work ethic' was seen to be displaced amongst the young by a 'New Hedonism' (1978: 157).

²² Many on the right attacked extremists, demonstrators, squatters, black power activists and student radicals. Militant trade unionists were also attacked and new laws like the Industrial Relations Act introduced. The demonstration against this act was depicted at the time as a demonstration of rowdies and anarchists 'promoting the downfall of law and order' (1978: 284).

²³ Explaining how society 'creates' deviance, Becker notes that *'social groups make deviance by making the rules whose infraction constitutes deviance'*, and by applying those rules to particular people and labelling them as outsiders. From this point of view, deviance is *not* the quality of the act the person commits, but rather a consequence of the application by others of rules and sanctions to an "offender" (Becker 1991: 9).

²⁴ This form of social constructionism, known as contextual constructionism, will be used within this thesis. For a discussion about the conflicting methods of strict and contextual constructionists, see Spector and Kitsuse (1987) and Best (1990: 189)

²⁵ See for example Thompson's *Moral Panic* (1998), where panics are understood to be generated by traditional conservative moralists, and also where 'safety' based panics like the 'safe sex' campaign are understood more as a justifiable response to a real social problem than as a new form of panic.

²⁶ The interest group theory has been developed most in the USA, due, Thompson believes, to existing fields of research in this country around social movements and collective behaviour studies. These social movements are defined as those groups that do not have the influence of established pressure groups and therefore, in part, because they need to attract attention to their issue of concern, are prone to present these concerns in terms of outrage and moral indignation (Thompson 1998: 19).

²⁷ The defence of tradition - and particularly the notion of a national tradition - is explicit within these statements and have been part of the conservative outlook in Britain since the French Revolution. See for example Edmond Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1999).

²⁸ Like the underclass, single parents and muggers.

²⁹ See *Knife Culture? Cut the Crap* (<http://www.spiked-online.com/Articles/0000000CA825.htm>).

³⁰ See Beck in Lash's *Risk, Environment and Modernity: Towards a new ecology* (1996).

³¹ The concern with social control as the aim for social policy and political interventions is expressed clearly by leading sociologist and New Labour adviser Anthony Giddens, in his book *The Third Way*. Giddens' concern for social order is reflected in his proposals, which lose any principle and become simple pragmatic judgements about the best way to maintain order in society. Meritocracy, for example is discussed in wholly negative terms and is questioned because of its potentially destabilising impact on 'social cohesion' (1998: 102).

³² The idea of cotton-wool kids relates to children who are over-protected by their parents.

³³ This helps in part to understand the notion of 'paranoid parenting', and the strength of the amoral absolute of child safety, discussed in later chapters.

³⁴ Although, as will be discussed later, what is meant by responsibility has changed and diminished.

³⁵ This sense of *The End of Ideology*, identified by Daniel Bell (1962) in the 1950s and 1960s, was emerging at the time amongst key sections of the American intelligentsia. However this sentiment was relatively marginal to society as a whole, but by the 1990s this sense of loss had become more universal within left- and right-wing thought (Furedi 1992).

³⁶ The 'political' approach of the Conservatives in the 1980s is contrasted to the micro politics of the 1990s. However, this is a somewhat exaggerated distinction that masks many of the trends emerging at this time (for example, the centrality of crime to politics and a growing therapeutic culture), which developed more forcefully in the 1990s. Despite this, politics in the 1980s, compared with later developments, maintained an ideological dimension with competing visions of the 'social' and the active individual, both of which held back the centrality of the passive victim and the centrality of this victim to the relationship between state and society.

³⁷ Where the petty criminal acts of children were mentioned, the target was not simply with this behaviour itself, nor the impact it had on individuals, but rather with the 'soft liberal' moral values – held by teachers and social workers – that it was assumed were the cause of undermining British Victorian values of discipline, hard work and a 'stiff upper lip' (Pearson 1982).

³⁸ As one Conservative noted with frustration, 'I believe that we probably have lost the culture war. That doesn't mean that war isn't going to continue, and that it isn't going to be fought on other fronts. But in terms of society in general, we have lost. This is why, even when we win in politics, our victories fail to translate into the kind of policies we believe are important' (Schneider 2003: 430).

³⁹ Crime was certainly an issue that the Conservative government used in the 1980s, however, as Dunbar and Langdon note, it was not an issue that was, 'very prominent in either of the general elections of 1983 or 1987' (Dunbar and Langdon 1998: 100).

⁴⁰ Reference <http://www.rethinking.org.uk/facts/system.shtml> [on 29/Nov 2005]

⁴¹ For the first time in the history of British politics Labour were seen and described as putting the Tories on the defensive over crime. Indeed, now it was the turn of the Conservative government to call foul and demand that crime – according to the official statistics – was actually falling.

⁴² The articles discussing community safety at this time were written with reference to the victim research being carried out examining the impact of racial harassment and also general crime concerns of burglary and robbery. This research was not simply academic but was a form of action research adopted by the council, 'in the hope that it will show [local people] how to defeat burglars and robbers' (*Times* 24 November 1987). Left realist, feminist criminologists and activists including Jock Young carried out this research. Still focused on specific areas and particular groups, this approach grew in the late 1990s to incorporate the entire population.

⁴³ The extreme examples of the shooting of school children in Dunblane and the killing of the head teacher Philip Lawrence were cited as evidence, which *typified* the problem of 'an explosion of crime and disorder'.

⁴⁴ 'Community safety' as a term used in the press with reference to crime noticeably increase in its significance in the mid 1990s, and a more pronounced increase followed the election of New Labour in 1997. From zero articles in 1986 and four in 1987 this increased to 61 in 1995 and by 1998 there were over 900 articles related to community safety and crime (Lexis Nexis media search of all British newspapers from 1984 that contained the words 'community safety' and 'crime').

⁴⁵ Writing in 2003, one Labour MP described the changing relationship with the electorate: 'What my constituents see as politics has changed out of all recognition during the 20 years or so since I first became their Member of Parliament. From a traditional fare of social security complaints, housing transfers, unfair dismissals, as well as job losses, constituents now more often than not, ask what can be done to stop their lives being made a misery by the unacceptable behaviour of some neighbours, or more commonly, their neighbours' children' (Field 2003: 9).

⁴⁶ James Q. Wilson's book *Thinking about Crime* (1975), written from a conservative perspective, was even more influential in questioning the idea that the 'causes' of crime could be tackled, leading to a pragmatism and technical approach to crime reduction.

⁴⁷ The idea that the fear of crime was irrational was advocated within the first British Crime Survey (Hough and Mayhew 1983). Developed in part because of the loss of statistical credibility in official crime statistics, the BCS, by discovering the 'dark figure' of crimes that went unreported to the police, helped to develop a focus upon the victims of crime and more specifically the victims of minor and middle range offences. Despite this, left realist and feminist criminologists argued that crimes against women and minor incivilities against 'vulnerable groups' remained hidden.

⁴⁸ The term 'vulnerable groups' is telling in and of itself, in that it ascribes the status of vulnerability to an entire section of society, the commonality between these people being subsequently understood through this label of being vulnerable. By the very nature of *being* a child, or elderly, or a woman you ARE vulnerable – regardless of how you understand yourself or experience life – and are therefore in need of protection.

⁴⁹ Also see Simon Jenkins's critique of the Conservative governments in *Accountable to None: Tory Nationalisation of Britain* (1995).

⁵⁰ This loss of a sense of human agency has been objectified and theorised by Ulrich Beck's understanding of a risk society (1992).

⁵¹ The understanding of Thatcherism for explaining the transformation within the working class was developed systematically within the radical journal, *Marxism Today*, a journal within which significant individuals who went on to influence the emergence of New Labour wrote, including Tony Blair (if infrequently), Geoff Mulgan and Charles Leadbetter (Finlayson 2003: 117).

⁵² Hayes and Hudson (2001: 11) described the notion of Essex Man as a 'crude lifestyle caricature', which was an 'implausible attempt to define a new group of workers with a Thatcherite ideology'.

⁵³ TINA was a term used to describe the idea promoted by Margaret Thatcher that There Is No Alternative to the market.

⁵⁴ See for example the NSPCC's research *Child Maltreatment in the UK* (2000) where this approach is adopted.

⁵⁵ The promotion of individual freedoms promoted by the Conservative government was of course one-sided and based more upon the challenge to collectivism and union power than to a celebration of the individual in and of itself, and the realities of the emergence of 'promethean man' are questionable. However, this more libertarian image of the individual continued to influence conservative thinking about crime.

⁵⁶ The underwolves were the disconnected, largely working-class young people, who Wilkinson and Mulgan of the left-wing think tank Demos believed had selfish hedonistic values and were potentially about to 'bite back' (1995).

