Three sides to every story: engaging an autoethnographic everyday lived experience of race and crime to explore legislative policy-practice tackling the U.K. gang

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the University of East London for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

January 2022

Abstract

This thesis draws on entries from a personal journal to revisit selected publications from a body of work as part of an autoethnographic methodology to explored issues of race and crime and critically examine the implications of gang legislative policy-practice for urban black male youth. Through a reflexive process, findings and recommendations from selected policy research published between 2002 and 2011 is revisited and critically assessed against an everyday lived experience of race and crime. Findings from this research resists how criminological ideas are used to support an official view and approach to 'problem youth' and gangs in the U.K that developed after 2003. It analyses how young people and communities speak about local problems as a means of reconceptualising how youth behaviour is understood and develop alternative ways of tackling it

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Acknowledgements

This work recognises the sacrifices, aspirations and strength of those who I love but have lost. I stand on the shoulders of giants

Love goes to Shanthini Cynthia for the love and support. Without it I would not have got over the finish line

Unreserved thank you to Anthony Gunter my supervisor, but more importantly my friend, for the hard talk but for giving me the space to tell my story. Without you I would not have got through this.

To friends, colleagues and respondents over the years. A bit of all of you has helped shaped this research

Introduction and summary

This study develops an autoethnographic methodology as a way of using my lived experience of race and crime as a mirror through which to critically explore personal conflicts of my professional activity and policy research about race, crime and 'gangs' – with special reference to urban black male youth. This thesisD more specifically examines a research question exploring U.K. gang policy-practice as a construction which expresses an idea of race and crime that has direct implications for 'official' perspectives on youth behaviour and in particular urban black male youth.

In developing an autoethnographic narrative and building context to the study, chapter one begins by describing my early upbringing as the second generation child of parents who were citizens of the Commonwealth and part of the 'Windrush Generation'; Caribbean migrants who came to Britain in search of work and to help rebuild the 'mother country'. It goes on to describe how these key life events – associated with growing up and my professional working life spent largely in east London – would influence my career choices and decisions made about the research I carried out.

Chapter two provides a review on the principal debates about race and crime, as a way of exploring and critically examining how ideas about black criminality are used in discussions about gangs in the U.K. This goes on to locate related policy and practice debate within wider discourse about youth behaviour to specifically revisit the ideas of John Solomos on black youth, racism and policy as a forms of political action carried out through government.

The following chapter explores the research procedure utilised for this study's autoethnographic approach, explaining how this gives representation to everyday lived experience as a way of generating authentic perspective of race and crime. It also examines this as a source of credible qualitative insight that provides raw data for the thesis' intertextual analysis. Attention is next given to the practical steps taken to compare my personal journal and selected publication as sources of textual raw data. This moreover gives details on the recursive processes used to interactively develop themes for the analysis. The chapter concludes by setting out the legislative and policy context before summarising each of the seven selected publications.

The final two chapters set out the findings from the analysis of the textual data. Chapter 4.0 examines the nature and basis of contrasting ways of conceptualising youth behaviour, looking at their policy implication for the identified behaviour of black male youth. It then explores how these ideas specifically inform policy aimed at tackling the 'gang' problem and how this feeds a scalded youth justice approach. The chapter ends with a critical examination of these ideas and how the raw data provides alternative understandings of youth behaviour.

Finally, chapter five extends the discussion of the role of friendships as an alternative way of understanding so-called 'deviant'/or 'criminal' youth behaviour. It develops a critique of the gang by demonstrating how the social processes that produce young people's friendship groups exist within wider community networks and social structures that can increase exposure to adult organised crime and 'the gang'.

Chapter 1.0. Autoethnographic journey from East London to doctoral studies

The final decision to complete this doctoral research, I eventually came to understand, was not so much driven by academic interest and adding to a body of knowledge but from a much more personal search. It came from an individual realisation that my experience of being born, growing up but also continuing to live and work in a deprived inner-city area, commonly provided very different perspectives on race and crime to those from professional policy/ applied research career over twenty-five years. My policy and practice research addressing race discrimination, at critical stages of my career came to be seen as at odds with my everyday lived reality, with wider implications for issues of social exclusion, which created a series of personal dilemmas. This has over time created a tension which failed to be fully defined or addressed until this doctoral research.

Although the research for the thesis practically started with revisiting hand-written notes from a personal journal, re-examining original data and pondering the draft versions published reports, its roots extend much further back. These personal records and computer back-ups files, many of which had not been looked at for several years, became the touchstone for thoughts and experiences that I had ignored for many years. The doctoral process I would come to discover came to embody a much wider and emotionally challenging retrospective, which over a period of several months, became a painful unguarded examination of a personal turmoil connected to trying to make sense of the struggles of growing up in a deprived inner-city area and awakening to how issues of race and inequality shaped the policy research in my professional career.

The start of the thesis' research process would become a very personal journey that took me back to my family as the first non-white homeowners in an ordinary east London street, the many mundane events in an ordinary terraced house and arriving in a neighbourhood dominated by white working class culture. This part of my journey is largely typical of many who resettled as immigrant workers to Britain as part of the 'Windrush Generation'. I was however born into the second generation and simply too young to have experienced their difficulties in finding somewhere to live, being stared

at in the streets or having to suffer the indignity of being turned away or only offered menial jobs because of my skin colour. Although I grew up hearing these stories, these were not my experiences of racism. Mine and others from the second generation were markedly different.

Moving into our family home came after, in what I remember, having to live in cramped single rooms with my siblings in a number of different multi occupancy households or sometimes staying with my grandmother who lived in similar conditions. To this day, I have clear memories of going to sleep in a room lit with a low voltage lightbulb, the weight of heavy layers of blankets to keep me warm and a faint odour of damp mixed with paraffin (from a green metal heater in the centre of the room that shielded us from the worst of the cold). This house provides my first lucid recollections of a mostly stable happy home, having front door with big bold numbers that belonged to us and which was filled with the joyous laughter of my siblings.

The pure excitement of arriving and exploring each room of what was a small three-bedroom terrace house, is still palpable. I still remember how on that first day we all had fish and chips and were even allowed a gherkin – it was a rare treat. Memories of these early years are however punctuated with incidents which resulted from having a different skin colour and culture. I vividly remember the reaction of the class, when I was seven years old, to the arrival of a new pupil with a non-English name. The most terrifying involved open violence. On one occasion my mother was forced from her sick bed, deranged with fever to protect my sister from being abused and physically attacked by a neighbour's child, while his own mother looked on. After this my mother gained a fearsome reputation and the physical hostility from our neighbours stopped.

My secondary school experiences, I now understand, would go on to profoundly affect my thinking and life chances as an adult. Comprehensive education and the spectrum of welfare provision provided those around me with social opportunities which helped create an internal narrative that would become a subtext to my adult life. To be clear, looking back I see the environment as providing every opportunity for involvement with stereotyped lifestyles typically associated those from poor multi-cultural inner-city areas of the 1970s. However, the deprivation and disadvantage for myself and several

in my group of friends, was not so much as intractable barriers to social progress, but it somehow acted to spur on a drive to overcome the stereotypes and in some way repaying a debt to those who invested in us. A small group of progressive young teachers and the families of small number of close friends, (many of which remain to the present day), especially while studying for A-levels in sixth form, helped to shape personal and social values that would give direction to many of my later research interests.

Much of my teenage years were acted out in a wide social network, in which my parents' friends (all of which I had to call either aunty or uncle) and those of my friends had a significant influence. Many however had none of the economic or social rewards from higher education, or as I got older realised in some instances had just rudimentary schooling. This older generation, almost without exception were honest and hardworking, who in adult life I came to understand, frequently persevered with manual or supervisory jobs so that their children could have at least life's basics. Despite struggling to work long hours on what was often on low wages and raise families in what was oftentimes a hostile society, they were without exception generous and hospitable. At this time but in also in later adult years, they came to represent a source of stability, who in being parents would frequently offer advice/ guidance or simply be there as a role model. My teenage self existed in a multi-racial world that imbued me and my peer group with values that still enrich our present-day friendships.

However, as virtually all of our parents were born and brought up in other countries, most had little or no experience of the U.K. education system. Despite doing as much as they knew how to give support and encouragement, my own exam achievements were in no small part was a result of the exceptional professionalism from what in retrospect was a group of idealistic teachers committed to the values of comprehensive education. Their liberal ideals made a lasting impression that practically demonstrated inclusivity and anti-racism, through action which often went beyond their formal teaching duties but went a long way to bridging educational and social disadvantage experienced. This played a major role in helping me define a political outlook that gave life-long resilience against the discrimination and exclusion of low expectations so often foisted on urban Black male youth, inspiring an ethic framework for my later ideas

on effective policy intervention. The professionalism of these teachers helped affect the formal and informal educational attainment and life chances of a cohort of inner-city youth, and to also open lasting personal questions on the nature of social exclusion and equality that would continue well into my subsequent career.

My early school experiences was set was against a backdrop of the major economic, political and social change of the 1970's which followed the welfare expansionism plus economic reconstruction of the immediate post-War years and an emerging European and globalised political economy. This was added to technological change which placed new demands on industrial relations which heightened tensions between government, trade unions, resulting in frequent industry action. This provided a context to more than two decades of 'colored' immigration which brought wholesale social and cultural change to many of Britain's inner-city areas, which alongside declining economic prosperity and falling material standards, contributed to the discriminatory backlash in communities such as mine. Racialised violent threat from extremist groups in a general climate of IRA terrorism combined to created a climate of unease – I can still recall from my teenage years the fears about terrorist activity and threat of 'paki-bashing'.

These general socio-economic conditions caused me to have a greater awareness of politics, social marginalisation and debates on race relations, creating burgeoning concerns about discrimination and equality. Concerns on these issues in many ways ignited a compulsion to better understand the underlying processes responsible for the deprivation I saw around me. They would provoke questions about individual or collective action for social change which provided the foundations of a lifelong search for answers about social justice. Faced with what I saw as social dilemmas, I sought answers in a mix of direct social action and religious community activism: I found no contradiction between messages of social transformation and eternal salvation. Conflating the sacred with the profane gave me a moral framework in which to campaign and fight for racial injustice through the message of a social gospel. As result of these personal convictions, much of the research completed during my professional career was carried out within a 6-mile radius of my childhood home in East London.

I was by all accounts little more than an average student who only managed modest A-level grades. These modest academic achievements, nonetheless provided me with options to become a trainee manager in a major high street chain store, a career in the armed forces or what was seen as a ‘good apprenticeship’. At the time all were seen to offer me good career prospects, which for me were in some way problematic or simply uninspiring. Encouraged by a teacher at school, I was helped to apply for university place and became the first in my family to be accepted for a degree course. Although other friends went to polytechnics and universities in other partsd of the country, I chose to stay in London, accepting an offer to at a church based ex-teacher training college. I simply wanted to stay closer to home.

Even though I was merely in another part of the city where I was born and had grown up, everything about college life was alien, new and exciting. It brought me into contact with students that under other circumstances I would almost certainly would not have met – some of whom have become life-long friends. Interestingly, despite being one of a handful of working class, non-white students the Christian ethos of the institution helped produce what I have always regarded as an unexpected supportive kindness from other students and staff. Moreover, this did a lot to moderate the radicalism and activism that had developed in my earlier teenage.

My university years created a love of learning that has never wavered. For the very first time in my life, I was in circumstances conducive to study – growing up in a house with few books and a bedroom with siblings, provided little space or opportunities for quiet study. Where I lacked confidence at school, my undergraduate studies helped me realise that those from more privileged backgrounds were no more intelligent than me, but alsofacillitatyed a love of books and for quiet study in the library. During a break before starting university, I had discovered an interest in working with young people and after working in youth centres and holiday play schemes during summer breaks, I decided on embarking upon a teaching career.

After graduation I applied for and was accepted for teacher training course at London University Institute of Education, completing a post graduate certificate in education and with gaining subsequent Qualified Teacher Status started at an inner London

secondary school. I quickly discovered a huge gap between the reality and a romanticised idea of teaching, the everyday demands of school did little to help achieve the learner centred classroom I hoped to recreate. Moreover, wholesale changes to education brought about by the demise of Inner London Education Authority and worsening conditions of employment, I viewed at the time as seriously undermining teachers' professional capacity. This created widespread discontent across the sector and a growing personal disappointment as with diminishing resources and morale. This led eventually to my arriving at the reluctant decision to leave teaching: a choice that would turn out to be a major turning point and the start of my research career.

After resigning as a classroom teacher, I straightaway found a job working for a small community organisation providing supplementary learning support to African and Caribbean children. The organisation sough to address perceived failures in the education system to account for pupils' cultural need was seen as a barrier to their academic success through 'Saturday school' classes and advocating on behalf of pupils and parents on problems related to schools or the local authority. I was responsible for coordinating a team of part time staff and volunteers, in giving pupil/ parent support and maintaining contact with schools and the council's education department. Most of my time was spent helping schools implement effective classroom interventions for what frequently was identified as pupils' social, emotional, psychological or welfare needs and oftentimes would focus on tackling disruptive behaviour that was often seen by schools to cause low academic attainment.