⁵⁷ In a sense what Mills was discussing was the classic liberal understanding of democracy: a democracy that he recognised was problematic in terms of where power lay in society and the subsequent role of public institutions. However, his discussion of a *public* is nonetheless a useful starting point to contrast the changing nature of politics in late twentieth century Britain.

⁵⁸ See *New Statesman* 7 July 2003 where Nick Cohen describes the '661 new crimes' created by the Labour governments since 1997.

⁵⁹ This transformation was not simply an 'image' and reflected the less active and collective nature of political life, but was however conceptualised and to a degree labelled as being 'vulnerable', a label that helped to create and recreate the public self image.

⁶⁰ Indeed the move in governance to the 'community' and away from the 'national' or 'international', reflected this same trend – away from the 'social'.

⁶¹ This development also helps explain the emergence of therapeutic politics, as Heartfield notes: 'Where the people are no longer constituted through the political process as a people, but remain instead atomised individuals, the state cannot represent the general will. In such conditions modern elites relate to the electorate on a more personal basis, in which circumstance, the expression of love is more appropriate' (Heartfield 2002: 200).

⁶² The 'vital ingredient', of 'fear of crime', 'discovered' in the 1980s (Gilling 1999: 1), was one of the key developments which led to a move towards a more therapeutically oriented approach to crime which became increasingly central to law and order issues as the 1990s progressed. One example of this, is the publication of *Anxieties about crime: findings from the 1994 British Crime Survey* (Home Office 1995). That the Home Office researchers decided to write a specific paper on anxieties about crime reflected the growing centrality of emotional indicators as central to the understanding of the social problem of crime.

⁶³ A more detailed explanation of the Child Safety Initiative will be presented in the following chapter. It should be noted that the author at this point in time also set up a youth research charity, with a number of like-minded colleagues, to examine the issue of youth regulation.

⁶⁴ See research by Cahill (1990), Hillman, Adams and Whiteleg (1990), Barnardos (1995), Wheway and Millard (1997), Valentine (1997), Valentine and McKendrick (1997), Moorcock (1998), Livingstone and Bovill (1999), and Blatchford (1999).

⁶⁵ This is a term used by Best (1990) to explain the typical examples used that express the core elements of a particular social problem.

⁶⁶ See Angrosino and Mays de Perez (2000: 674) for a discussion about observational research.

⁶⁷ This observational work around Hillhouse was also supplemented by council statistics on the owner occupation, car ownership, and various statistics on the population.

⁶⁸ As will be explained in the following chapters, one of the issues raised by John Orr, Strathclyde's Chief of Police, in relation to possible safety issues for parents was that of paedophiles.

⁶⁹ See Fontana and Frey (2000: 656) for a discussion about unstructured interviews and oral histories.

⁷⁰ As Christensen and James note in terms of the importance of context when interviewing children, 'The same child could be boisterous and outspoken at home, but shy and reserved at school' (2000: 103).

⁷¹ As the CSI specifically targeted any child 'under the age of 16', nobody over this age was interviewed.

⁷² See *Statement of Ethical Practice for the British Sociological Association* (BSA 2004). In particular note Point 6 on being responsible to safeguard the proper interests of those involved in or affected by this work; Point 13 on ensuring the physical and psychological well being of those involved; Point 16 on consent; Point 17 on making interviewees aware of their right to refuse; Point 34 on respecting anonymity and Point 36 on storing data.

⁷³ See Appendix 1 for the consent form used.

⁷⁴ Within the writing up of this research all children's names have been changed.

⁷⁵ As a Barnardos document on research ethics with children rightly points out, research with children can be justified if the information being gained does not already exist, or is not attainable from another source (Barnardos 1995b: 2).

⁷⁶ See Appendix 2 and 3 for details of the questionnaires used.

⁷⁷ In *Random Violence*, Joel Best carries out a similar analysis, in examining specific 'new' crimes like stalking and attempting to understand them within a broader framework of the generalised fear of random violence in American society (Best 1999).

⁷⁸ These groups and individuals were analysed particularly as they were the key 'elite' claimsmakers promoting the implementation of the CSI.

⁷⁹ The local newspaper coverage of the curfew was particularly useful for gaining access to 'elite' claims and justifications for the curfew, largely because most of the articles in the *Hamilton Advertiser* were generated by police press releases and comments about the progress of the initiative.

⁸⁰ This limited oppositional 'voice' was less to do with media bias than with a lack of an organised, and especially political, opposition to the curfew, which would have resulted in a systematic oppositional voice being present.

⁸¹ The individuals and organisations contacted were: Save the Children (Scotland), Nancy Ovens - Vice Chair of Play Scotland, Gerison Landsdown - Director of the Children's Rights Office, Tim Gill from the Children's Play Council, Roger Smith of the Children's Society (who gave a statement in a personal capacity) and the Scottish Human Rights Centre.

⁸² Throughout the chapter the term curfew and the Child Safety Initiative (CSI) will both be used to avoid repetition. Despite not being a formal curfew, as we will show, this was how local adults and young people alike understood the initiative.

⁸³ See also Gilling (1999: 2) where he notes that, 'in the course of the 1980s a vital and further ingredient [to crime prevention initiatives] was added, namely the fear of crime'.

⁸⁴ While the Hamilton 'curfew' may have been, to some degree, a mere continuation of policies associated with youth crime, it is worth noting that prior to this development, and especially in the 1980s, curfews were generally discussed and understood as initiatives used only in extreme cases of war, civil unrest, or in countries notorious for their authoritarian approach - particularly in the Eastern Block. See for example the *Times* 26 May 1989: 'Verdict on Israeli soldiers sparks protests by Arabs', Richard Owen.

⁸⁵ In terms of the 'grassroots' support for community safety type initiatives in the 1990s, it is worth noting that an opinion poll in Glasgow found that 95% of Glaswegians were in favour of the City Watch CCTV initiative developed in the city centre, and only 2% were opposed to it (Cummins 1997: 17).

⁸⁶ By 1997 the discussion about zero tolerance policing had reached a high point, in part because of the general election in that year and the ensuing battle between the Conservative and Labour parties over the toughness of their crime policies, and also because of the impact that this form of policing was believed to be having in the USA. Indeed, it was this year, the year of the Hamilton curfew, which saw more newspaper articles, at least in the *Guardian*, which raised the issue of zero tolerance in relation to crime, than any previous or subsequent year. (In a Lexis Nexis media search there were over 70 articles discussing 'zero tolerance' initiatives in relation to 'crime'. This was an increase from 11 the previous year, and from 1998 on there have been around 50 such articles).

⁸⁷ In February 1993, Strathclyde police launched Operation Blade, an initiative aimed at ridding the streets of knives by stopping and searching young men. In 1993 a night-club curfew was established in Glasgow's city centre. In the winter of 1994 Glasgow Development Agency launched City Watch, a CCTV scheme that covered the whole of the city centre. In the summer of 1996 Glasgow District Council banned street drinking - the ban was not just focused on the city centre, but covered the whole of the district. In October 1996 Strathclyde Police launched Operation Spotlight, an umbrella operation that aimed to target both crime and the fear of crime. The Child Safety Initiative - or what became known as the Hamilton Curfew, set up in October 1997 - was part of the continuing Operation Spotlight.

⁸⁸ 'Instead of a society wide system of policing [for the past 200 years], the British political establishment pursued an ideal of solidarity...now, at the end of the twentieth century, in tandem with the reassertion of a punitive sovereignty, threatens the eclipse of that project of solidarity which formed the central thrust of twentieth century social and penal politics. In its place, we are witnessing the emergence of a more divisive, exclusionary project of punishment and police' (Garland 1996: 466).

⁸⁹ Hillhouse, as the largest of the three targeted areas, was the one within which the research for this thesis was carried and as such, it is this estate that will largely be related to in terms of the claimsmaking process of the CSI.

⁹⁰ 'Information', South Lanarkshire Council, Child Safety Initiative Launch 23 October 1997.

⁹¹ Sandy Cameron, Executive Director of Social Work, speaking on Sky Scottish 26 October 1997.

⁹² See Appendix 4 for John Orr's full speech as provided at the launch of the CSI.

⁹³ See Appendix 5 for Tom McCabe's speech as provided at the launch of the CSI.

⁹⁴ Tom McCabe, Labour Leader of South Lanarkshire Council, speaking on Sky Scottish 26 October 1997.

⁹⁵ Sandy Cameron, Executive Director of Social Work, speaking on Sky Scottish 26 October 1997.

⁹⁶ This aspect of the 'at risk' young person appears to have been integrated into the CSI by the social work department themselves, giving a more 'caring' framework for the initiative. The social work department, while playing no role in the enforcement of the initiative, had worked closely with the police in the development of the curfew prior to its introduction.

⁹⁷ Two Sides to Every Story 'Proximity Conference': Bridging the Gap Between Young and Old Conference, 10 November 1997, former Strathclyde Regional Council Headquarters, Glasgow.