The role also often required me to provide a 'community perspective' for which I was frequently requested to consult with elected councillors and council officers about local services. This gradually progressed into not only regular and formal consultations, but more informal conversations about policy/ service developments important to community interests. It was a period in which I felt free of school hierarchy and bureaucracy, where my actions or decisions helped bring about direct observable change. Working at a grassroots level also linked me to a network of other local groups/ individuals with shared interests and frequent collective action aimed at influencing decisions made by the borough. This joint action was empowering and provided local people a practical mechanism for activism for representing community views and

pursuing local interests. It crucially introduced me to the world of community politics, equipping me with knowledge and skills which later became important to my next career move.

An ongoing local campaign in Waltham Forest [East London], calling for greater council compliance with the duties imposed by the 1976 Race Relation Act and developing services sensitive to the ethnic/cultural need of residents, saw the Council approve the formation of a race relations unit. This would contain a research and development team, with a remit focussed on 'Asian' and 'Afro-Caribbean' communities, that would be responsible for investigating types/ level of local service need, identify gaps and make recommendations to the council for developing provision to black and minority ethnic residents. My appointment as team manager started fifteen-years of local government research that would span full-time posts in three different local authorities.

As my first senior post, it in no small way was shaped by the supervision from an enormously influential line manager, who become a lasting friend and mentor, who guided my early local government career. His seasoned experience of community and local government politics navigated me though the fractuous and oftentimes fragile coalitions between African-Caribbean and Asian community's and other representatives but equally the fragilities of elected councillors' egos. In practice the post connected 'community research' (that at the time I did not understand as having an ethnographic and participative action focus) to practical policy/ service and community development. These early years of race relations research involved collaborative working with colleagues from our unit, elected councillors, community representatives, staff from other department but at times external bodies. Demands to meet urgent deadlines, handing politically sensitive requests from elected councillors, responding to local and national press, finding solutions to community grant-aiding crisis all of which made it fraught at times but also enormously rewarding.

From this came several progressive and innovative council initiatives such as a borough wide community consultation framework, service charter for refugees/ asylum seekers, local quantitative assessment of community need, grants allocation strategy,

annual service audit services for meeting the needs BME residents and annual racial harassment policy/ service reviews. Research during these early local authority years was at times hugely challenging but also enormously enjoyable and fulfilling. It was a period in my career of unparalleled professional development that helped create research-based borough wide change some of which remain to the present day (among other things the council still organises an annual children Caribbean carnival). Without question this work brought me immense professional satisfaction that went a long way to addressing many of my private policy and practice questions about marginalisation and social exclusion. In retrospect, practical experience and learning from this period provided a blueprint for my views to which I would return and guide my research approach in later years.

I was by this time making steady progress up the career ladder, and my subsequent research posts involved a broader range of evaluation, intelligence gathering, policy analysis, customer satisfaction and best value performance assessment tasks supporting corporate and strategic objectives. This did not mean however that I had no further involvement in research on effective policy/ practice on disadvantage and community need. Although this not always part of my everyday work, as far as possible I remained up to date on academic debates, evaluations/ policy research and examples of good practice. In this period, I gained invaluable experience working with a broader range of stakeholders, decision makers and more complex wider range of governance and resource demands. This also gave invaluable insight to the oftentimes more nebulous politics and practice of public sector policy/ service development, which was to prove useful in a later decision to branch out as a self-employed freelance consultant.

My research to this point was restricted to local authority policy and practice which by focussing on immediate service delivery issues, gave negligible consideration to theoretical ideas or wider policy context to. Recognising how this took something away from the overall effectiveness of my work, in an effort to advance my professional development and with support from my employer I decided to complete a Masters degree in social research methods. Working full-time while studying part-time I decided was the best way of improving my research skills while developing better academic

understanding of my applied/ policy research. The course at Surrey University provided me with new knowledge on qualitative and quantitative research design but the opportunity to meet researchers from a variety of backgrounds. Importantly, my dissertation tackled practical policy challenges for the council where I worked at the time, contrasting borough level geographic locations of social need using the Department of the Environment's Indices of Deprivation with the concentrations of Black and minority and ethnic residents and distribution of community services. Despite its methodological weakness, the study found community services broadly located in areas with the highest need/ social deprivation developing ideas that was to influence the direction of my subsequent research interests.

Although my post-graduate studies provided new research skills and useful knowledge, with time I came to see it as giving only limited help in better understanding the practical policy problems that had preoccupied me until this point in my career. I still regarded much of the work I was required to carry out as not going far enough in addressing issues of race and social exclusion. Much of my research and other evaluations at this time were problem-orientated and demanded quantitative data. The need to understand and respond to local community need had not gone away but much of the work I was required statistics; generally regarded by managers and other decision makers as the only real form of evidence. Moreover, increasingly aware how my everyday experience at times provided a markedly different picture of the 'real problems' faced by local communities helped to only extenuate my growing ambivalence about the effectiveness of the research I carried out.

Looking back, in an attempt to address the growing conflict between professional and person views on race and discrimination, with the assistance of a grant from the Barbados High Commission, I subsequently completed three years of incomplete doctoral research at Birmingham University Institute of local Government Studies. My thesis continued to explore themes developed in my Masters dissertation, by examining public policy and statutory provision in addressing racial harassment, contrasting its effectiveness with community-based services. If further explored local government provision as a form of regulation for maintaining social control, using in-

depth personal interviews to critically assess the effectiveness of council policy relative local need.

This continuing academic study was important for a number of reasons. For the first time, I was taught by a non-White academic who as my supervisor, in ways that not previously experienced, helped me develop independent thinking. Until now much of the knowledge since my undergraduate studies remained largely sacrosanct, but I was now encouraged to be confident in examining academic ideas from a critical race perspective. His guidance opened discourse within the academic literature that allowed me to question many of the theorical ideas and research methodologies that I had until this point allowed to remain unquestioned. My monthly supervision sessions were both intellectually challenging and invigorating; starting a process that progressively contested many of the sociological ideas and methodologic arguments that until this time I saw as irrefutable.

Above all, my incomplete doctorate opened new insights on the nature of academic research, its principal methods of investigation and how theoretical ideas from this came to influence official policy. This however fostered new levels of apprehension on how knowledge is produced, creating new ontological and epistemological questions on the marginalisation of black communities. Moreover, it started a resistance to the requirement for professional and methodological neutrality in the research I carried out, which would eventually culminate in me rationalising merits of ethnography and qualitative methods. As a result of these burgeoning early views, I saw many academic studies as describing a social reality that was a long way outside of my own experience, and at best having only cursory relevance to the problems of the people I knew. To the most part many of their findings in my view inappropriately addressed key issues of social exclusion and discrimination, resulting in what I saw as a real disconnect between the ways in which academic research supports official policy and my direct knowledge of real-world need the deprived inner-city.

The incomplete research was however both enjoyable and enriching, going some way in helping me address the policy issues that continued to cause my personal conflicts to have a pivotal role in helping me develop new perspectives based on a critical

analysis of theory and methodology, policy and practice, my thinking was nudged toward a view of university research Eedowed with new ways of examining academic research and what I regarded as ‘real as largely inadequate for addressing the practical everyday ‘applied’ issues that preoccupied me. Moreover, despite this new understanding, I remained unable to comprehensively address what I saw as fundamental questions about race, discrimination and social exclusion.

For the first time in my professional career events in this period created doubts about the ability of knowledge from research to offer gainful insight on real world policy problems. Compounded by other life pressures at the time, I made a conscious decision to discontinue my doctoral research and possible academic career and to instead focus on my local government research. By this time, I had acquired a broad range of policy research experience, working in roles supporting borough-wide corporate and strategic decisions and in some instances the roll out of national initiatives e.g. I produced a local council research toolkit aimed supporting service providers generate evidence that demonstrated best value and customer satisfaction. However, even though much of this was at a higher level to work done previously, far from advancing my understanding of how research supports policy, each new project merely heightened my dissatisfaction with the ability of my work to effectively tackle social disadvantage and address local need. Important aspects of my work failed to meaningfully address actual social problems that I saw around me in my daily life. For example, I remember privately concluding from an evaluation of very large spending urban renewal projects from what was a Single Regeneration Budget, aimed to ease unemployment and kick-starting enterprise, but it was I reality a long way from bringing promised local benefits.

An unexpected consequence of a not previously experienced deepening professional dissatisfaction was that attitudes toward the work I carried out gradually came to affect how I felt about myself, forming a mix of a loss of enthusiasm and hyper-vigilance. It would eventually push me into unhealthy levels of stress. I came to see much of the work I produced as in some way not good enough (looking back although some of this was real, a great deal of it was imagined) causing me to check every small detail and working twice as hard to prove my professional competence. I had throughout my

career always kept a rudimentary work diary as a way of way of organising thoughts, noting key points from work-related conversations/ meetings and commenting on personal concerns at the time. A consequence of events in this period, was to start a more detailed record of observations and reflections about myself and my work – partly as an outlet for frustrations and to make better sense of my work. This went on to set out ideas on theoretical explanations from my research and by giving context to develop critical perspectives as a way of taking forward my own interests and means of sharpening my own work. Over time this was gradually expanded to include more personal reflections and private thoughts, the reflexive analysis forming part of this thesis' autoethnographic methodology, showed that many were written in times of low self-confidence or while feeling overwhelmed by events around me.

Private events in this period of my life, finally pushed me into making another drastic decision about the direction of my career. Changes in the funding arrangements and management of local government services produced fundamental change to the ethos and type of policy research I was required to carry out: greater emphasis was now given to producing performance and customer satisfaction statistics aimed at showing best value. Privately however I viewed this kind of approach to policy and service planning as capable of giving only a generalised picture of need that was incapable of adequately addressing issues of race and inequality. Meanwhile, senior managers and other decision makers generally failed to see the value of qualitative evidence that came from in-depth interviews or forms of community research so influential earlier in my career, regarding it negatively as 'soft' data containing bias that made it unsuitable for balanced policy/ service developments.

This period also saw increased public sector funding for research and evaluation which provided openings for independent specialists that worked outside of established research organisations, think-tanks, political interest groups or universities. It would provide me with new career opportunities. I was by now sufficiently frustrated with the research I was required to carry out and after months of agonised deliberation, I made what at the time was a monumental decision to give up my local government career, to accepted temporary research position with the London School of Economics and South Bank universities. This marked the period when I commenced working, for a

number of years, as an independent freelance researcher. During this period, I carried out a variety of studies for a range of clients, predominately departments in public organisations with a duty to demonstrate efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery. My years of local government research usefully provided the practical knowledge on bureaucratic culture and public administrative procedures, particularly on equality and diversity, necessary for conducting the required focus groups, user satisfaction surveys, impact assessments for a variety of and policy reviews. Although each were individual commercial contracts the focus of much of this work included policing, youth crime and effective community safety.

As a non-white freelance researcher, I was mostly employed to assist in gaining community access and giving specialist guidance on race. However, much of this work either supported survey fieldwork, producing statistical data or gathering evidence from structured/ semi structured interviews. Slowly I came to realise that even as a freelance researcher, in practice I possessed very little real independence to explore issues I saw as important. Further, much of what I was employed to do involved accessing black/ minority ethic respondents for more senior white researchers. Their general inability however to fully relate to the respondents' cultural backgrounds or deprived neighbourhoods where they lived, in my view resulted in much of the research failing to go far enough in addressing issues of race. More practically on a day-to-day basis, suggestions made by me were often seen as not being a priority for the study or treated as an afterthought and given no real support. Looking back, despite the appearance of involvement, my actual involvement and real contribution to much of this work was little more than tokenistic, adding to my existing frustrations.

A high-profile double homicide in Birmingham involving teenagers Latisha Shakespeare and Carleen Ellis at a new year's party, acted as a critical turning point in my approach to research but also private views on my professional activity and everyday experience. The party itself, and the community where the shooting happened and those involved, were all familiar, similarities with the world in which I had lived all my life, brought the horror of the tragedies close to home. In my mind it could have happened to any of the people I knew or in the street where I lived. In the following months, I began to better engage with the unfolding crime and disorder

debates in the press and academic discourse, which slowly altered my views on the behaviour I saw around me. Increasingly I became circumspect about routine events or people that I knew or suspected were involved with criminal activity or violence, to create difficult ethical dilemmas. These on several occasions sparked disagreement with individuals in my social network, that with at least one person I became vehement, about the morality of some of their actions and choices, some involving people I had grown up with and knew intimately.

Looking back, tensions between my private and professional worlds in many ways reflected growing public and political concerns about youth crime, gun related serious violence and 'gangs'. This effected my main research interests, resulting in a successful bid for a small-scale study commissioned by a community organisation. Its focus on examining what was seen locally as gangs and drug related violence among African and Caribbean youth, investigating the nature and cause of shootings in a deprived inner-city area. Based in a community not too dissimilar to where I had grown up and continued to live, this made the research especially attractive and of particular personal interest.

The project would mark a major change in my research approach that would continue to shape my subsequent work on gangs and serious youth violence but also provide early ideas important to this thesis' research question. For the first time, I was able to adopt a purely qualitative approach using personal interviews as the principal research tool for exploring the first-hand narratives of those who worked and lived locally. In this way, the study intentionally moved away from how the researcher as an outsider comprehended local violence, to instead emphasise how stories and insights from local people provide powerful insights on the problems they faced and options for tackling them.

The direct accounts of those living with the problem, provided insights that fundamentally challenged my long-standing taken for granted acceptance of methodology and an uncritical acceptance of ideas on research design which started in my under-graduate studies and progressed through my professional development. Liker no study before, the study practically demonstrated that researcher detachment

and objectivity was not in and of itself detrimental to validity and reliability. However, failure to build respondent trust and empathy could restrict their willingness to talk freely and openly which would undermine the investigation's full situational range and depth. This in turn opened essentialist questions on the 'scientific method' and the authenticity and credibility of research, leading me for the first time to consciously draw into question how 'empirical' evidence as knowledge production supports common-sense views about race and crime. For these reasons the study helped to also deepen the dilemma between my private and professional experience. Local residents' account of gangs and violence, in many ways reflected experiences from my own everyday lived reality of race and crime; their grounded first-hand accounts providing a depth of understanding that much of my previous research simply failed to achieve. Moreover, these compelling insights also gave representation to the social realities of marginalised communities that were often overlooked in many official government or academic studies.

Gainful employment as a freelance consultant ended with a period of intense personal reflection and critical introspection not only on the quality/ relevance of my work but role as a black researcher. It became impossible to escape the feeling that many of the research findings I had previously helped in producing, did little more than extend existing taken for granted assumptions that reinforced common sense stereotypes about race and crime. Although not fully realising it at the time, events in this period caused me to totally turn in on myself, draining my personal and professional confidence, to triggering a dark introspection and critical reflection that would eventually lead to a renewed interest in completing my doctoral research.

Despite this loss of confidence and belief, these experiences unexpectedly helped to make better sense of my years in local authority policy research and limitation of university-based studies. I now started to privately formulate my own ideas and doubts about quantitative methods and statistical analysis as 'real research' to open a new appreciation and confidence in the value of qualitative knowledge production. I now saw the personal accounts from situated experience, especially those which normally fall outside of mainstream policy concerns, as providing robust authentic knowledge that could not be gained from the conventional methods that had dominated much of

my previous work. This realisation led to me to a renewal in the personal questions that I had on the nature of real-world problems and how they might be tackled through applied/policy research. Although this acted to alter my attitude and approach to my own research, I was still unable to theoretically rationalise the perceived tensions between my professional research activity and everyday lived experience. It was an intellectual impulse that in one way or another had stayed with me that would lead finally to a renewed interest in doctoral research.

A chance meeting with a black university lecturer in criminology, who eventually became my PhD supervisor, was a key turning point in final decision to start the research that informs this thesis. He had a similar practice-based professional background and also a working-class upbringing, this provided a common cultural and socio-economic frame of reference that allowed us to informally debate issues of mutual interest. Importantly for me, I had not since my earlier incomplete PhD studies, had the opportunity to discursively explore debates about youth, race and crime in detail with an academic who shared similar interests. Meeting periodically over several months, a keenly contested exchange of ideas, helped to challenge and refine many of my supercilious ideas that for many years had remained unarticulated. For the first time, opinions that were built up over several years and to which had rigidly adhered, opened to levels of scrutiny that that helped shape the direction and focus of the thesis' eventual research question.

Significantly, the decision to base the thesis research in an autoethnographic methodology came as a suggestion from my supervisor following a discussion about applied research and my own policy experience. It followed discussion that made it clear that the substantive issues I wanted to explore, could not be rationally separated from my actual life events, many of which clearly extended back to my early formative childhood years. These instead provided opportunity by which to critically examine the taken for granted orthodoxy on which much of my previous research activity was accepted as credible knowledge production, and that over the years and various stages of my career can be seen to dislocate me from a lived truth/ reality of race and crime. At the time I knew very little about autoethnography's methodological strengths or potential basis for the thesis' research procedure. It was a subsequent review of the

literature that firstly made it clear how a personal journal provided an important data source for exploring the conflict between my professional and everyday lived experience. Furthermore, it gave a means through which to re-examine my previously published research in relation to wider debates on race and crime policy/ practice as a way of adding to existing body of knowledge.

The doctoral process therefore provided a unique opportunity to revisit personal and professional circumstances that had for many years been pushed out of mind with the hope of gaining a better understand of tensions that arose from being a Black researcher. It quickly became clear that the reflexivity it required would involve revisiting uncomfortable or even challenging memories, which as the research progressed, were gradually exposed as layers of emotion that in some stances had remained unexplored and gathering momentum over the years to produce unresolved tensions. The thesis turned out to be an exercise in finally facing up to a foreboding that for some time I forced myself to ignore what I finally accepted as inner turmoil and pain. At the same time as being tortuous the reflexivity was also cathartic, which at times felt like having a weight being lifted from my chest. As a result of going through the process I was at last able to look at my everyday lived experience and professional activity through new eyes, to give a third side to my story.

Chapter 2.0. Literary review

Introduction

As detailed discussions on the causes and nature of the gang are covered adequately elsewhere (see Knox 1994, Curry and Decker 2003, Frazer 2017, Prowse 2013, Hughes 2006), this review starts by specifically exploring the race and crime discourse and implications of U.K. gang legislative policy-practice for urban black male youth. It goes on to examine how the U.K. gang has come to reflect generic ideas on 'problem youth' to then consider the implications of debates on black masculinity. It continues by exploring how the formulation of the U.K. gang also fails to recognise a wider discourse on organised crime, the implication of a transnational perspective and problem separating group/ collective behaviour from the gang. It ends with a discussion of how the idea of the gang in current legislation, policy and practice fails to build on the British sub cultural explanations of youth behaviour and adequately account for 'street' activity. It continues to build a critical perspective by adding historical context to nascence and evolution of U.K. gang legislative policy-practice by revisiting the research and ideas advanced by John Solomos. This assesses what is argued as links between race, official government action through politics and its relationship to official policy. The review ends by reviewing how debates within criminology have direct bearing on ideas about race and crime and their contribution to the construction of urban black male youth as crime metaphor.

2.1 Nascence and development of UK gang legislative policy-practice: a critical perspective

We find an extensive policy and academic literature on the gang, much of which is dominated by U.S. research and with early studies going back to the late nineteenth century (see Sheldon 1898). Significant development following with industrial expansion in major cities and contributions of the Chicago School during the early twentieth century which in the following decades transformed with increasing youth homicide rates connected to drug wars that by the 1960s spread to urban areas across

the country. Despite the huge body of knowledge, the huge academic research and official policy endeavour at all levels of government has failed to achieve consensus on a definition, essential nature or common features of a gang[1].

These ideas have nonetheless profoundly affected the understanding of youth behaviour, group activity and crime. Crucially it has been noted that Britain and America have experienced markedly different social problems to create substantive forms of youth deviance/ delinquency (Campbell and Muncie 1989), the seminal work of Downes (1966) on group youth behaviour referring to 'non-existent gang' to instead highlight the importance of leisure and youth culture. For these reasons it has been argued that the gang is 'essentially an American product' (Klein 1995, p.3) and 'America own the gang, while Britain has traditionally been the home of subcultures' (Muncie 2004, p.160). As a corollary, until the mid-2000s academic and policy discourse gave only minor account to gangs in a U.K. context. It has been historically rejected (Downes 1966, Campbell and Muncer 1989) or hard to find (Scott 1956), had a restricted influence (Bullock and Tilley 2002, Bennett and Holloway 2004). As a result, the idea of the gangs in the U.K was either resisted (Marshall et al 2005) an official survey on youth offending that despite drawing on the Eurogang Network[2] avoids referring to the gang' altogether, instead using the term 'delinquent youth groups' (Sharp et al 2004).

An early official statement points to the absence of specific guidance for tackling gangs, highlighting:

> 'there is also specific guidance available for schools, YOTs (both available in May 2008), parents and carers, the CPS (both available summer 2008) and the Probation and Prison Services (available autumn 2008)' (Home Office 2005, p.8)

[1] Within criminology and wider social studies the gang remains highly problematic (c.f. Katz 2000, Klein 1969, Miller 1975, Ball and Curry 1995, Decker and Kempf–Leonard 1995, Huff 1996, Fraser 2017) with some experts "finding fault with nearly all definitions" (Esbensen et al 2001: 105).

[2] An acknowledged 'group of international experts on 'gang' research' (Sharp et al 2004, p. v) following a conference in 1997 formally developed the *Eurogang Program* to that drew on lessons from local and Federal America experience to inform the differing experiences of the street gangs across Europe. It developed 'a single workable definition' and comparable methods as a common framework for supporting the work of academics and government

A subsequent gradual change in position is seen in early education policy (Department for Children, School and Families 2010, NASUWT 2008). This is more definitive in Operation Cruise, carried out by the Metropolitan Police, that for the first time identifies empirical group characteristics and purports a gang typology to profoundly affect subsequent official policy and service interventions. We hence find the gang as "being taken up by the police service, Home Office, Youth Justice Board and HM Prison service" (Association of Chief Police Officers 2007, p.22) providing the basis for 2009 Home office guidance *Tackling Gangs: A Practical Guide for Local Authorities*.

However, it is the independent review by a political think-tank, The Centre for Social Justice, and publication Dying to Belong in 2009 that has the most enduring impact. For the first time it provides a standard definition that provides a yardstick for a consistent approach to policy and practice. Its recommendation provides the cornerstone for the 2011 government cross-departmental Ending Gangs and Youth Violence Strategy[3] that in subsequent years this was to shape a Home Office Programme and activity of local area Gang Action Teams. Perhaps most critically, this definition would influence the 2009 Policing and Crime Act that for the first time legally defined the U.K. gang but to influence a wide range of subsequent policy/ practice[4]

Joseph (2018) argues narrowed criminological ideal that supports political policy priorities as profoundly affecting the understanding of youth behaviour with far-reaching consequences for legislation policy and practice. It is Dick Hobbs that identified interlocking processes of de-industrialisation, globalisation and neo-liberalism as converging to normalise criminality through 'getting paid' which creates an entrepreneurial youth culture (Hobbs 2013) that in turn creates what he identified as the 'gang U.K.'. Although race is found as a reoccurring theme withing U.S. gang discourse (c.f. Bursik and Grasmick 1995, Ebensen et al 2001, Katz 2000, Klein 1969, Miller 1980, Ball and Curry 1995, Decker and Kempf –Leonard 1995, Huff 1996) in the

[3] Summarised as the fives P's: 1. Providing support 2. Prevention 3. Pathways Out 4. Punishment and Enforcement 5. Partnership Working.

[4] Joseph (2018) notes how this definition in becoming vicarious attached to notions of urban Black male youth criminality influences the subsequent policy approach to 'moped crime', 'drug dealing', 'gang injunctions' 'dangerous dogs', 'knife crime/ zombie knives', 'drill music', 'grooming', 'county lines', 'joint enterprise', 'Section 60', 'stop and search' and 2018 Serious Violence Strategy

U.K. context, despite the relevance of race to crime and youth violence (Gunter 2017) the U.K gang in policy and academic discourse is found to be under-theorised (Joseph and Gunter 2011). In this context U.K. gang legislative policy-practice becomes a criminalising construct that draws on taken for granted view of race and crime to signify problematic behaviour that is disproportionately attributed to urban black male youth.

This focus on what is seen as 'gangsta culture' negates the nuanced complex impact of imperialist white-supremacist patriarchal capitalism of a pervasive market-driven system (hooks 2004) resulting in narrowed conceptualisations of youth behaviour in 'criminological and youth gang studies' (Gunter 2017 p.16) through what is viewed as a 'fixation on gangs by academic, policy makers, justice practitioners and the media [that] is both dangerous and unhelpful' (ibid. p.16). In therefore failing to adequately theorise race and crime, U.K. legislative gang policy-practice conflates academic and political discourse to create what Coughlin and Venkatesh (2003, p.51) describe as 'definitional boundaries' about collective criminal entrepreneurial activity. Crucially, drugs and violence are made the principal defining features of the U.K. gangs without reference to wider context and conditionality.

The existing discourse on gangs in the U.K is found to contain contested view on youth crime and urban black male youth. It is as a social construction from the alignment between positivist academic ideas and an official legislative policy-practice that is based on a realist criminology (Joseph 2017). Smithson Ralphs and Williams (2012) further dispute the gang's ontological reality and highlight its implication for race that it is more directly seen as distorting a view of Black criminality and urban youth violence (Williams and Clarke 2018) to provide an instrumental means of 'criminalising the other' makes urban black male youth the nexus of race and crime (Williams 2015).