⁹⁸ See Waiton (2001) *Scared of the Kids?*, comment section, where a number of those individuals and groups opposing the curfew explain their concerns.

⁹⁹ In this respect - in terms of social problem formation - the basis for the curfew as far as the authorities were concerned was via a 'grassroots' concern with safety.

¹⁰⁰ South Lanarkshire Council prior to the curfew had hired the System 3 survey company to find out what concerns and issues were of relevance to local people (System 3 1996). Following this, the 'First Citizens' Jury in Scotland' was set up to address the issues of community safety and it was this jury that was later said to have come up with the idea of the curfew (South Lanarkshire 1997a). Subsequently research with young people was carried out in schools in Hamilton to assess the thoughts of young people about the curfew. Also the police hired researchers from Strathclyde University to assess the effectiveness of the curfew not simply in reducing crime but in improving the public sense of safety (McGallagly et al 1998)

¹⁰¹ A 'phone-in' opinion poll run by the local *Hamilton Advertiser* 16 October 1997 showed that 95 per cent of the public supported the curfew - this was something referred to by Chief Constable John Orr in his launch speech.

¹⁰² During the curfew the police themselves kept a record of the thoughts of the young people who they picked up on the street, which showed that a majority supported this initiative. The exact figures of support by these young people has been questioned and the usefulness of statistics collected by the police from young people taken home can be seriously questioned (see Springham 1997).

¹⁰³ Part of the reason for Robertson making this claim was that he had suggested setting up Citizens' Juries to test public opinion on local issues. Often projected as a more democratic attempt to 'listen to the people' this approach to social policy development and the growth of the use of consultants in local government also suggests a level of disengagement felt by politicians and local authorities from the public.

¹⁰⁴ The idea of the *public*, here relates to C. Wright Mills' (1967) understanding of active engaged individuals, discussed in Chapter 4.

¹⁰⁵ Allison McLaughlan of the *Daily Record* summed up the feeling of those promoting the curfew when she described the Scottish Human Rights Centre as 'nutters'. 'It's OK for liberals to be standing sayin, 'Oh aye, it's infringing people's human rights'', McLaughlan said, 'but what about the rights of people who are getting their windows panned in' (The Face, June 1998).

¹⁰⁶ To what degree young people themselves had adopted this understanding of themselves and their 'rights' will be examined further in the next chapter.

¹⁰⁷ The dominant view that today's world is structured around neo-liberal policies and practices has not resulted in the rise of libertarian values and a desire for individual freedom. As Brook and Cape noted in their chapter *Libertarianism in Retreat* in the British Social Attitudes Survey, all sections of society have become less libertarian in their outlook in recent years (Brook and Cape 1995: 204-5).

¹⁰⁸ As Rose has argued, the emergence of the governance through 'community', predicated on a more micro-management form of crime prevention, has over recent years become understood as a 'cure for all ills' (Rose 1996: 331).

¹⁰⁹ Gilling also identified that the move to community safety developed under the Conservative government, with the primary problem being understood to be economic, 'the Conservative solution being a market one'. With the creation of *Safer Cities* it was believed, enterprise, community activity and personal responsibility could flourish (Gilling 1999: 5)

¹¹⁰ Rose rightly observes that the process of governance through the 'community' developed as a 'new plane or surface upon which micro-moral relations among persons are conceptualised and administered', and where 'a whole series of issues are problematised' (Rose 1996: 331).

¹¹¹ Rose in particular has a critical recognition, for example, of the therapeutic interventionist element of responsabilisation and the development of new relations of governance through 'community' professionals (Rose 1996: 348; Rose 1999). Despite this recognition, however, to some degree the idea of responsabilisation relates to the individual and his behaviour. Here it is this aspect of the notion of responsibility and responsabilisation that is examined.

¹¹² This is not to argue that a more individualised aspect of crime prevention has not developed in a technical sense - whereby individuals take more responsibility for private security measures. But within the realm of human consciousness and interpersonal or public action, rather than autonomous self-governing individuals developing, we see a promotion and emergence of diminished subjective engagement with the community within an ontological framework of the vulnerable individual.

¹¹³ Structural questions, the more heterogeneous nature of, or at least outlook, amongst people in Hillhouse, and to some degree a 'real' concern about especially drunken older unemployed young men, all helped to legitimise the CSI and the action by the police. However, despite this, what is being examined here is the changing nature of what responsibility meant to the authorities when relating to the people of Hillhouse.

¹¹⁴ Even at the level of intergenerational communication, the 'Bridging the Gap' conference, mentioned above, can be seen as an example of how past informal relationships between the generations were formalised: a mechanism that has increasingly been understood to be the way forward for helping to recreate a sense of community. A number of conferences around the UK have developed over the past seven years connected to 'intergeneration' reconnecting. One such conference in Keele explained that, 'Participants took part in a variety of workshops on issues such as citizenship, fear of crime, reminiscence, effective intergenerational practice, building healthy communities and intergenerational mentoring. Participants also had the opportunity to see displays on a wide variety of intergenerational initiatives' (www.bgop.org.uk/pages/events_past019.html).

¹¹⁵ This was reflected in a Strathclyde police advertising campaign at the time, which stated: 'If you think there *may* be trouble, pick up a weapon'. The weapon in question was a telephone and the message not to intervene yourself was clear. Also, during the curfew, following complaints by adults about rowdy teenagers in another area of Hamilton, the police put out a statement to the public commanding that people should, 'Call us and we will come round and deal with the situation. Do not engage them yourself, call us' (Hamilton People 12 December 1997).

¹¹⁶ See Labour MP, Frank Field's book *Neighbours from Hell: The Politics of Behaviour* (2003) where he promotes the need for the police to play the role of surrogate parents.

¹¹⁷ <http://www.centre21.org.uk/agenda/agenda2000/articles/tough.html>

¹¹⁸ As noted previously, this idea of being streetwise was already seen to be under threat with the development of what was described as 'cotton wool kids'.

¹¹⁹ Rather than with reference to protecting the life and property of the individual or the moral values of society.

¹²⁰ The specific activities of young people were often referred to - especially by the tabloid press - as a problem in and of itself. However, for those promoting the curfew, the underlying problem being engaged with was the more generalised concern about fear which was understood to be an almost permanent emotional state of the adults living in the targeted areas.

¹²¹ See Furedi (2004: 136) where he notes that, 'The 'self at risk' is a construction of cultural norms that regard people's fears as itself a source of risk.

¹²² In April 1997, shadow Home Secretary Jack Straw had described the fear of crime as something that 'hangs like a dark cloud in the air'. Elaborating, Straw believed the extent of this problem meant that 'Two thirds of women pensioners are scared to leave their house at night. Our pensioners are prisoners in their own homes who only want to live in peace. Surely the prisoners should be those who commit the crimes, not those who are the victims of crime. It cannot go on' (*Guardian* 26 April 1997).

¹²³ Here the focus of the therapeutic outlook has been focused on the issue of the fear of crime. However, this was equally significant in the attempted engagement made with young people and parents, i.e. the fear felt by these groups was understood as the core basis of connection and of the legitimisation of the curfew.

¹²⁴ In terms of rhetorical pronouncements regarding the curfew, it was noticeable that national politicians and the chief of police were more inclined to relate to the fear of 'yobs' and the problem of

antisocial behaviour. Whereas the local police and social work department - possibly due to their direct contact with the community, the need to develop practical solutions, and their desire to be understood as caring rather than authoritarian - constantly described the CSI as an initiative to make children and young people safe, as well as adults. Whereas the local police systematically argued that the curfew was about the safety of young children, the local MP George Robertson echoed the 'tough on crime' focus of the Labour leadership and was more inclined to emphasise the 'rights' of fearful adults. Indeed as later developments proved, the Labour leadership was more than happy to introduce curfew legislation without concern about the use of the term curfew. This contrasts with the local council leader in Hamilton, who had stated that a curfew has 'no place in a society heading for the new millennium'.

¹²⁵ With subsequent developments in parenting classes and the problematisation of parenting itself, it also appears that parents themselves have become a group who are understood to need professional support to be good parents (Furedi 2001).

¹²⁶ While there does appear to have been a general level of fear within the curfew targeted communities, this does not imply that all adults were living in a constant state of fear, nor that many of these adults did or would engage with young people if they were encouraged to do so. Indeed by relating to the general sense of anxiety and promoting behaviour accordingly, it will be argued in the following chapter that the council were relating to, but also encouraging, a more passive and risk-averse approach to community life.

¹²⁷ Note that the definition of 'safe' is: 'protected from danger or risk [but also] cautious and unenterprising'. See www.askoxford.com

¹²⁸ See Labour Party documents (1993; 1995 and 1996).

¹²⁹ See the Glasgow *Herald* 3 November 1997, where the story of a four-year-old boy found out on the streets at 9pm was the basis for an article about the initiative.