Alexander (2008) provides early substantive academic analysis of race, crime and culture in relation to the U.K. gang policy and practice. For her, inadequate understanding of urban youth identity has led to a 'rush to label ''the gang problem''[5]

[5] A 'problem of thinking' in relation to the gang is seen as having three aspects: 1) the problem of race, 2) the problem of history and, 3) the problem of culture from which common-sense 'knowledges' about 'young black

and to devise a range of interventions on this basis is in danger of creating the circumstances it seeks to challenge' (ibid, p.16). Joseph and Gunter (2011) extend the theoretical examination of race and crime, pointing to how an under-theorisation acts to support realist and positivist understandings of youth behaviour. The gang as a construction provides an objective social category capable of supporting with an official punitive 'top down' youth justice approach, which ignores the complexities of youth culture, deprivation and institutional/ structural discrimination in ways that support the interest of what is argued to be a 'gang industry' and detract from alternative understandings[6] of perceived problems (Joseph 2017).

Gangs is also seen as the result of 'dysfunctional cultural adaptation' (Palmer 2009) from the links between black youth cultures and 'violent worlds' of inner-city neighbourhoods created by changing structural social, economic and cultural conditions. Although racism, unjust policing and systemic disadvantage are acknowledged as contributing factors they are seen to provide only limited explanations for the nihilism with which they engage. The criminal activity of Black youth is more clearly seen as a driving force behind the increase in gang activity since the 1980s. A critical realist perspective on patterns youth involvement in drug dealing not only give rise to the view that 'street gangs really do exist' (Pitts 2019, p.41) but that 'the evidence for the over-representation of Black young people in street gangs in London is compelling' (Pitts 2020, p.146).

In view of these contested ideas, we find alternative explanations for the U.K. 'gang' and urban black youth. Craine (1997) also views official government action has affecting the impact of wider structures on culture, arguing 'the alleged formulation of a youth underclass constitutes an ideological smokescreen which …. diverts attention from government culpability, presenting 'public issues' of policy failure as 'personal issues' of degeneracy and moral turpitude' (Craine 1997, p.130. Origianl emphasis). Debates about structural racism are thus subsumed in what he identifies as *the black*

boys' act as extension of those about the broader Black community. This is seen to create an inner city criminal culture that provides the basis for action aimed at tackling concerns about youth violence through official gang policy/ practice.

[6] In rejecting the 'gang' as the basis for effective policy and practice he argues real-world group activity is instead locally seen as giving rise to gang 'type', 'gang like' and 'gang related' group activity.

magic roundabout that blocks youth transition to cause social exclusion. Crucially, practical shortfalls in post 16-school transition directly causes 'alternative careers' and involvement with crime related to the gang. Young people therefore develop patterns of 'coping tactics' and 'survival strategies' to handle limited post-school progression[7], in which the Black magic roundabout becomes a cyclical pattern of getting stuck in administrative government schemes, the informal economy and unemployment, engendering resentment that results in:

> 'the progressive abandonment of labour market committeeman and the proactive development of alternative careers and status symbols' (ibid, 1997, p.140).

Although alternative careers develop through three broad stages, it is the second intermediate stage that involves crossing of boundaries of illegality and increasing involvement in non-legitimate enterprise that incrementally coalesces in the third stage of an anti-employment ethos. It is this subculture that provide a range of illegal activity as an alternative career structure that is outside of mainstream norms and values

The youth transition discourse thus provides Gunter (2010) with a conceptual framework that links naturally occurring everyday subcultural practice of urban Black male youth to wider structural forces. Moving away from what he sees as damaging criminological explanations, he instead associates rule-breaking with temporal social processes in urban spaces as a way of accounting for cultural formation outside the definitionalism of mainstream normativity. Rejecting notions of the gang for explaining collective youth behaviour, he instead draws on subcultural ideas to introduce the notion of 'badness' to reformulate ideas of 'problem youth' through a concern with 'the complex interplay of power and control (via physical force), language, culture, dress wear, and a youthful disregard of the values and institutions of a mainstream adult society…' (Gunter 2010, p.135). This is seen to provide a crucial conceptual bridge between the theoretical assertions of conventional cultural studies and questions raised about multicultural urban hybridity in relation to urban black male youth which

[7] Craine (1997) argues three board patterns of post school transitions into post 16 employment: 1) traditional, 2) protracted and, 3) cyclical transitions.

allows analysis outside 'the narrower concerns and preoccupations of criminology' from which their behaviour is:

> 'not just about delinquency or the effects and consequences of criminal activity, it is more about placing such adaptations and modes of being *within the broader context* of young people's everyday lived experiences. (Gunter 2010, p.135. Emphasis added).

The notion of badness can be therefore seen as a mode of youth culture that addresses under-theorised ideas about race and crime by referencing a wider interactive and structural landscape so as to contextualise mundane everyday lived reality in ways that 'is not about the margins at all, its life force is derived from the majority of young people who make up its centre ground' (ibid, p.93). An understanding urban youth culture is developed outside mainstream normativity and realist constructions through badness as a notion that takes 'account of the entirety of the subjects' lived experiences' (Gunter 2010, p13) and moving ideas about place and space in the metropolitan complex away from conventional geographies of the urban which are seen to give biased representations of race (Jackson 1989) to produce geographies of exclusion (Sibley 1995).

This analysis decouples urban black male youth from the conventional subcultural and criminological geography based on the social disorganisation (Shaw and McKay 1942) and cultural transmission (Sutherland 1939) and the gang as dystrophic 'street socialisation' (Vigil 2002). Naturally occurring processes of cultural formation through badness inverts the conceptual and pathological distortions connected to notion of the 'street' to reconfigure them through what is described as 'on road'[8]. Further, resisting the idea of a single deviant youth subculture, he disambiguates the abstraction between types of behaviour conventionally seen as criminal and the spatiality in which they take place. Rejecting the exceptionalism and spectacular view of youth behaviour common in culture studies, by accounting for mundane everyday lived youth

[8] Gunter in using this term takes as his cue the language used by young people in describing their mundane activity and behaviour of their subculture as 'being on road' (Gunter 2011, p.103) implicit to which is a tacit

experience, the notion of badness directly links to a geographic relationship between place and space.

For Gunter therefore, badness and on-road involve the relationality of place-space complex which can be seen to take place in two important ways. Firstly, from delineating the local, locale and location in a framework that links the place and space of practice (Probyn 1990) allowing road cultures to associate behaviour with spatiality. Secondly, culture is created through a process of hybridisation (Bhabha 1994) that progresses through three types of space; firstly physical, secondly remote and finally to what is described as a 'third space' (Soja 1996) in which Individual uniqueness contributes context to a hybridity that continuously contests and re-negotiate the boundaries of cultural identity,

Hence, what for Gunter (2010) is a 'commonality of experience' (ibdi, p.95) creates hybridity in urban culture in which 'road subculture is viewed as a continuum' (Gunter 201, p.93). This intrinsically links variegated youth behaviour to diverse geographic locations in which everyday lived cultural experience expressed badness as cultural meaning contextually derived from a place-space complex. This furthermore gives rise to what is seen as a 'distinct mode of critical spatial awareness' (Said 1996) in which:

> "everything comes together… subjectivity and objectivity, the abstract and the concrete, the real and the imagined, the knowable and the unimaginable, the repetitive and the differential, structure and agency, mind and body, consciousness and the unconscious, the disciplined and the transdisciplinary, everyday life and unending history." (ibid, p. 57)

The conventional street gang discourse can be seen as offering limited insight to youth culture race and crime in the context of U.K. policy/ practice in two important ways. By firstly failing to account for the multiplicity of urban cultural practices which are differentiated in layers of a place-space complex, but also how temporality and spatiality become a transitive mode or third space for cultural formation in youth transition. Secondly, how mundane everyday cultural practice is distinct from external criteria of crime and delinquency and thirdly the ways in which everyday of micro-level agency is connected to wider macro structural influences is totalised in youth

transitions to make lived cultural experience of on-road badness an expression of alternative youth transition that happens outside the normative mainstream.

2.2 Youth culture and street activity: beyond 'problem youth' and constructed gang

Debates on the U.K. gang in failing to address issues of race and crime fails to build on the discourse within the literature on problem youth. The notion of 'problem youth' is seen as move away from the idea of young people's vulnerability (Jones 2009) to a focus instead on disorder in which '[i]mages of dangerousness are arguably the most familiar public appearances if youth encapsulated in the threat and danger of the mob or gang' (Muncie 2004, p.7). This is seen as having roots in post-industrial urbanisation (Humphries 1981) to create a 'myth' about a safety, law and order that is argued by Pearson (1983)[9] to be a historical 'acceptable fear'. In his highly influential historical analysis, the gang is linked to rule-breaking Victorian/ Edwardian youth but also mods, teddy boys and skinheads and through a notion of 'the hooligan'[10].He moreover goes on to argue that 'rowdyism' and 'misbehaviour' connects young people with street robbery that '[f]rom the early 1600s that streets of London and other cities have been terrorised by a succession of organised gangs…' (ibid, p.188).

Urban Black male youth as a social group - perhaps more than any other – is seen as a problem group and reoccurring issue in many of the most contentious debates about policing, punitive criminal justice and incarceration. Research from the U.S. develop many of the major debates on black masculinity, culture and crime in the urban context (Anderson 1990, 1999; bell hooks 2004; Curry 2017; Majors and Billson1992; Pullman 1995; Van Deburg 2004; Liebow (1967); Wilson 2009, Wacquant 2008), issues of violence (Oliver 1994, Pinder-Hughes 1997), policing and criminal justice (Davies

[9] He astutely observed '[a]t the moment it is black people who stand accused of disrupting the peaceful tradition of the 'British way of life' (Pearson 1983, p.ix).

[10] Common use of the term is said to be the result of newspaper headlines following August Bank holiday disturbances in 1898 and subsequently after 'began to be used widely' after which 'a pattern of trouble quickly came to be associated with street gangs' (Pearson 1983, p.76)

2018, Robinson 2000, Mann 1993). In contrast to the body of U.S. research it is noted that '[very] little has been written on issues of black masculinity in the British context' (Alexander 2000, p.373). Although academic comment is not completely absent from either official government reports[11] much contains only vicarious reference to urban Black male youth, issues which are seemingly directly related, enigmatically indicated through generic terms such as 'urban' problems, 'black youth' or 'young black people'.

Black male youth in the literature is theorised in various ways which particularly in the urban context is argued to form part of a cultural matrix (Patterson and Fosse 2015) and 'a struggle over definition, understanding and construction of meanings around black masculinity within the dominant regime of truth' (Mercer and Julien 1994, p.138). We however find specific U.K research issue of black masculinity is instead subsumed in wider debates on class, youth sub-culture and deviance. Hence early work by David Downs (1966) in advancing the notion of delinquent solution draws on 'Black Moslems' (Downes, 1966, p.10) and ideas advanced by Yinger (1960) to illustrate how the formation of counter-norms create 'contraculture'.

Early U.K. theory is found to draw heavily on the subcultural ideas of the Chicago School, which was influential in shaping earlier social anthropological research on Black immigrants (for example seen Little 1967, Collins 1952, 1957; Richmond 1955). Early social anthropology is seen to build on ideas developed during colonial rule to feed ideas on 'cultural deficiency and cognitive incompetency' as conceptualisations that are based in what is argued as a 'Black deficit' (Shilliham 2017). Despite sharp political and intellectual divisions within the discipline (Mills 2008) and strong advocacy for social injustice, research such as Little (1967)[12] provide racialised characterisations that has been used to reinforce biased stereotypes. Some have become central in the subsequent race relations discourse (Patterson 1965, Cashmore 1979, Rex and Moore

[11] Typical of this is evidence by Ben Bowling and Coretta Phillips to the House of Commons Committee Inquiry in October 2006 at: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200607/cmselect/cmhaff/181/181we12.htm

[12] For example he describes how 'a background of slavery, poverty, and frustration that has left a distinctive mark on their working habits, family organization, religious practice, and attitudes to authority', family life is characterised as 'frequently unorthodox by British standards' describing how 'men move about in search of work, setting up unstable unions in quick succession. The unstable unit usually consists of a man and woman living together for a period of weeks or months'. (Little 1967, P. 514).

1969, Pryce 1979) that has since been broadly criticised for pathologising Black immigrant family structure, culture and community (Lawrence 1982).

The notion of 'deficit' implicit to ideas about culture, youth behaviour and the gang is further challenged by Gunter (2010) who calls on the Matza's (1964) notion of 'drift' to argue that 'young people's involvement in deviance and criminal activity is both transient and sporadic' (ibid, p.128). Further, social typifications create constructed dyadic pathologies that either 'problematise' them as criminal stereotypes or through 'hyper masculinity' elevate them as cultural or sporting icons. He nonetheless sees both ends of a polemic as problematic, with each sensationalising mundane behaviour to signifying hyper aggressions directed toward what is seen as 'the narrow concerns and pre-occupations of criminology' (Gunter 2010, P.135). This dualism is a common theme, that theorises Black masculinity within a framework of 'superhumanisation' (Waytz, Hoffman and Trawalter 2015) that simultaneously produces a 'dehumanisation' (Geoff et.al 2014) creating a:

> 'hegemonic repertoire of images of black masculinity, from docile "Uncle Tom," the shuffling minstrel entertainer, the threatening native, to "Superspade" figures like Shaft, has been forged in and through the histories of slavery, colonialism and imperialism'. (Mercer and Julien 2013, p.137)

Staples (1982) views black masculinity as a dialectic of systemic contradictions which creates a gender role that is the 'legacy of slavery' creating social norms and giving rise to 'the black male as being in conflict with the normative definition of masculinity' (ibid, p.2). It is moreover a contraction that continues in contemporary Britain and which for Mercer and Julien (2013) help explain the 'images of black males in political debates around law and order' (p.137). For them the denial of male attributes produced by slavery, impels black men to adopt types of patriarchal values from 'prevailing definitions of masculinity [that] imply power, control and authority' (Mercer and Julien 2013, p.140) providing an internalised *subordinated masculinity* that provides the means of surviving the suppression to which they were subject. Therefore 'macho' attitudes and behaviour is used to instrumentally challenge hegemonic white

dominance behaviour as a type of 'negative resistance' (Mercer and Julien 2013, p.140) from which:

> 'The prevailing stereotype project an image of black male youth as a "mugger" or "rioter"; either way he constitutes a violent and dangerous threat to white society, he becomes the objectified form of inarticulate fears at the back of the minds of "ordinary British people."' (Mercer and Julien 2013, p.140. Original emphasis).

Concerns about gangs in Britain is also connected to anxieties about problem working class youth that by the 1920s were variously identified through hooliganism, vagrancy, disorderliness, misconduct, rowdyism and delinquency linked to mobs, yobs, hoodlums, vandals and thugs that is brought together in the notion 'problem youth' (Muncie 2004) that more importantly provides the rationale for authoritarianism and social control. Importantly problem youth is linked to an idea of dangerousness (Shelden 2001) and organised adult crime[13] in what is broadly seen as the criminal underworld (Shore 2015). Although the notion of organised crime is contested (Standing 2003), it is generally seen to contain three key dimensions in which 'crime are committed on a continuous basis involving planning and preparation as opposed to impulsive, spur of the moment criminal acts' involving 'the cooperation of several criminals will tend to make the commission of crimes easier as the scale and complexity of an operation increases' (Van Lampe 2015, p.4-5). We nonetheless find little U.K. research on youth gangs and organised adult crime. The link is seen as part of a natural evolution [14] (Densley 2016) and youth are involved in different types of U.K. gang variously connected to organised crime (Pitts 2010)[15]. Similarly, Hallsworth and Young's (2006) typology of street collectives[16] connecting collective youth behaviour, adult organised and persistent crime.

[13] 1) type of criminal activity; 2) particular criminal structure or organisation 3) organised crime as a form of illegal governance (von Lampe, 2016, p.27) suggesting that an adequate conceptual framework encompasses elements of all three.

[14] Densely (2016) suggests that gangs progress through four stages that are: 1) recreation 2) crime 3) enterprise 4) governance

[15] In developing his 'reluctant gangster' thesis and developing a typology gangs/ groups in a London borough he identified: 1) the articulated super gang 2) the street gang 3) the compressed street gang 4) the wannabee gangsters and 5) the criminal youth group

[16] These street collectives are being: 1) peer groups 2) gangs, and 3) organised crime groups

We however find a separation made between collective youth rule-breaking, anti-social or criminality adult organised crime and research that questioning 'whether youth gangs might evolve into adult organised crime groups' (Stanton 2019, p.6). Further research also finds that that serious violence used against others to control and exploit illegal opportunity through gangs are 'more likely to involve young adults than the age range covered by the youth justice system' (Young et.al 2007, p.14). The uncertainty of the links seen to have direct implications for policy and practice that result in 'terms such as ''organised crime'' and ''gangs'' can be subject to universal and over-simplistic definition' (Thompson 2019, p.14).

We also find from the literature describing how gangs transcend national boundaries and youth gang are found in countries around the world (Grennan et al 2000, Covey 2003), across geography boundaries and between cultures (Hazelhurst and Hazelhurst 1998, Cavan and Cavan 1968, Salek and Brotherton 2008). Academic debate and U.K. gang legislative policy-practice by failing to account for international perspectives on urban youth culture and conflict (see Brotherton 2008, Daiute et al 2006, Tienda and Wilson 2002, Brotherton and Gude 2021) ignored the role of transnational social processes, legitimate state politics and illegitimate drug cartels which are argued to form part of an interconnected 'global city' and to acknowledge that 'there has always been gangs, today's urbanizing world is producing them faster than ever and in myriad forms and shapes' (Hagadorn 2008, p.xxiii). From a global perspective, gangs therefore overlap macro-economic structure and micro-level crime (Hagedorn 2005n 2007), in ways that gives rise to unregulated informal economy and mundane subcultural activity. Adaptations to wider structural forces give rise to organised crime and delinquency that trickle down to produce lower-level social processes (Kornhauser 1978, Short and Stodbeck 1974, Cressey and Ward 1969, Short 1968, Zimring 1981, Morash 1983, Erikson 1977). These wider structural forces give rise to particular forms of youth subcultures in which the 'gang' is a rejection of mainstream normativity. Conventional explanation see it therefore as *reaction formation* to *stratus frustration* (Cohen 1955) or form of *differential opportunity* (Cloward and Ohlin 1961).

Furthermore, the literature shows that the gang is not coterminous with the collective behaviour or of the individuals in a group. However, the notion of the group and how the individual is influenced by collective behaviour is problematic[17]. A propensity toward crime can result from group involvement (Warr 2002) as a spontaneous temporary response to crowd or mob influence of 'a collective mind' that creates contagious suggestibility or 'peer pressure' (Le Bon 1895). Group involvement can cause a loss of individuality to produce a shared redefinition of right and wrong which justifies new normal behaviour (Turner and Killian 1987) but it is an idea resisted by Allport (1924) who adopts an individualistic perspective to argue that groups are merely an instrumental means to an end. McPhail (1991) however completely rejects any emphasis on already assembled groups, arguing this narrows any analysis of collective behaviour to instead assert that gatherings form in stages[18]. Difficulties in satisfactorily separating gang from group/collective activity has been a reoccurring theme in research. Therefore, the idea of 'the play group' is used by Thrasher (1927), in what is seen as the 'near group' (Yablonsky 1962), the group processes of Short and Strodbeck (1965) and William Foot Whyte's (1943) classic study of Boston 'street corner society' view of the gang as a more social group that emerges from an urban milieu. Gunter (2017) therefore observes:

> 'According to Randall Sheldon et al (2013:23), too many US gang researchers have 'confused the *group* with the term *gang* and have proceeded to expand the definition' to the point where it becomes a catchall boundary that includes 'every group of youth that commit offences together'. Consequently, what is the difference between youth gangs, street gangs and drug gangs' (cited in Gunter 2017, p.14-15)

[17] Difference between groups and gangs are distinguished in several way that includes: absence of organisation (Aldridge 2007, Hagedorn 1988, Moore 1991, Vigil 1988, Decker and Van Winkle 1996), involves only low-level, street-based drug dealing (Howard and Decker 1999, Decker 1995), groups normally do not have the capacity to organise homicides (Decker and Curry 2002), are short-lived where their primary activity is 'hanging out' (Klein 1971, Hagedorn 1988)

[18] McPhail (1991) suggests that the three stages involved in a gathering include: 1) the assembling process 2) the assembled gathering, and 3) the dispersal process.

These however represent early ideas for explaining gangs and youth culture in the U.S. context, which conventionally are seen to have limited application to the U.K. (Downes 1963) from which the British academy has instead called on an understanding of youth subculture to explain collective youth behaviour and deviance which it has been observed that while Britain is 'the home to youth's ritual resistance, the United States produced the paradox of ritual conformity' (Campbell and Muncer 1989, p.284). This has created a distinctive tradition of British subcultural theory encompassing a broad range of perspectives that including symbolic meanings/ imagery from interactive processes (Ferrell and Sanders 1995), an expression of style (Hebidge 1979, Ferrell 1976) seen as a differentiated complex 'kaleidoscope' (Brake 1980). It also includes counterculture (Hebidge 1976) which expresses resistance (Hall and Jefferson 1976, Hall et al 1978) and rebellion (Sivanandan 1976) that is shaped by the exchange/ hybridity (Gilroy 1987) from dynamic social change (Miles 2000). Forming part of a common culture it is based in everyday activity (Willis 1990) so as to pursue pleasure as intentional transgression of crime control (Presdee 2000) to provides key themes in cultural criminology discourse (see Ferrell et.al. 2004).

Subcultural analysis of race and crime has given special focus to the gang but initially on black male youth as *hustlers* (Pryce 1979) and *rude boys* (Hebdige 1979) or Rasta as countercultural resistance to social structures (Chambers 2017) giving alternative insight to cultural stereotypes of some research (Cashmore 1979). Critical race perspectives connect black youth and 'mugging' to a moral panic during the 1970s, in which distorted press and political constructions to create symbolic fold devils which becoming scapegoats for wider social problems that give 'the matter of race and racism a theoretical and as well as a practical centrality (Hall et al 1978, p.394). Gilroy (1993) furthermore highlights how colonialism fragments black culture through the geographic displacement of slavery, creating a Black Atlantic diaspora, which allows the continuous reworking of cultural meaning to produce a 'double consciousness'. A resulting hybridity redefines pathological views of black families, to provide a source of social capital, using heritage to make links back to the Caribbean as a social asset in the creation of new cultural identities (Reynolds 2004).

The final section of this review more fully explores how ideas about race develop within criminology, in which we also find youth delinquency, crime and the gang linked to what is generally described as ‘the street’ and more specifically the ‘street youth gang’. To the most part this fails to account for important postmodern debates within urban and cultural geography (Harvey 1989, Bhabha 1994, Lefebrvre 1974) which crucially highlight the effect fractured cities (Jacobs 1992) revise notions of place and space (Soja 1996, Massey 1994, Thrift 1996) so as to consider the spatialisation of culture (Low 2017, Jackson 1989) in the geographies of exclusion and resistance (Sibley 1995, Pile and Keith 1997). Hence although large part of the U.K, gang narrative alludes to poor inner city it fails to reimage concepts of the urban (Amin and Thrift 2002) related to politics of location (Kirby 1982, Agnew 1978) which is seen as giving rise to a ‘new’ urban politics (Sanders 1979). Importantly in relation to race and crime, it fails to recognise the urban multiculturalism and multiplicity of cultural forms that shape social relations in poor inner cities and how this gives rise to what is argued as a distinctive urban culture (Back 1996).

Although a conventional topic of criminological interest, the academic and policy debates which contributed to the inception and continues to shape U.K. gang legislative policy-practice fails to include detailed debate in the literature of how public space become locations for culture or other forms of behaviour that might be linked to crime. In the classic ethnographic study of Whyte (1943) ‘street corner society’ is a positive social source of structured support in which the gang is a community institution which helps reinforce social order which rather than being in conflict with the local community is an integral part of it. The idea of prosocial integration with the local community is also supported by Jankowshi (1991) who see it as local ‘patriotism’ (ibid, p.199) which provides an easily accessible means of tackling problems of the urban social system. In similar ways the ‘street corner boys’ (Cloward and Ohlin 1962) and ‘street smarts’ toughness of youth in working-class gangs Miller’s (1958) the street as public spaces provide an context for social interaction to become the location for subcultural activity.

Furthermore everyday ‘gang’ behaviour in public space is linked to wider social structure through the idea of ‘street habitas’. Advancing concepts first proposed by

Pierre Bourdieu Frazer (2015) argues it as an unconscious disposition to exploit available social capital which is also used in explaining illegal drug activity (Sandberg and Pederson 2008) and 'hotspot' offending (see Harding 2014). Frazer (2017) however insists viewing gangs as habitas makes connection too narrowly connected to criminality, seeing it instead as an 'adaptive response' in a known location which give a means of addressing urban marginality. Space therefore becomes part of the unconsciousness of habitas which provides the basis of group identity. This idea of identity is developed by Ilan (2015) who goes further to decouple street activity and culture from criminality through the notion of 'street cool'. This views a spectrum of cultural practice as providing forms of social capital that he argues is 'against gangs discourse' in which:

> 'the notion of street culture allows for a more nuanced and accurate understanding of how individuals and groups variously deploy street cultural practices…' (Illan 2015, P.80)

Hence, rather than a permanent, hierarchical structures the street gang is instead seen as informal, unstructured naturally occurring group behaviour. In this way it is as dynamic, short-lived and characteristically fragmented with a lack structure and formal leadership in which 'hanging out' not crime is their primary activity (Klein 1971, Hagedorn 1988). For Bourgois (1995) it is not the gang but *street culture* which give 'a complex and conflictual web of beliefs, symbols, modes of interaction, values and ideologies' that provides most importantly opportunities for gaining respect and a reputation which he claimed to be 'an alternative forum for antonymous personal integrity' (Bourgois, p.8). it is for these reasons that some commentators point away from the gang and instead refer to 'gang likeness' (Morash 1983).