¹³⁰ The idea of *issues*, which are more general and to some degree more political in their make-up, as opposed to *troubles*, which are more directly related to individual personal concerns, relates to C. Wright Mills' (1967) work described previously.

¹³¹ Despite this example however, which had focused attention upon what the police had felt to be an example of 'irresponsible parenting', it should be noted more generally that when highlighting the individual examples of unsafe children, the local police in the main did this simply with reference to the child being unsafe and rarely mentioned the irresponsibility of the parent or grandparent. The message of child safety, rather than irresponsible parenting, appeared to be more central for the local police force and indeed the parents or grandparents were to a degree represented as needing support rather than punishment.

¹³² John Orr had mentioned the issue of paedophiles as a problem for children wandering the streets at night in his launch speech of the CSI. For Orr, that parents would allow their children to be out, unsupervised at night, 'beggared belief'.

¹³³ See research by Cahill (1990), Hillman, Adams and Whiteleg (1990), Barnardos (1995), Wheway and Millard (1997), Valentine (1997), Valentine and McKendrick (1997), Moorcock (1998), Livingstone and Bovill (1999), and Blatchford (1999).

¹³⁴ The myth of the problem of under-10-year-olds is of particular significance given the later development of curfew legislation across the UK targeting this age group - something that was justified in part with reference to the success of the Hamilton curfew.

¹³⁵ See Waiton (2001), Chapter 4, for a summary of this research.

¹³⁶ There was also a psychological footnote added in the 1989 definition - *Psychiatry sociopath*.

¹³⁷ In the journal *Sociology and Social Research* in 1916, for example, there was an article examining the 'Antisocial Behaviour of Automobile Drivers': see Ashley, P. (1916) 'Antisocial Behaviour of Automobile Drivers'. *Sociology and Social Research* Vol. 1.

¹³⁸ This figure shows the results from the *Times*' own website for the term antisocial behaviour from 1984 to 2001, and the term antisocial behaviour in a Lexis Nexis media search of the *Guardian* newspaper.

¹³⁹ This latter rapid increase is not indicated in table one, in part to emphasise the constant increase of the problem before this more substantial increase.

¹⁴⁰ For example, ASBOs were mentioned in 142 of the 544 'antisocial behaviour' articles in the *Guardian* in 2004 - a number of these articles were discussing the implementation and the impact of these initiatives

¹⁴¹ See for example the Queen's Speeches by Tony Blair in 2002 and 2004 that highlighted problems of antisocial behaviour as central to future government policy objectives, and the Queen's Speech in 2005 that highlighted the issue of respect as key.

¹⁴² The 1998 Act introduced curfews on children, and the 2003 Act introduced curfew zones that have been challenged and found to be illegal. The Scottish Act enforced a requirement that Local Authorities and Chief Constables jointly prepare an Antisocial Behaviour Strategy and contained much of the new developments in the England and Wales version of 2003. Other acts, such as the Clean Neighbourhoods Act and the Licensing Act have targeted underage drinking - or selling of alcohol, and litter. Laws introduced in the Criminal Justice and Police Act (2001) have also been used to fine people urinating and vomiting in public.

¹⁴³ This information was gained via a Lexis Nexis media search of the *Guardian* for articles containing the words 'antisocial behaviour' and 'politician' or 'minister' or 'Home Secretary'.

¹⁴⁴ In a Lexis Nexis search of antisocial behaviour and youth, children or young people there were 245 articles in the *Guardian* in 2004, and there were 261 'antisocial behaviour' articles mentioning 'community' or 'estates'.

¹⁴⁵ Nuisance behaviour – defined as shouting, swearing, hanging around and fooling around in groups, sometimes outside other people's homes – made up between one in ten and two in ten phone calls to the police as noted in the Audit Commission Report in 1996 (Waiton 2001: 87): Also see Valentine (1996).

¹⁴⁶ Antisocial behaviour was understood to be an issue at a 'local level', but also in relation to 'the public's key education priorities', where 'pupil behaviour/discipline' was the main issue that people felt the government should be addressing in schools (MORI 2005).

¹⁴⁷ Also within criminology, the growth of research examining antisocial behaviour has developed with the increasing influence of psychology. In the British Journal of Criminology the increased use of the term antisocial behaviour since 2000, for example, has developed largely in relation to articles examining work by authors like the Child Psychiatrist Michael Rutter and Professor of Psychological Criminology David Farrington.

¹⁴⁸ This BIDS search looked for these terms in the Title/Keyword/Abstract fields.

¹⁴⁹ The European Journal of Personality, for example, was first published in 1987, the Journal of Forensic Psychiatry and Psychology in 1989, The Journal of Social Distress and the Homeless in 1991, and the Journal of Child and Family Studies in 1992 - all of which contain articles about antisocial behaviour.

¹⁵⁰ The increase in the statistics on violent crime, as Jon Simmons of the Home Office and also a spokesperson for the Association of Chief Police Officers argued, was related to recording and reporting of offences and also with the increasing targeting of certain 'drinking areas' by the police on Friday and Saturday nights (*Guardian* 21 July 2005).

¹⁵¹ As a MORI Poll noted, despite the statistical fall in crime, 'Law and Order is now the number one priority for the first time in years' (MORI 2005), while despite these falls in recent times three quarters of the public still believe that the national crime rate is rising (Home Office 2003: 1).

¹⁵² This concentration on petty acts of incivility as being important - indeed of being the most important thing to study - to understand communities' sense of wellbeing has been discussed previously in relation to feminist and new realist thinkers. It was also something that the 'New Labour' sociologist Anthony Giddens, in *The Third Way* (1998: 86), uncritically recognises as being the case.

¹⁵³ For example, it is the issue of antisocial behaviour that is more frequently understood today to be the problem that undermines communities - indeed this was already reflected within the Hamilton Child Safety initiative and the focus upon issues related to young people hanging around the streets. Noisy neighbours and rowdy youngsters arguably capture the popular imagination far more than, say, burglars and organised criminals do - reflected in programmes about 'Neighbours from Hell' and the increasingly popular use of terms like 'neds' and 'charvers'. In general the sense of a 'loss of respect' and of a broader social breakdown relates more to issues associated with antisocial behaviour than to those of serious crime - reflected in the recent Queen's Speeches.

¹⁵⁴ 1802 J. Mackintosh in *Memoirs* (1835) I. Iv. 176 A collection of all the rebellious, antisocial, blasphemous..books..published during..the Revolution. 1844 *Dublin rev.* Mar. 34 The dark, malignant, atrocious, and utterly anti-social character, which the Republican party in its contest with the new government has exhibited (Oxford Dictionary 1885).

¹⁵⁵ These additions to the meaning of antisocial behaviour are not a separate meaning from the original idea of 'opposing the principles of society', but rather are a continuation of this meaning and an addition to them.

¹⁵⁶ Also see Furedi (1992: 90-97).

¹⁵⁷ This is not to argue that problems of behaviour do not exist, but rather that in the past, like the issue of crime, these *troubles* would not have been accepted as the 'social problem' to be addressed in society.

¹⁵⁸ In the 1970s for example the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, 'characterised youth subcultures as cultures of resistance in opposition to...bourgeois hegemony' (Calcutt 1996: 51).

¹⁵⁹ For example in a MORI Poll (2005) survey under the title, '*Guardian* readers like them too', it was noted that 67% of *Guardian* readers support the introduction of ASBOs.

¹⁶⁰ The safety of children - especially with regard to the issue of child abuse - is one of the few 'absolute' values that British society feels confident to uphold. But this is a particularly negative and low-level common denominator around which to develop a web of meaning.

¹⁶¹ Conservative moralists like Melanie Philips have helped to promote the problem of antisocial behaviour. However Philips recognises that the traditional moral absolutes of the Victorian period that she respects are no longer relevant to the new morality of the twenty-first century. Recognising her own isolation from even an agreement on what sort of behaviour is understood to be antisocial, Philips feels the world has been 'turned upside down', noting that: 'The Victorian reformers all had one thing in common. They were absolutely certain that behaviour such as drinking, sexual licentiousness or prostitution were wrong in themselves. That *iron belief* prompted them to try to curb what they clearly understood as vice and depravity. But now, anyone who even used such terms would be considered beyond the pale. The only thing now absolutely unacceptable is to regard such behaviour as unacceptable' (*Daily Mail* 17 June 2004, my emphasis).

¹⁶² See the approach taken in the Scottish Office publication *Children Young People and Offending in Scotland* (Asquith 1998).

¹⁶³ Within criminology (as discussed in the previous chapter), issues of harassment and abuse helped to focus attention more upon issues of behaviour within 'everyday' life that helped to repose the meaning of crime away from traditional concerns with economic and physical concerns like burglary and assault and towards more minor forms of problem behaviour.