In failing to observe street based social activity the U.K. gang also fails in giving adequate account to the intercultural relations which contribute to the formation of evolving ethnic identities that give rise to urban cultures, Crucially, for issue of race and crime this allows the neglect of the cultural racism which gives rise to what is seen as the 'metropolitan paradox' (Keith 2005). The hybridity of lifestyles found on 'the street' produce a constantly changing contemporary metropolitan milieu that creates urban culture to define the multi-cultural nature of the city and context for a fluidity and

mutability. The hybridised identities born out of are, however, what is called 'subject positions or subjectifications' (ibid, p.82) which produce a 'racialised city'. His research thus points to how the putative Bengali 'gang' is seen as the *street rebel*[19] to allow ideas about race to be connected to policy for which he argued a 'theoretical analysis of criminalisation helps to understand the manner in which 'blackness' is produced as a sign of criminal otherness' (ibid, p.94).

Detailed exploration of race, crime and 'the street', with special reference to black males in public, is explored by the 1990 work of Elija Anderson *streetwise,* which gives a detailed and nuanced exploration of race in relation to the social dynamics of the ghetto poor. This he argues provides the context for the formation of *street codes* (Anderson 1999) an idea in the literature commonly used to account for gang related criminality. He however used it to describe defensive practices in which street life is a form of social regulation, enabling youth in low-income black communities to instrumentally engage and navigate the dangers of informal mutually understood community, cultural and social mechanisms. Further, in the absence of jobs, street codes become a form of unwritten social etiquette and mode of conduct through which to command respect.

Wacquant (2002) however is derisive about ethnographies that portray a homiletic vison of 'the street' and which he sees to convey 'neo-romantic tales' about what for him is 'the dark figure'. He is critical of ethnographic studies which are 'eager to embrace the clichés of public debate' (ibid, p.1469) by arguing that they show an overall 'blindness to issues of class power and [their] stubborn disregard for the deep and multisided involvement….of the state'. The violent crime commonly seen as linked to race and the poor urban underclass is explained by Wacquant as the result of advanced marginality, from which gang activity can be seen as embedded in:

> 'generic *mechanisms* that produce it, like the *specific forms* it assumes, become fully intelligible once one takes caution to embed them in the historical matrix of

[19] Keith (2005) also highlight the ethnic entrepreneur as a second type of subjective position.

class, state and space characteristic of each society at a given epoch'. (Wacquant 2008, p.2)

In relation to the ghetto 'street thug' commonly connected to the gang, analysis of the political action for tackling what for him is an underclass culture, is directed not at micro level agency, seen as individual or 'personal responsibility'. Instead, problem associated with what he views as urban outcasts linked to wider structural determinants (Wacquant 2009) and precarious employment in Black communities and deindustrialisation which creates urban decay and districts of exclusion. Therefore, instead of tackling racial justice, social and economic inequality and restrictive 'workfare', government policy is directed toward oppressive policing, mass incarceration and penal criminal justice and an expansive 'prisonfare' that disproportionately punishes the poor (Wacquant 2009).

2.3 Race and politics in post-War Britain 1945 -2003: John Solomos revisited

Government response to mass Black immigration[20] through legislative and policy change in the post-1945 period is seen by Solomos as a blueprint for the official approach to race and crime, which provides the research question explore by this thesis, a means of examining the subsequent approach pf U.K. gang legislative policy-practice. Importantly what he determines as the politics of race and immigration (Solomos 1989) is seen in two related strands of government action. The first relate to the instigation of new immigration controls. These initially were used in response to the Irish immigration crisis following the potatoes blight of 1845 but also managing the massive Jewish settlement from Eastern Europe in the late nineteenth century to be subsequently employed to control the non-White British colonial subjects arriving at

[20] Detailed analysis of post-1945 immigration, race and politics is covered elsewhere and so not included in this review (see Freeman 1979; Solomos 1989; Layton-Henry 1992; Macdonald 1983; Carter and Joshi 1984; Patterson 1969; Miles and Phizacklea 1984)

seaports from entering the country (see Fryer 1984). Second is the instigation of new bureaucratic systems which formalise legislative powers[21].

However, the changing global economy[22] and need to rebuild the economy post-1945, resulted in an official government appeal to colonial countries for workers to support the 'mother country'. Hence, England was a naturel choice for many from the Old Commonwealth who could not find employment at home. Although total numbers remained low compared to those from the Irish Republic, old Commonwealth countries, Polish war veterans and European Voluntary Workers programme (Carter and Joshi 1984, Patterson 1969, Miles and Phizacklea 1984) popular concerns about a loss in the British way of life triggered huge public and political consternation about a 'coloured problem'. Solomos therefore argues that changes to immigration between the 1948 British Nationality Act and 1962 Commonwealth Immigrants Act evidences state racist ideology and policy mechanism for the racialisation of politics.

The 1948 British Nationality Act was originally intended as a way of loosening entry and settlement rules for migrants from New Commonwealth countries (Freeman 1979) but the unexpected arrival of unanticipated number of black immigrants was a popular narrative in which 'all immigrants were perceived as black and immigration became a coded term for talking about racial questions' (Solomos 1993. P.62) resulted in public demands for tighter controls[23]. Hence, changing popular and press attitudes to black immigration in this period is found to profoundly affect government action. An interplay of economic, state politics, cultural and social forces give rise to wholesale social and cultural transformation (Obelkevich and Catteral 1994) which help force what is seen

[21] The 1926 Special Restrictions (Coloured Aline Seamen) Order restricted colonial seamen's ability to land to create a discriminatory 'colour bar' triggering a hostility in port areas leading in 1919 to the lynch mobs and racial riots in Liverpool and Cardiff (see Fryer 1984).

[22] Change to McCarren Walther Act in 1952, restricted the number of British West Indians who could legally settle in the U.S.

[23] Arrival of the Empire Windrush in 1948 was preceded by other ships from former colonies such as the SS Almanzora and SS Ormonde in 1947. A BBC (2019) documentary 'The Unwanted: The Secret Windrush Files', following the public release of previously confidential state files and official records showed how the government actions aimed at attracting workers to rebuild the economy while simultaneously attempting to curtail and control levels of Black migration to Britain (also see the Guardian 2019). Furthermore, the 1949 report of the Royal Commission on Population in noting that 'the scarcity of labour might make it difficult to man industries which are commonly considered unattractive, and it may be necessary to draw on immigrants for that purpose' expresses a need for immigrants 'of good stock' concluding however how 'large scale immigration was both undesirable and impracticable'.

as a political 'paradigm shift' (Hay 1996) at the same time of Britain's diminishing global influence and what Childs (1997) describes as the 'colonial retreat'

Broader economic decline (Gamble 1981) and looming economic crisis (Leys 1983) provided an economic context to public and political views on newly arrived black immigrants, to create post-War politics lined to Britain's colonial legacy in strands of government action seen as a 'immigrant-colonial nexus' (Freeman 1979). This gives rise to complex political discourse that is formative in ways integral to 'the evolution of the post-war British state and the complex and constantly dynamic processes and mechanisms which have driven its evolution' (Kerr 2001, p.24). We thus find gradual shifts in formal political representative and government structures which seek to maintain consensual political culture through the existing state system and (Birch 1964) while also moving from monolithic politics that is carried out through unitary state machinery. This is accompanied by a shift from the conventional 'Westminster model' of parliamentary sovereignty, Cabinet leadership, ministerial accountability and neutral civil service toward a process of modernisation. This political change is also seen to signal progression from *synchronic* politics to a *diachronic* complex involving continuities and discontinuities which are found between agency and structure (Hay 2002).For these reasons modern political relations are seen as 'interpretivist' reflecting the multi layered differentiated polity containing alternative forms of governance (O'Neill 2004) that embodies a web of exchange relationships of policy networks and power interplay of interests groups (see Bevir and Rhodes 2003, Rhodes 1997; Richards and Smith 2002).

A resulting disintegration in conventional politics (Nairn 1981) contributing to the breakdown of a disputed post-War political census[24], with new forms of civil engagement (Beer 1965) irreversibly altered the political landscape. This was to also foist a new official approach to race, that is seen to move it from a marginal concern to be at the core of voracious debates about immigration in the 1950s (Deakin 1968, Rose 1969, Foot 1965). These Solomos argues are finally resolved in the cross-party political

[24] Debate on the post-War consensus is highly contested. Support to the idea is given by Kavanagh and Morris (1989) but although by contested (Marlow 1996, Kerr 2001 the post-War consensus is taken here to generally mean cross-party agreement on achieving full employment, government intervention through Keynesian macroeconomics, a fiscal regime for financing Welfare provision and conciliatory trade union relations.

consensus on immigration policy which would finally culminate in 1962 Commonwealth Immigrants Act. Events between 1948 and 1962 are nonetheless seen as a 'surrender to racism' (Fryer 1984), representing an important bridging point between conventional colonial relations and a political discourse on 'too many coloured immigrants' as a social problem. Crucially, tighter immigration controls would be practically achieved through new legislative instruments as well as policy procedures. This is simultaneously seen as creating a 'peripherisation' in the management of race policy that defines a new direction in statecraft that also devolves race relations to the politics of local government (Bulpitt 1985). This is furthermore claimed to form new types of relationship between central and devolved government, but in which the customs, autonomy and practices at the centre to remain largely unaltered.

Importantly, the 1962 Act in effect removed the equal immigration status of black Commonwealth citizens by making a distinction with those born or having a passport not issued in the in the U.K. or Irish Republic. Legislation broadly outlined conditions of eligibility but gave new discretionary powers of admission to immigration officers at the port of entry[25]. Moreover, the introduction of *employment vouchers*[26] gave rise to a new system of administrative procedures and system of annual reviews. Solomos (1993) sees these as representing the 'institutionalising of immigration controls' which provide a surreptitious means of controlling black immigration 'in coded terms' to provide that he claims is 'widely seen as a piece of legislation specifically aimed at black migrants' (Solomos 1989, p.64). Further, the legislative based policy change and accompanying administrative procedures act to not only control entry but limit entitlements after settlement (Nixon 1982) that is seen to have direct implication for housing, employment, welfare and crime (Bloch, Neal and Solomos 2013).

Early substantive analysis on politics, race and youth crime policy is provided by John Solomos (1988) in *Black youth, racism and the state: the politics of ideology and policy*, importantly for the thesis' research question, proffering a cogent account of how urban

[25] Admission to Britain could now be refused to anyone either 'in a position to support himself and his dependents, if any in the United Kingdom otherwise than by taking employment or engaging for reward in any business, profession or other occupation', or if 'for the purposes of employment [there], and is the person described in a current voucher issued for the purposes of this section by or on behalf of the Minister of Labour'
[26] This now specified three specific categories for legitimate entry to Britain

black male youth becomes the focus of political concerns and official government action. Moreover, in critically analysis what he describes as the 'crisis of Black youth' (Solomos 1988 p24) he evidences how a ubiquitous racism is operationalised through the politics of public policy to more fundamentally argues that a politicisation of race is exemplified in 'a move from a ''pre political'' to a ''political'' stage in the history of post war racism'[27] by problematising black immigrant communities, for which he goes to claim that:

> during the late 1950s and early 1960s the issue of immigration control was intimately tied to the question of the involvement of black immigrants in criminal activity. (Solomos 1980, p.121)

At the core of Solomos' thesis is the assertion that 'ideology and political intervention has been central to a process through which the ''race question'' has been formulated as a problem' (Solomos 1988, p.30. Original emphasis) He applies a Neo-Marxist analysis to see ideology[28] not as a simply 'abstracted monolith but as a set of institutions which have a direct and indirect impact on the content and working of politics' (Solomos 1988, p.17) but uses this to provide a concrete view of government action that allows him to consider wider structural processes as relevant to how black male youth is affected by youth crime and justice policy. In ways important to this thesis, he thus adopts an antireductionist race perspective arguing that:

> 'racial inequality has been reproduced in British society over the last four decades, and the importance of analysing the role of the *complex totality* of economic, social and political processes [which] can help explain the institutionalisation of racism. The immediate reference … has, however, been the specific question of how the category 'black youth' was put on the political agenda'' (Solomos 1988, p234. Original emphasis)

[27] See Deakin 1970, p.96-100; Foot 1965 p. 130-2 quoted in Solomos (1988 p.34)

[28] Solomos' use of the term ideology generally reflects that of used broadly within neo-Marxist thinking and might generally he regarded as: 'any discourse which, as a whole (but not necessarily in terms of all of its component parts) represents human being, and the social relations between human beings, in a distorted and misleading manner. Thus, ideology is a specific form of discourse.' (Miles 1989, p.42)

This understanding of *complex totality* can be seen to have an important teleological implications in conceptualising what he calls the 'politics of racism' which provides him with the means of developing a wider framework involving the 'complex interactions and linkages between the institutions of the state and the wider sets of social relations within which they exist' (Solomos 1988, p.18). It is a 'relational approach' that allow him to give account to a range of structural components and 'formative processes' (Solomos 1988, p17) that shape the racialisation of politics through:

> 'a complex articulation of relationships between political, ideological and economic developments, each with their own impact on the policy outputs in relation to immigration and "race issues"' (Solomos 1988 p.29-30. Original emphasis)

In this way official policy is the outcome of racist ideology and direct function of politics which is implemented through official government/ state action. Historically, the racialisation of politics after 1948, brings together interwoven elements of government action to tackle the problem of black immigration, to place it at the forefront of a process of change that can regarded as the *politicisation of race*, for which:

> 'the response to black labour migration in the post-Second World War period were shaped by complex articulations of political, ideological and economic developments, each with its own impact on the policy outputs in relation to immigration and 'race' issues. (Solomos 1988, p.29. original emphasis).

Solomos' analysis therefore draws together critical perspectives on four interrelated themes. His examination of immigration is used in (1) an ontology of race as the basis for a pragmatic critique of how (2) mainstream political science discourse and (3) race relations research helps to equally develop a problematic view of race in what he views as (4) the politics of race. We shall later see how these themes come together to turn shape crime policy in ways that have direct implications for urban black male youth. Thus, in the post-1948 period, race becomes both a construct and expression of politics that is produced from a relationship between state ideology and practical government action observed as:

> ‘the response to black labour migration in the post-Second World War period were shaped by complex articulations of political, ideological and economic developments, each with its own impact on the policy outputs in relation to immigration and ‘race’ issues. (Solomos 1988, p.29. original emphasis).

In resisting the idea of race as a reified ontological category, Solomos instead argues it as a political construction directly observable in the actions of state, which he illustrated in how changes to immigration legislation and policy between 1948 and 1962 was used to control the immigration black Commonwealth citizens. The politics-race nexus thus determines that ‘racism is not a static phenomenon. In societies such as Britain racism is produced and reproduced through political discourse, the media, the education system and other institutions’ Solomos 1993, p.9). This perspective is held in tension with Miles’ essentialist view of race that nonetheless recognises ‘other non-visible (alleged or real)’ biological features (Miles 1989, p.75) that in rejecting a ‘single monolithic racism’ supports what is argued as ‘multifarious historical formation of *racisms’* (Goldberg 1990, p. xiii). He therefore advances a non-essentialist argument, in which race is situationally or historically contingent, and perhaps most significant ‘the meaning of race as a social construction is contested and fought over’ making it the result of complex processes through which ‘race is constructed as a social and political relation’ (Solomos 1993, p.29-30).

In his later views, as we shall later explore, race is seen as metonymically coded and elaborated as culture, with its exact meaning ‘located within particular fields of discourse’ that are spatially contextualised manifestations. Solomos and Back (1996) therefore argue for a ‘situated racism within particular settings and social context’ (p.29) that is an ‘open political construction’ (Solomos and Back 1996, p.10) and for which the ‘presumption of a single monolithic racism is being displaced by a mapping of multifarious historical formulations of *racisms’* (Solomos 1993, p32. Emphasis added). This critically give rise to what they see as ‘political positions’ which provide the basis for ‘various paradigms’ which produce what is seen as *the politics of knowledge production* (Ibid, p.26).

Furthermore, Solomos' concept of race has roots in both political science and race relations research. Asserting that mainstream political science gives inadequate account to the changing ideas about race and racism, it instead adopts what is described as a 'narrow view of politics and power' (Dearlove and Saunders 1984, p, 3-4) to have only 'a secondary influence on the mainstream sociological studies of race relations' (Solomos 1993, p.22). He also claims that a lack of research during the 1980s means 'no attempts have been made to analyse the politics of racism within the main body of sociological studies of racism' (Solomos 1993, p.6) causing a 'negative neglect of politics from within the mainstream of the sociology of race relations' (Solomos 1988, p.5). Furthermore, what he views as '*the politics of research on racism'* merely offers different perspectives[29] on ideology in which 'race exists as a fixed objective category, and that these beliefs are reflected in political discourses and at the level of popular ideas' (Solomos 1993, p.8). Crucially, the 'fixed objective category' becomes the teleological basis for legislation and policy that expresses political priorities in which race becomes 'a signifier for a range of social problems and conflicts' (Solomos 1993, p.8). Furthermore failing to recognise the limitation of race as unified analytical category, undermines its scientific credential in academic discourse through an ability to help move from the demarcation between what Banton (1991) determines as *explanandum* and *explanans*[30] and helps Solomos to make contrasts with a critical perspective by highlighting:

> While Rex is concerned with models of social action (that is, for Rex it is enough that race is utilised in everyday discourse as a basis for social action) Miles is concerned with the analytical and objective status of race as a basis of action (Miles 1982, quoted in Solomos 1993, p. 28)

Solomos therefore criticises research addressing the 'race relations problematic' (see Banton 1991) and general sociology of race discourse for pathologising black family structure and personal identity (see Patterson 1965, Cashmore 1979, Pryce 1979)

[29] Solomos adopts a critical position on the dichotomous perspectives of Michael Banton and John Rex described as 'as anascopic (looking up from the ''micro'')' as opposed to 'catascopic (looking down from the ''macro'')' (Banton 1991, p.117) which respectively contrast an essentially anthropological and historical analysis with class-based structural explanations.

[30] Banton (1990) differentiates between *explanandum* that is a definer of what is to be explained and *explanans* as the explanatory basis)

claiming undue emphasis is given to policy problems social problems in specific towns or cities (for example see Banton 1955, Glass 1960, Patterson 1963, Rex 1973, Rex and Moore1969) to argue that:

> '…social relations within black communal lifestyles [is] at the expense of detailed studies of the personal and institutional mechanism through which white racism operates… that an exaggerated emphasis on factors of this sort only shifts attention from racism, and shifts the problem of ''race relations'' onto black communities as individuals or as collectives'. (Solomos 1988, p,11-12. Original emphasis)

For Solomos, although racism is a central feature of his politics of race and feature of class difference, far from being an inert abstracted unified ideological category, it crucially is the result of a complex dynamism that is the outcome of practical political processes of *racialisation*[31] rooted in a European colonial past. This idea shares much with the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies[32], for which race provides a collective identity and effective means for solidarity and political action that is frequently expressed at a community or locality level (Gilroy 1987). The notion of racialisation thus allows Solomos to account for 'cultural or political processes or situations where race is invoked as an explanation or a means of understanding' (Murji and Solomos 2005). Variegated cultural processes and ethnic identities found in metropolitan settings, produce what he sees as 'a multiplicity of political identities' (Solomos and Back 1996) but also a new cultural racism from a politics of identity, similar in nature of what Fanon (1967) regards as a 'new racism'. For these reasons, race is consequent to 'a kaleidoscope of cultural syncretisms' which are seen by Solomos as 'a complex spectrum of racism' which arise out of a 'shifting political context' (Solomos and Back 1996, p.26). Hence, rather than the result of a monolithic category 'racism manifests

[31] A term widely used firstly by Franz Fanon (1967) in relation to national culture, European domination and colonialism it is has a longer history and wider usage (Barot and Bird 2001), so as to obscure agreement on its exact meaning (Murji and Solomos 2005). It is more directly associated with the contrasting perspectives from to the sociology of race and Banton (1977) who defines it as ' a process …. a mode of categorisation [that] was developed, applied tentatively in European historical writing'(Banton 1977, p.18). By contrast it is seen by Miles and Phizaklea (1984) as 'a historical process in which the idea of ''race'', and it use to describe a particular population, is ultimately connected to with colonial exploitation (ibid, p.12)

[32] In particular, work advanced through the Race and Politics Group (CCCS 1992).

itself in plural and complex forms' as metonymic elaborations from which it is argued 'racism may be expressed through a variety of coded signifiers' (ibid, p.28).

2.4 Urban Black male youth as crime metaphor

An over-arching coloniality and ethnocentrism in seen to have shaped Western sociology and anthropology (Smith 1990, Vidich and Layman) which despite a major influence on the development of criminology thinking (Agozino 2003) race and crime is seen to be under-theorised in some ways but over-theorised in others (Holdaway1997). Within this, British criminological discourse has in no small part been influenced by ideas from the U.S. (Tierney 1996) where '[s}ince the colonial era, race and crime in America has been intrinsically linked; there has been a belief that minorities, especially Blacks, are more criminal (Gabbidon and Taylor Greene 2005, p.ix).

Early British criminological thinking is found to be as rooted in classical and positivistic ideas that are seen to support medico-legal and practical needs of the penal system (Garland 1988) in ways that relate academic research to the policy concerns of government. Positivism as scientific method is found to provide theoretical resources, structured arguments, concepts and evidence that allowing criminology to establish what is seem as 'positions[33]' (Garland 1985, p.122) which although not always explicit imbues state intervention with 'a social engineering capability'.

It is further argued 'the connection between biology and crime has its roots in Europe' (Gabbidon 2010, p.9) to connect race and crime through a biological determinism[34]. Although positivist criminology is widely critiqued (Garland 1985, Cohen 1988, Taylor

[33] Garland argues a common theoretical structure as emerging from three 'positions': differentiation and individualisation, pathology and correctionalism, and finally interventionism and statism.

[34] Ideas connected to Cesare Lombroso, acknowledged many as the father of criminology, who argued distinguishable physical characteristics and their measurement as the basis for classifying human being into atavistic categories which provide the basis for a hierarchy of races and separation of criminals from non-criminals and ensures

et al, Roshier 1989, Reiner 1988, Rock 1988) the origins of British criminology[35] is seen however by one of its founding fathers, Leon Radzinowicz, as rooted in 'the pragmatic position' (Radzinowicz 1966, P.128), with Hermann Mannheim (1960) similarly seeing it linked to ' the "founding fathers" and their "scientific mission"' (quoted in Garland 1985, p.110. Original emphasis) and what is described as an 'institutionally based, medico-legal criminology which predominated in Britain for much of the nineteenth century and first half of the twentieth century…'(Garland 2002, p.32). The pragmatic positivist foundation is nonetheless seen as problematic. Failure in psychology and biological determinism as scientific method to successfully treat or as a cure for criminality. Shortcoming in judicial punishment as punishment (Weiner 1990) by the 1950s led to fundamental questions about the veracity of positivist absolutionism at the core of establishment orthodoxy (Young 1988) and to what was eventually seen as 'aetiological crisis' (Young 1994) and need for alternative explanations of crime/ criminality. Broader postmodern challenges (Lyotard 1984) by the 1960s to fundamentally challenge previous taken for positivist assumptions. Mills (1959) idea of the *sociological imagination, questioning* the extent to which individual experience links to grand theory is developed in Jock Young's augment for a 'criminological imagination' that critiques the *abstracted empiricism* created by the 'bogus of positivism' (Young 2011).

This growing critique gives rise to what John Tierney describes as a 'hopscotch of sometimes frenetic ideas that grew out of wild possibilities of the new deviancy' (Tierney 1996, p.127), developed new understandings of deviance and crime through an array of critical and radical perspectives. He argues that these culminate in the 1960s with a 'break with orthodoxy' and emergence of British *cultural diversity theory* which draws from phenomenology, interactionism, ethnomethodology and labelling theory to develop new perspective on convention ideas about race and 'crime'. This is seen as a *reorientation* of positivism in 'what might be called the sceptical revolution on criminology and the sociology of deviance' (Cohen 1973 p. 12. Original emphasis quoted in Tierney 1996, p.127).

[35] Stan Cohen recognises that the first British criminologist, Charles Goring who trained as a doctor was 'totally pragmatic' but moreover the first major figures were not sociologists but 'Radzinowicz (legal), Gruhut (legal), Manneheim (legal training and later psychiatric and especially sociological interest)' (Cohen 1966, P. 128).

This break with orthodoxy would fundamentally affect criminology's relationship with what is seen an 'establishment approach to crime' (Young 1994, P.91). What is argued a paradigm shift[36] is seen by Garland (2002) as a transformation in criminological knowledge production from a 'Lombrosian project' to a 'government project' related to practical criminal justice administrative concerns. It furthermore marked by a transition from 'modernity to late modernity', involving change to a cluster of social, economic and cultural factors change but most crucially 'the reorganization of class (and, in the USA) race) relations' (Garland and Sparks 2000, p.15). Despite acknowledging how race is connected to the 'undeserving underclass' through anti-welfare policy and neo-liberal politics, further criminological analysis disappointedly fails to be developed.