¹⁶⁴ As noted in Chapter 1, the 'discovery' of violence and abuse against women and children (Jenkins 1992:231) had helped to elevate society's awareness and concern with the *behaviour* of particularly men.

¹⁶⁵ Binge drinking is a relatively modern term, the first use of it in the UK press being 1989. The number of articles using this term grew slowly through the 1990s and increased substantially in 2003, and by 2004 the *Guardian* had 189 articles on the subject and there were thousands of articles using the term in all UK papers (these results relate to a Nexis Lexis media search).

¹⁶⁶ In a major research document developed by the Scottish Office between 1995-8, *Children, Young People and Offending in Scotland*, a document produced at the same time as the idea and implementation of the Hamilton curfew was occurring, David Farrington's approach can be seen to be central to the understanding of crime and antisocial behaviour. Here, the use of 'risk indicators' of crime and antisocial behaviour are identified through a 'synthesis of current thinking on the social and psychological processes' and an examination of the 'formal and informal' influences on young people: this examination being directly connected to developing 'policies and practices most likely to have a positive impact on *shaping the behaviour* of young Scots' (Asquith et al 1998: i, my italics).

¹⁶⁷ Here, it is the *behaviour* rather than the beliefs or moral values of individuals that are emphasised, with issues like binge drinking being understood not as ungodly but unhealthy and unsafe.

¹⁶⁸ At a time when the capacity for social intervention has been diminished, as has the belief in the capacity of individuals to act, the grab-bag approach of 'psychosocial' studies that fails either to understand the psychology of the individual or society appears to be most appropriate (see Lasch 1979: 34 for a discussion on psychoanalysis and the study of society).

¹⁶⁹ Note for example the change in the law related to *doli incapax* discussed previously.

¹⁷⁰ Note for example the recent discussion about nursery provision and the concern with the fact that 'antisocial behaviour' has been found to occur within 3-year-old children who attend nursery from an early age (*Times* 16 June 2005).

¹⁷¹ The case of the relatively recently labelled 'paedophile' is the best example of this 'type' of person who is largely understood to have lost any capacity to 'act' in any other way than as a socially defined paedophile. This is similarly represented in the various discussions about 'cultures' of crime that give a sense of permanent distance between those who belong to these imagined 'cultures' and the rest of society (see Calcutt 1996).

¹⁷² See for example Frank Field's description of antisocial behaviour, which he believes is as significant a threat as international terrorism (Field 2003).

¹⁷³ The therapeutic turn within the Catholic Church in the USA is illustrated in relation to the emergence of counselling - rather than moral castigation - given to priests found to have abused children. As Jenkins notes, 'During the 1970s and 1980s, psychological values and assumptions permeated the religious world no less than the secular culture', the consequence being that therapeutic practices and 'values' began to over ride the moral/religious basis of the church itself (Sommers and Satel 2005: 82).

¹⁷⁴ An example of this development can be seen within race and the emergence of the idea of institutional racism - and the change in police recordings of claims of racism (indeed racism itself has today become just another form of antisocial behaviour). Speaking on Radio 4, ex-Chief Constable David Westwood explained that all racist reporting needed to be recorded - regardless of the evidence. As he said, 'it's about each individual respecting other individuals', you record that people 'believe' there was racism, and have to 'accept that someone feels aggrieved', otherwise you 'turn them right off', you 'doubly traumatise' the individual (BBC Radio 4, July 26th 2005 *On the Ropes*).

¹⁷⁵ Tony Blair described anti-social behaviour such as vandalism, graffiti and fly tipping as 'probably the biggest immediate issue for people in the country'. It will be the centrepiece of the Queen's speech on November 13, he added during a visit to Newham in east London (*Guardian* 14 November 2002). On November 4th 2002, Tony Blair argued that the clutch of bills to deal with crime and antisocial disorder at the heart of the Queen's speech was designed to create a 'victim justice system' rather than the present 'criminal justice system' (*Guardian* 4 November 2002).

¹⁷⁶ As an aside, but perhaps of significance, 'antisocial behaviour' had already become a term used by the South African state in the late 1980s, to describe the problems of black youth who lacked the social skills by a very early age to become part of society. That this was understood as a problem of 'antisocial behaviour' caused by a loss of 'webs of authority', may reflect the disintegration of legitimacy of the South African political elite and a spontaneous attempt to repose the problem of the legitimacy of the state as one of the *behaviour* of black youth. The question of political leadership was recast as one of an individual's learned behaviour (*Guardian* 8 May 1990).

¹⁷⁷ For Anthony Giddens, the question of the need for social order is unproblematic and central to every issue: the social arrangement of society and the development of social policies being seen as positive not in terms of their moral or political content, but simply in relation to the degree to which they reinforce social order (Giddens 1998:102).

¹⁷⁸ The Dictionary of Psychology defines *psychosocial* as 'generally a grab-bag term used freely to cover any situation where both psychological and social factors are assumed to play a role (Dictionary of Psychology 1985).

¹⁷⁹ See Furedi (1992) for an historical analysis of the role of ideology in the 20th century.

¹⁸⁰ See Scottish Executive Publications (2005).

¹⁸¹ Disclosure Scotland is the latest vetting procedure that has been introduced in Scotland.

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Appendix 1

Parents Consent Form

The Child Safety Initiative

Stuart Waiton

A proposed research project is planned to interview young people in and around the Hillhouse area to understand what the children and young people of the area think about the Child Safety Initiative being launched in the Hillhouse area.

Your child has been chosen to be interviewed for this research. The children and young people have been chosen simply by their position on their class register. The interview is voluntary and the participants are free to withdraw their consent at any time. This will be explained to the young people themselves at the time of interview.

The interview will be carried out in the school during school time and will take approximately 20 – 30 minutes. The interview will be based on a questionnaire and notes of the interview will be taken by the researcher. No personal details of the young people will be used in any publication or written work and the interview will be confidential. Any written work will use changed names.

If you do not wish to consent simply ignore this form.

a. I confirm that I have read the above and give consent for my child to be interviewed.

Name of Child/ Young Person

Name of Person giving consent

Date

Signature

Researcher

Date

Signature

Appendix 2

Children’s Questionnaire

- 1. What is your first name?
.....
- 2. Which estate do you live on? (If unsure, get the name of the road)
.....
- 3. How old are you?
.....
- 4. What year of school is that?
.....
- 5. Are they male of female?
- 6. Are they White Black Asian Chinese or other?

Get them chatting about what they like to do at night. Suss out why they like doing the things they do, what they would like to be able to do more of, and what they don’t like doing. Then get them to go through their last week – what did they do each night + the weekends.

- 7. Who do you travel home from school with in the evening? Tick one of the answers below.

Parents or some other adult Friends By myself

- 8. When you go to a friend’s house at night how do you get there?
By themselves taken never go

If taken by an adult – why is this

If they go by themselves, do they feel safe? Y/N
If not, why not?
.....

- 9. Do you ever go to the shops for your parents? Y/N
If not why not?

- 10. Do you play out in the streets in the evening? Y/N
If you do not play out in the streets at night, why is this?
.....

- 11. Is it different in the summer?

-
12. Do you play out in the street at the weekend? Y/N
If not, why not?
 13. Have you heard of the Child Safety Initiative? Y/N
If not, try Curfew? Y/N
 14. If you play out in the street at night, what time do you have to be in by?
.....
 15. Has this time changed since the introduction of the curfew? Yes or No
 16. What time did you have to be in by before the curfew?
 17. When you played out on were you allowed to go out of the sight of your
parents? Yes or No
If not, why not?
.....
 18. What time does the curfew start in Hillhouse?
.....
 19. Do you think the curfew is a good idea? Yes or No
Explain why you think this.....
.....
.....
 20. Do you know what time the police start taking people home? Y/N
What time is this?
 21. When you are out:- by yourself at night in your area do you feel safe?
Yes or No or I've never been out alone (do they mean they're with friends
etc)

If not, why not?
 22. If you were out alone at night and felt unsafe or scared, what would you do?
.....
If say go home, ask if there was no-one at home, what would you do?
.....
 23. If you were out alone at night and needed to know the time would you ask an
adult you don't know who was passing by? Yes or No

If you answered no, why is this?
 24. Would you feel happy about asking a teenager you don't know? Yes or No

If you answered no, why is this?
 25. Would you feel happy about asking a police officer? Yes or No

- If you answered no, why is this?
26. Did an adult speak to you (other than parents or relatives) from your street last week? Y/N
- If yes, who was it?
- What was it about?
27. Did you talk to any other adults on your estate? Y/N
- Who?
- What about?
28. When out on your estate –
- | | |
|---|--------------------|
| Have you ever been told off; been asked to move on; been questioned about what you are doing? | Yes or No |
| If yes – who normally does this? | Police |
| | Parents |
| Tick one answer | Friends parents |
| | Other adults |
| | Other young people |
29. Have adults you don't know very well ever told you off, moved you on or questioned you? Y/N
- What for?
30. Have you ever been told off; been moved on; or been questioned about what you were doing by the police? Y/N
- What for?
- If they answered yes to both the above, which happens more often?
Police or Other Adults
- If they have been spoken to by the police, find out if there had been a complaint about them and whether or not an adult had already complained to their face?
-
31. Do you think the police should be phoned if a young person is:-
(tick which answers you agree with)
- a) sitting on a strangers' wall
 - b) running in someone's garden
 - c) knocking on someone's door and running away
 - d) smashing a bottle
 - e) fighting

- f) playing football in the street
- g) being noisy
- h) drinking under age
- i) being out after the curfew time

Any comments why

32. Have you ever visited or called on the house of someone you didn't know very well on your estate? Y/N
 (e.g. for Halloween, to raise money etc) Ask who it was to assess if they or their parents knew them.
 Who was it, why visit?

33. Do you think talking to adults on your estate is a good thing to do? Y/N

Why?
 34. Would you like to see more police on your streets at night? More
Less
No change

35. Would you like to see more young people out at night? More
Less
No change

**PAGE
NUMBERING
AS ORIGINAL**

Appendix 3

Children’s Diary

Name _____

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Activity	Activity	Activity	Activity	Activity	Activity	Activity
Venue	Venue	Venue	Venue	Venue	Venue	Venue
With	With	With	With	With	With	With
Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time
Travel: How	Travel: How	Travel: How	Travel: How	Travel: How	Travel: How	Travel: How
With	With	With	With	With	With	With

Appendix 4

Young People’s Questionnaire

1. What is your first name?
2. Which estate do you live on? (If unsure get name of the road)
.....
3. How old are you?
4. What year of school is that?
5. Are they male or female?
6. Are they White Black Asian Chinese or other?
7. Who do you travel home from school with in the evening? Tick one answer below
Parents or some other adult Friends By myself
- If parents/adult THEN - Why is this?

 If parents/adults THEN - Would you rather go by yourself or with friends? Y/N
 WHY?
- 7a. Do you or would you feel safe walking home alone? Y/N
 WHY?
- 7b. When you go to a friend’s house at night how do you get there? By themselves or taken
 or never go
 If taken by an adult – why is this?
8. Generally, do you consider the area you live in to be safe? Safe Unsafe
 If unsafe – why is this?
- 8a. In general how safe do you feel when:
- | | | | |
|----------------------------|------|--------|--------------------|
| Out with friends at night? | Safe | Unsafe | Never go out |
| Out alone at night? | Safe | Unsafe | Never go out alone |
| In your own home? | Safe | Unsafe | |
| In Hamilton? | Safe | Unsafe | Never go |
| In Glasgow? | Safe | Unsafe | Never go |
- 8b. What if anything could the council or other organisation do to make you feel safe?
.....
- 8c. What if anything could young people do to make communities safer?
.....

- 8d. What if anything could adults do to make communities safer?
.....
9. Do you and your friends ever just hang about doing nothing in particular during the evenings or weekends? No
 Yes, once in a while
 Yes, nearly every day
IF NO, why not?
- 9a. Where do you usually go?
.....
- 9b. What do you usually do?
.....
10. Do/Would you feel safe going out at night? Y/N
Why?
11. Do you play out more in the summer? Y/N
12. What time do you play out till in the summer?
13. Do you ever travel outside your estate (say to Hamilton) independently (without an adult?) Y/N
If YES – are your parents happy about you doing this? Y/N
If parents are not happy – Why not?
- If parents are happy – Why?
- If NO (they don't travel to Hamilton independently) – WHY is this?
.....
14. Do you belong to any club? Y/N
If YES – why do you prefer being in a club to being out with your friends?
15. Who do you spend most of your spare time with? (Number 1st and 2nd)
Mum/dad Brother/sister by yourself
Best friend boy/girl friend group of friends
Adults who aren't in my family
16. Have you heard of the Child Safety Initiative? Y/N
- 16a. Have you heard of the Curfew? Y/N
- 16b. Which do you use? Curfew/CSI
17. Are your parents more worried when you play out since the introduction of the Curfew/CSI? Y/N
WHY?
18. Do you feel safer when you're out since the introduction of the curfew?
Y/N/No different
WHY?

19. If you go out in the streets, what time do you have to be in by?
20. Has this time changed since the introduction of the curfew? Yes or No
21. What time did you have to be in before the curfew?
22. When you go out at night are you allowed to go out of the sight of your parents?
Y/N/I never go out
If no, why?
23. Would you like more freedom to go wherever you wanted? Y/N
If yes, where would they like to go and what would they like to do?
.....
If no, why not?
24. Are you happy to go places where there are no adults around? Y/N
If not, why not?
If yes, why?
25. What time does the curfew start in Hillhouse?
26. Do you think the curfew is a good idea? Yes or No
Explain why you think this.
.....
If they say NO – ask “but do you think the police need some other powers to deal with
the young people in your area?” Y/N
If no, why not?
If yes, What power/why think this?
.....
27. Do you know what time the police start taking people home? Y/N/Don't know
What time is this?
28. If you were REALLY scared when out at night, and you weren't near your house or a
house of someone you knew, would you be prepared to call on a house you didn't know?
Y/N
If no, why not?
29. If you were out alone at night and needed to know the time would you ask an
adult you don't know who was passing by? Yes or No
WHY?
30. Would you feel happy about asking a teenager you didn't know? Yes or No
WHY?
- 30a. If you had to ask either an adult or a teenager, which would you ask?
Adult/Teenager
31. Would you feel happy about asking a police officer? Yes or No

WHY?

32. What adults do you know and talk to on your estate?

Most in Hillhouse

Most in my street

Some on my street

A few neighbours and parents friends

Other

(Elaborate if necessary on who these adults are they know)

33. Do adults offer them advice/do they respect them/do they feel they have things in common with them?

EXPLAIN

.....

34. Have you ever made an effort to talk to an adult you didn't know very well who lives near you? Y/N

WHY?

35. Generally, do you trust the adults on your estate? Y/N

WHY?

36. Generally, do you think adults trust you? Y/N

WHY?

37. Are there any adults you think are scare of you when you're playing out at night?

Y/N

(Elaborate)

38. When out on your estate have you ever been told off, been asked to move on, been questioned about what you are doing? Y/N

If yes - who normally does this?

Police

Parents

(Number 1 and 2)

Friends parents

Other adults

Other young people

39. Have adults you don't know very well ever told you off, moved you on or questioned you? Y/N

What for?

40. Have you ever been told off; been moved on; been questioned about what you are doing by the police? Yes or No

How often and what for?

41. Who talks to you most often in the street at night? Adults/Police

42. If they have been spoken to by the police - find out if there had been a complaint about them and whether or not an adult had already complained to their face.

.....

43. Do you think the police should be phoned if a young person is:
(Tick which answers you agree with) **WHY**
- a) sitting on a strangers' wall Y/N
 - b) running someone's garden Y/N
 - c) knocking on someone's door and running away Y/N
 - d) smashing a bottle Y/N
 - e) fighting Y/N
 - f) playing football in street Y/N
 - g) being noisy Y/N
 - h) drinking under age Y/N
- (If yes, ask – surely they're not harming anybody, would it not be better to tell their parents etc)
- i) being out after the curfew time Y/N
- (If yes, ask – is this not up to the parents?) Y/N
- 43g) If they say YES to noisy – ask do you think it is fair enough for someone to phone the police on kids playing noisily in the street, rather than coming out to talk to the young people themselves Y/N
- (Comment)
- 43ga) Then ask – If it was you being noisy – just having a laugh with your friends, not doing anything in particular and the person in the house was scared, do you think it is ok for them to call the police rather than talk to you themselves? Y/N
- (Comment)
- 43gb) Then ask – Do you think it is fair to restrict young people's freedom if adults are scared of them – even if the young people are not committing any crimes? Y/N
- (Comment)
44. Have you ever visited or called on the house of someone you didn't know very well on your estate? Y/N
(e.g. for Halloween, to raise money etc) Ask who it was to assess if they or their parents knew them. Who was it, why visit?
.....
45. Do you think talking to adults on your estate is a good thing to do? Yes or No
Why?
46. Would you like to see more police on your streets at night? More/Less/No change WHY?
.....
47. Would you like to see more young people out at night? More/Less/No change
WHY?.....
48. Is there much bother in your street? Y/N
- 48a) Is there much bother in Hillhouse? Y/N
What?
49. Has this changed since the curfew? Y/N
How?

50. Have you personally ever had any bother? Y/N
What?
51. Has this changed since the curfew? Y/N
How?
52. Do the people who drink in the street give you much bother? Y/N
Elaborate
53. Do busy roads stop you going out/hanging out at night? Y/N
Elaborate
If Yes, what does it stop you doing?
.....

Appendix 5

Speech by John Orr Strathclyde Chief Constable (in the form it was handed out) at the launch of the South Lanarkshire Council and Strathclyde Police Children and Young People's Safety Initiative – Thursday 23 October 1997.

LAUNCH OF CHILD SAFETY INITIATIVE HAMILTON 23.10.97

CHIEF CONSTABLE JOHN ORR

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

**THE TWIN CONCERNS OF CHILD WELFARE
AND JUVENILE CRIME HAVE LONG BEEN
CLOSELY ASSOCIATED.**

**INDEED, THE ENLIGHTENED APPROACH OF
THE CHILDREN'S HEARINGS SYSTEM IN
SCOTLAND – IN WHICH THE EMPHASIS IS ON
PROTECTING THE WELFARE OF THE CHILD
RATHER THAN PUNISHING HIS OR HER
CRIMINALITY – IS SAID TO BE THE ENVY OF
MANY OTHER JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEMS
AROUND THE WORLD.**

TODAY IN HAMILTON, STRATHCLYDE POLICE AND SOUTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL ARE LAUNCHING A JOINT PIONEERING INITIATIVE WHICH WE HOPE WILL BUILD ON THE PRINCIPLES OF THAT DISTINCTIVE SCOTTISH APPROACH TO THE CARE AND WELFARE OF OUR YOUNG PEOPLE.

THE HAMILTON CHILD SAFETY INITIATIVE IS A PILOT PROJECT WHICH AIMS – SIMULTANEOUSLY – TO PROTECT THE SAFETY OF YOUNG PEOPLE, DECREASE THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR THEM TO BECOME INVOLVED IN JUVENILE CRIME AND REDUCE THE FEAR OF CRIME AMONG THE PUBLIC.

FROM TODAY, 3 NEIGHBOURING AREAS IN HAMILTON – WHITEHILL, HILLHOUSE AND FAIRHILL – WILL BE THE FOCUS OF A SPECIAL 6-MONTHS-LONG PILOT PROJECT WHICH SEEKS TO HIGHLIGHT THE DANGERS FACED BY YOUNGSTERS ALLOWED OUT AFTER DARK WITHOUT ADULT SUPERVISION – RISKS WHICH CAN LEAD TO CHILDREN FALLING PREY TO POSSIBLE DANGER, BECOMING INVOLVED IN COMMITTING CRIME OR CREATING A NUISANCE TO OTHERS.

THIS INITIATIVE – THE RESULT OF UNPRECEDENTED COLLABORATION BETWEEN STRATHCLYDE POLICE AND SOUTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL – WAS DRAWN UP IN RESPONSE TO THE CONCERNS AND WISHES OF LOCAL HOUSEHOLDERS AND YOUNG PEOPLE ABOUT NUISANCE CRIME, SUCH AS VANDALISM AND THE PRESENCE OF UNSUPERVISED OR UNRULY CHILDREN ON THE STREET AFTER DARK.

A KEY ELEMENT OF THE INITIATIVE, AND ONE WHICH HAD ALREADY RECEIVED OVERWHELMING SUPPORT FROM LOCAL RESIDENTS, WILL BE HIGH-PROFILE AFTER-DARK COMMUNITY POLICE PATROLS IN LOCAL STREETS.

THE PRINCIPAL AIM OF THE PATROLS IS TO ENSURE THAT VULNERABLE YOUNGSTERS AGED UNDER 16 – AND PARTICULARLY THOSE AGED 12 OR LESS – ARE NOT EXPOSED TO DANGERS OR TEMPTED TO BECOME EMBROILED IN CRIMES ASSOCIATED WITH BEING OUT ALONE TOO LATE IN THE DARK OR WITH EQUALLY VULNERABLE COMPANY..... CRIMES SUCH AS VANDALISM, CREATING DISTURBANCES AND MINOR VIOLENCE.

POLICE OFFICERS WHO COME UPON UNACCOMPANIED CHILDREN DURING THE EVENING PATROLS AND WHO BELIEVE THE CHILDREN ARE AT RISK WILL RETURN THE YOUNGSTERS TO THEIR HOMES. PARENTS OR CARERS WILL BE REMINDED OF THE DANGERS FACING CHILDREN OUT ALONG IN THE DARK.

IF THERE IS NO SUITABLE ADULT SUPERVISION AT HOME, THE CHILDREN WILL BE TAKEN TO A SAFE ROOM IN HAMILTON POLICE OFFICE, UNTIL THEIR PARENTS OR CARERS COLLECT THEM.

IF POLICE BELIEVE THE CIRCUMSTANCES GIVE RISE TO FURTHER CAUSE FOR CONCERN, THE COUNCIL'S SOCIAL WORK DEPARTMENT WILL BE INFORMED.

IN CASES OF IMMEDIATE EMERGENCY, THE DUTY STANDBY SOCIAL WORKER WILL ATTEND THE POLICE OFFICE.

THE POLICE PATROLS WILL BE UNDERTAKEN BY A POOL OF COMMUNITY POLICE OFFICERS WHO HAVE BEEN SPECIALLY SELECTED FOR THEIR EXPERIENCE, SKILL AND EMPATHY WHEN IT COMES TO DEALING WITH YOUNG

PEOPLE. SOME OF THE OFFICERS ARE PARENTS THEMSELVES.

EACH PATROL WILL SPEND TIME ON LOCAL STREETS FOR A FEW HOURS AS REQUIRED – USUALLY ON THURSDAY, FRIDAY AND SATURDAY EVENING, THE TIMES IDENTIFIED BY POLICE AND LOCALS AS MOST PROBLEMATIC.

THEY WILL SPEAK TO THE YOUNG PEOPLE, REMIND THEM OF THE NEED TO CONSIDER THE REST OF THE COMMUNITY WITH THEIR ACTIVITIES ON THE STREET AND TAKE FURTHER ACTION (THAT IS RETURN THEM HOME/ISSUE WARNINGS/FORMALLY DETAIN THEM ON CRIMINAL CHARGES) ONLY WHEN NECESSARY.

THE RESULTS WILL BE EVALUATED BY THE FORCE AT THE END OF THE TRIAL PERIOD TO MEASURE THEIR IMPACT ON LOCAL CHILD WELFARE AND CRIME.

IN TRUTH, THE POLICE HAVE ALWAYS HAD POWERS TO RETURN CHILDREN HOME IF THEY HAVE CONCERNS ABOUT THEIR WELLBEING.

IT IS JUST THAT WITH THIS PARTICULAR PROJECT, WE ARE FORMALISING THIS APPROACH AND GIVING A MODERN SLANT TO OLD-FASHIONED COMMUNITY POLICING.

WE DO NOT ALLOW YOUNG PEOPLE TO BE IN DANGER IN THE HOME SO WE SHOULDN'T PERMIT IT IN THE STREET.

OUR HOPE IS THAT BY TAKING VULNERABLE AND IMPRESSIONABLE YOUNGSTERS OUT OF HARM'S WAY, THERE WILL BE A DOUBLE SPIN-OFF.....

.... THEY WILL BE SAFER AND THEY WON'T BE TEMPTED TO GET CAUGHT UP IN MISCHIEF-MAKING OR WORSE.

THAT WAY THE WHOLE COMMUNITY WILL BENEFIT.

SOME OF THE SITUATIONS MY OFFICERS COME ACROSS BEGGAR BELIEF. A 9-YEAR-OLD GIRL WAS FOUND IN A CLOSE AT NIGHT EARLIER THIS YEAR IN THIS POLICE SUB-DIVISION, DRESSED ONLY IN HER UNDERWEAR AND DRESSING-GOWN.

THIS LITTLE GIRL WAS UPSET AND TOLD THE OFFICERS THAT HER MOTHER WAS DEAD.

WHEN MY OFFICERS TOOK HER HOME THEY FOUND HER MOTHER “DEAD” ALRIGHT – DEAD DRUNK.

ANOTHER 9-YEAR-OLD, A BOY, WAS ALSO FOUND IN SIMILAR CIRCUMSTANCES FAIRLY RECENTLY. HIS PARENTS WERE NOT AT HOME – HIS MUM WAS TRACED AT THE BINGO AND HIS DAD WAS AT THE PUB.

THESE TYPES OF SCENARIOS ARE NOT UNCOMMON ACROSS THE FORCE AREA.

WE COME ACROSS YOUNG PEOPLE OUT OF DOORS WAY AFTER NIGHTFALL AND THEY ARE NEGLECTED, BADLY CLOTHED AND IN NEED OF CARE.

YET – AND WHAT A PRADOX – PAEDOPHILE COURT CASES HIS THE HEADLINES REGULARLY AND THERE IS CONTROVERSY ABOUT THE ISSUE OF THE RIGHTS OF COMMUNITIES TO KNOW EHERE CONVICTED OFFENDERS ARE LIVING.

WHAT, THEN, CAN PARENTS OF THE CHILDREN WITH WHOM WE COME INTO CONTACT POSSIBLY BE THINKING ABOUT?

THE FIGURES FOR CRIME IN THE HAMILTON AREA ARE DOWN CONSIDERABLY SO FAR THIS YEAR, DUE TO THE HARD WORK OF THE LOCAL POLICE FOR THE FORCE'S ANTI-CRIME CAMPAIGN, THE SPOTLIGHT INITIATIVE.

BUT IF PEOPLE REMAIN ANXIOUS AND CONCERNED, THEN WE MUST RESPOND – AND DECISIVELY.

THIS INITIATIVE IS NO DRACONIAN CURFEW.

STRATHCLYDE POLICE DO NOT THINK YOUNG PEOPLE ARE PUBLIC ENEMY NO.1 AND THIS FORCE IS NOT ANTI YOUNG PEOPLE.

ON THE CONTRARY, WE ARE TAKING THIS APPROACH BECAUSE WE REALLY CARE THAT OUR YOUNG PEOPLE LIVE A SAFE AND CRIME-FREE LIFE.

IT'S CERTAINLY NO CRIME FOR YOUNGSTERS TO STAND IN THE STREET CHATTING TO THEIR FRIENDS.

MY OFFICERS WILL NOT HARASS LAW-ABIDING YOUNG PEOPLE WHO ARE NOT COMMITTING OR HAVE NO INTENTION OF COMMITTING CRIME OR PUBLIC NUISANCE.

UNFORTUNATELY, THE MOST COMMON REQUEST WE RECEIVED ACROSS THE FORCE AREA IS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ASKING FOR OFFICERS TO DEAL WITH YOUNGSTERS DISTURBING THE PEACE, FRIGHTENING RESIDENTS OR DESTROYING THE NEIGHBOURHOOD IN SOME WAY.

WE HAVE SEEN YOUNGSTERS AS YOUNG AS 8 TO 10 YEARS OLD BECOME INVOLVED IN GANG FIGHTS.

LOCAL COMMUNITIES HAVE EVERY RIGHT TO DEMAND THE BEST POSSIBLE SERVICE FROM THE POLICE AND THEIR COUNCILS WHEN THEY CANNOT LIVE THEIR LIVES TO THE FULLEST, FREE FROM PETTY CRIME AND ANNOYANCE.

THE COMMUNITIES OF WHITEHILL, HILLHOUSE AND FAIRHILL HAVE BEEN SELECTED AS THE LOCATIONS FOR THE PILOT PROJECT

..... NOT BECAUSE THEY HAVE MORE PROBLEMS THAN OTHER COMMUNITIES BUT BECAUSE THEY HAVE CALLED FOR AND SUPPORT FIRM ACTION.

AND INDEPENDENT OPINION POLLS PROVE IT.

A SURVEY PUBLISHED BY THE HAMILTON ADVERTISER NEWSPAPER AFTER THE INITIATIVE BECAME PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE SHOWED 95% OR 972 WERE IN FAVOUR OF THE COMMUNITY POLICE PATROLS WITH ONLY 5% OR 55 PEOPLE, AGAINST.

AND IT SEEMS THAT THIS PARTICULAR APPROACH TO AN ALL-TOO-COMMON SITUATION FOR MANY COMMUNITIES HAS TOUCHED A CHORD WITH THE PUBLIC.

ANOTHER TELEPHONE POLL, THIS TIME CONDUCTED ON THE ITV TELETEXT FOR CENTRAL SCOTLAND, SHOWED THAT 96% OR 1846 OF THE 1918 CALLERS WANTED THE INITIATIVE EXTENDED TO THE REST OF SCOTLAND.

ONLY 72 PEOPLE, OR 4%, WERE AGAINST.

THAT IS WHY THIS PILOT PROJECT WILL BE THOROUGHLY EVALUATED BY THE FORCE TO MEASURE THE IMPACT ON COMMUNITY SAFETY.

VIEWS ON PEOPLE'S RIGHTS ARE MANY AND VARIED BUT THERE CAN BE NO ARGUMENT SURELY AGAINST THE RIGHT OF ALL PEOPLE

**– INCLUDING AND PERHAPS EVEN
ESPECIALLY THE YOUNG – TO LIVE IN SAFETY
IN THE COMMUNITY SAFE FROM CRIME
AND NEGLECT TOO.**

**PEOPLE HAVE RESPONSIBILITIES, AS WELL
AS RIGHTS.**

**ALL-IN-ALL, WHAT STRATHCLYDE POLICE AND
SOUTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL WANT THIS
INITIATIVE TO DO IS TO REMIND EVERYONE
OF THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES TO OTHERS**

Appendix 6

Speech by Councillor Tom McCabe, Leader of South Lanarkshire Council (in the form it was handed out) at the launch of the South Lanarkshire Council and Strathclyde Police Children and Young People's Safety Initiative – Thursday 23 October 1997.

Can I echo the comments of the Chief Constable, for this is a partnership – a partnership of the local authority, the police and, perhaps most importantly, the community.

I want to stress the reality of the joint South Lanarkshire Council and Strathclyde Police Children and Young People's Safety Initiative.

I want to right away ask you to – please – press the delete button on those headlines that have wrongly dubbed this unique initiative a curfew.

That is a nonsense notion!

Such a notion has no place in Hamilton, no place in South Lanarkshire.

It has no place in a society heading for the new millennium.

The Hamilton child safety initiative is about improving the quality of life for the people of Whitehill, Hillhouse and Fairhill.

It is about the safety and the protection of our children – today, how – and in the future.

It is about responsibility.

It is about civil liberties and freedom – the freedom of everyone in the community to live without fear or intimidation.

Each of us has responsibilities to other people within our communities.

We have to recognise that when some people chose to ignore their responsibilities – to their children, to their neighbours, to

their community – to society – it leads to an erosion of community.

It leads to people becoming fearful and distrustful of each other.

Let me ask those civil libertarians whose gut reaction has been to hit out at this initiative to take a step back and consider what the council, the police and the community are trying to achieve.

Let me ask them to come and talk with us.

They will find that the initiative we are launching today is not about an increase in powers at the expense of the freedom of children and young people.

It is not about giving the police the power to whisk off the streets young people who are simply there enjoying themselves.

It is in fact about returning civil liberties to communities – about removing fear.

The truth is that our children and young people's safety initiative has at its core the rights of children.

But it also seeks to highlight the responsibilities that young people themselves have – and perhaps more importantly, the responsibility that parents have.

And of course it is in the home that those lessons are first learned. It is there that we learn that we are part of the community.

The Hamilton child safety initiative is in actual fact about the civil liberty that recognises the rights of young people and the community as a whole.

It is about saying no to those who throw away the rules and ignore the rights of others.

It's about the responsibility of parents realising and recognising it is in their interest to know where their children are and what they are doing.

But it's also about the responsibility of local authorities to realise that they have to listen to what young people are saying, about recognising that councils – government – do not have all the answers.

It's about realising that young people are worth listening to, about accepting that young people have views and ideas worth not only evaluating, but taking on board.

We do no favour for children by excusing behaviour which can lead them into regrettable situations.

In essence we are seeking to create an environment where everyone – young and old – can feel safe and secure.

And what's so wrong about spelling out to those who discard the rules and ignore the rights of others that their actions will not be tolerated.

The decision to launch a safety initiative pilot scheme comes in response to concerns directly raised by the community.

A number of surveys carried out by the council in recent months – a System Three poll, a Youth Survey and Scotland's first Citizens' Jury here in Hamilton – showed that for all ages the number one priority was community safety.

Let me stress that the pilot areas involved in the initiative have been chosen not because they have any more problems than any other communities throughout the country – but because the community itself has called for action.

When we looked at the evidence from the surveys and from the recommendations of the Hillhouse Citizens' Jury – the message came over loud and clear – safety issues were a top priority.

And that includes the safety of young people, particularly at night.

And so it is right that we should be concerned about the safety of young children on the streets at night and tackle the issue of their vulnerability.

The community has raised genuine concerns.

Today we are demonstrating our commitment to respond to those concerns.

And we are doing that by working in partnership with the community and by consulting our young people on what they want.

I can tell you that part of our wider consultation process includes providing integrated youth facilities which are being designed by young people in partnership with the council.

It will have a one-stop shop approach to youth issues and they will be especially relevant to youngsters in their mid to late teens.

These will be both social and educational using internet cafes, which it is hoped will open up training opportunities.

Information and advice on a range of issues will be available and will be presented in a way which is acceptable to young people.

Our youth will have a day-to-day management role in the running of the facilities which initially will be set up in Hamilton, East Kilbride, Larkhall and Lanark.

The Chief Constable has spoken of the support that has come from the community through the various telephone polls that have been conducted.

I believe the support that they have already shown will be repaid in giving them a community in which they can have justifiable pride.

ENDS