However, specific debate on race in mainstream British criminology during the 1960s and 70s fails to gain any substantial foothold where research and theory examination is mostly subsumed in wider debate about social class and race relations. An exception to this in the 1980s is the account given to culture, ideology and politics in the work of the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) and highly influential Policing the Crisis (Hall et al 1978). Crucial within radical debates is the emergence of realist criminology perspectives on race which are most fully articulated in the article *The Race and Crime Debate* (Lea and Young 2008) that is criticised as an 'capitulation to the weight of racist logic' so as to promulgate the 'myth of black criminality' (Gilroy 1982), whereby:

> 'The emphasis on black culture legitimates the idea that any black, all blacks, are somehow contaminated by the alien predisposition top crime which is reproduced in their distinctive cultures…. Young and Lea do little more than reproduce this pathology in polite social democratic rhetoric. (Gilroy 1987. P.112-113)

[36] Young (1988) argues that conditions for a successful paradigm shift in the social sciences include: 1) a clear empirical problems or anomaly in the dominant paradigm 2) material support for the adherents of the new paradigm to enter the field 3) there is a material problems for those in power (i.e. of policy) to which the new paradigm offers a solution 4) there is a political and culturally conducive context for the emergence of the new paradigm (Young 1988, p. 166)

Radical and critical perspectives are however developed by Barbara Hudson who links new deviancy theory to race and crime through *administrative criminology*[37]. This draws on a modernism that remains synonymous with the political priorities of an establishment approach that draws from positivistic ideas in support of a penal approach to criminal justice which engage:

> 'in applied research aimed at primarily assisting criminal justice and penal system professionals in policy development and decision-making. Its objective are effectiveness and efficiency, and closer match of practice to policy, rather than any grand theorising.' (Hudson 1993, p.5-6)

Since the 1980s administrative criminology has become the cornerstone of an 'establishment approach to crime' (Young 1994, p.91) seen in the 'pragmatic, interdisciplinary, correctional, reformist and positivist' (Clarke and Cornish 1983, p.12) situational and crime prevention focus of the Home Office[38]. Despite the break with orthodoxy and new deviancy perspectives of crime, mainstream orthodox views were 'not influenced by the paradigm shift away from positivist criminology' (Hudson 1993. P.2) but instead a persistence of positivism in the logic of statistical modelling and 'techno-speak' of quantitative techniques. This results in a 'fake scientificity'' which Jock Young observes as 'a considerable shift back to positivism… once seemingly intellectually defeated, has crept back to the centre stage of syllabus and research agenda' Young 2011, P.20) representations of this kind is seen to create the black disproportionality in UK crime figures (Kalunta-Crumpton 2006, House of Commons Home Affairs Committee 2007). Moreover, in relation to race and crime, Hudson (1993) argues no demise or diminution of positivist or mainstream administration criminological thinking 'but it continues' (Hudson 1993, p.3). Roshier (1989) takes a similar view of mainstream criminology, arguing that it remains largely unaffected by the postmodern changes which reject the positivist assumptions underpinning classical criminology administrative criminology. The adherence to an establishment orthodoxy

[37] The concept of an administrative criminology was originally proposed by Vold (1958) as a means of linking theory from classical criminology to positivist ideas that developed in the latter half of the eighteenth century as part of a legal system for effectively controlling crime and official response to fears about maintaining law and order.

[38] See Clarke 1980, 1992; Clarke and Cornish 1983; Cornish and Clarke 1986; Clarke and Mayhew 1980

is seen as ‘a poor thing – anti-theoretical, unrelated to wider social context and depoliticised’ (Rosher1989, p.67) which is argues to be a *postclassical criminology*.

We find therefore *contemporary criminology* is maintaining its relationship with politics to form a mainstream ‘criminological enterprise’ which supports social control, providing the instrument for implementing the political priorities of the state (Bottoms 1987). While Garland (1985) highlights the limitations of the positivist and realist *theoretical frameworks* (Garland and Sparks 2000) go on to observe the detrimental effect that the persistence of empirical-postivism on ‘the formative, hegemonic discourse for the first two-thirds of this century’ (Garland and Sparks 2000, p.189) in failing to account for the multi-faceted postmodern and post structural realities of contemporary culture.

This criminological reversion to empiric-based positivism allows a ‘penal regression’ (Radzinowicz 1991) and is a return to earlier ideas that inhibits conceptual development allowing a mechanistic ‘top down’ approach within contemporary administrative criminology. For Bottoms (1987) expansion of market forces in the public sector, signals a rolling-back of welfarism that directly impacts criminal justice that creates a ‘new model of crime control’. Since the 1980s the narrowed scope is seen as marginalising certain types of perspective in a ‘new pragmatism’ (Jefferson and Shapland 1994). Governmentality (Foucault 1991) creates social and political processes for governing crime, which shift criminal justice measures from *corporal* punishment to bureaucratic system of regulation and discipline, making imprisonment part of a *carceral* model of criminal justice (Foucault 1977). Governmentality marks an important shift in state administration in which new forms of governance makes *governing possible without government*, to form new models of crime control (Bottoms 1987) through a *crime control complex*[39] (Garland 2001). Therefore, a *culture of control* (Garland 2001) provides a practical mechanism for state action through criminal justice policy/ practice; the political focus on guiding rather than forcible management is seen as the new function of the *regulatory state* (Braithwaite 2000). These mechanisms of

[39] Garland (2001) argues that ‘social, economic and cultural changes’ plus ‘political realignments and policy initiatives that developed in response to these changes’ act as what he calls *transformative forces* that replace modernist conception of crime control with a new *crime control complex.*

indirect approach is moreover seen to have direct implications for race and crime, giving rise to the *racial state* (Goldberg 2002).

The literature shows important ways in which political concerns in the post-War period helped shape official policy as an instrument of government action that in the decades which followed, links ideas on race and crime in ways that have had direct implications for Black male youth from deprived inner-city areas. Hence, throughout the 1960s, in response to young blacks progressive portrayal as a problem group, tactics for the 'policing of immigrant areas' (Lambert 1970) is accompanied by increasing allegations of prejudice and use of excessive force. Research moreover points to how this is exacerbated by deprived social conditions and points to a 'hard core' of young people (John 1970, p.20) who are placed at the forefront of a breakdown in police-community relations (John 1970, Hunte 1966, Lambert 1970). This is seen to forms the core of subsequent debates about black criminality and police response to address problems of crime in poor black communities (Ellis and McLaughlin 1991, Rowe 2004, Crowther 2000). However, despite warning in a 1969 Select Committee report on the 'dangers of particularisation', that see problems associated with black youth as the result of 'race' or 'discrimination' (Solomos 1988, p.76). This is furthermore seen to parallel the official U.S. approach in the late 1960 and 1970s for tackling perceived increased street crime. The ideas of 'mugging' is argued to be a constructed form of visceral law-breaking, intended to provoke an emotive public response that can be symbolically linked to black youth in order to legitimise a law-and-order agenda that has specific and disproportionate implications for policing race and crime (Scheingold 1991).

Critically, the 1973 Select Committee report on Race Relation and Immigration is seen as having a pivotal role in associating problems of race and crime to urban black male youth. Findings from political debates on policing and relations with black immigrant communities provides what Solomos asserts as the first example of a narrowing in official concerns which starts a process of racialisation, seen as:

> 'the first coherent official statement on the inter-relationship between race, crime and policing. Young blacks were a central issue in the deliberations and conclusions of the Committee, since it was the younger generation who were both

popularly and official seen as the ‘source of the problem’’ (Solomos 1998, p.96. Original emphasis)

Official Britain government action it is argued, for tackling mugging/ street crime during the early 1970s[40] thus ‘represents perhaps the clearest example of how the politicisation of the issue came about’ (Solomos 1988, p.99) that further demonstrates a syncretism between politics, legislation and policy/ practice that disproportionately affects young blacks (Demuth 1978). It moreover is seen to create ‘the moment of the mugger’ (Hall et al 1978, p.293) to folk devils for a moral panic that is claimed to make the ‘street’ synonymous with criminal black youth so as to detract attention from a wider social, economic and political crisis. Hall et al. (1978) however draws attention to a wider crisis to argue ‘[t]he reaction to ‘’mugging’’…. is and continues to be one of the forms is which this critical ‘’crisis of hegemony’’ makes itself manifest’ (Ibid: 217. Original emphasis). Black youth criminality becomes therefore a social construction providing political scapegoats as a mean of legitimating a law-and-order agenda and the policing of black communities to symbolically demonstrate control of a social crisis. Political action aimed at tackling street crime thus becomes the teleological devise of an official approach to race and crime in which policing is a *signifying practice* (Hall 1997), where:

‘the term ‘mugging’ and ‘black crime’ are now virtually synonymous… though ‘mugging’ was continually shadowed by the theme of race and crime, this link was rarely made explicit. This is no longer the case. The two are indissolubly linked: each term references the other in both the official and public consciousness.’ (Hall et al, 1978, p.217)

The 1973 Select Committee report is also seen as playing a key role in constructing an official link between race, crime and urban Black male youth in helping to identify what disparagingly has been described as collective ‘objective qualities’ (John 1981. P.155) which introduces the idea of fixed attributes for guiding police action and other

[40] This called on Section 4 of the Vagrancy Act 1824, referred to as the ‘sus law’ to provided policy and operational basis for stop and search as a policing tactic, extending legal powers to apprehend any person who was ‘reasonably suspected’ of criminal involvement, particularly in possession of stolen goods.

policy interventions based on race. This period however also sees a defiance from the second generation of immigrants to experiences of racism and social exclusion, which is seen to come through the Rastafarian movement (Cashmore 1979, Garrison 1979), represented symbolically through the 'red gold and green' colours of the Ethiopian flag. More pertinently, subsequent debate on race-crime, public order and policing (Jefferson 1993) focus on 'the notion that the 'Dreadlock' minority of black youth was the source of the problem' (Solomos 1988, p.114) and more insidious black criminality connected to organised crime and extreme violence of 'Yardies'[41]. This is typified in a highly criticised study which describes:

> ' a particular group –some 200 youths of West Indian origin or descent who have taken on the appearance of followers of the Rastafarian faith ….Many of the couple of hundred ''hard core'' dreadlocks who now form a criminalised sub-culture in the area live in squats. Almost all are unemployed. And apart from the specific crimes for which they are responsible, they constantly threaten the peace of individual citizens … making the police task both difficult and dangerous, since every police contact with them involves the risk of confrontation or violence.' (Brown 1977, p.3. Original emphasis)

In response to mounting demonisation, this second generation is seen as drawing on 'the discrimination faced by their generation and boldly use it as an expression of their cultural identity' (Chambers 2017, p.52) forging a unique black-British culture as a rection to 'society's prejudice, racism and ignorance … beginning in the 1940's and running through several decades.' (Chambers 2017, p.88). Hence, the distinctive style and dress of 'rude boys' (Hebdige 1976) and hustling' which 'makes up for all the intrinsic and extrinsic deprivation of work;' (Pryce 1979, p.68) offer alternative subcultural perspective to the criminological problem youth narrative which provided a means through which:

[41] Small (1995) provides a typical early example of popular notions about organised Jamaican gangs, international drug-dealing and a culture of violence see to affect 'rude boy' urban youth

> ‘common sense images of violence and disorder during the 1970s fed into policy debates about the growth of a ‘violent society’ and the need to respond to this trend with the strengthening of the police.’ (Solomos 1988, p.183)

During the 1980s urban black male youth continued occupying popular concerns about law, order and public safety to make ‘the police on the ground suspect all black youngsters, and particularly those who congregated in groups’ (Solomos 1988, p.109). In many inner city areas the notion of the ‘Front Line’ becomes a metonymy for the strained relationship between policing practice and community reaction to it, the resulting ‘confrontation between the police and young blacks, particular in many of the most deprived inner-city areas‘ (Solomos 1988, p. 179) which for Solomos came to be seen as a ‘social time bomb’. Hence, police action through Operation Swamp by the Metropolitan police and use of the ‘sus’ law to target stop and search to address street crime, provides an example of over-policing and unfair discrimination (Demuth 1978) that Solomos uses to illustrate later breakdowns in public order.

Further, government action carried out through policy institutions such as the police is seen as attempts ‘to cope with [how] social problems often contradict, as well as reflect, the beliefs used to rationalise such action’ (Edelman 1977, p.19) and is criticised for being merely symbolic. This type of symbolic political action would continue to agitate confrontation with Black youth and culminate eventually in street protests across the country in what is popularly described as the 1981 urban riots[42]. These would however create concerns about a permanent urban underclass in Britain, to spark fears about race riots similar to those seen in the U.S during the 1960s (Button 1978) and threated the safety and security of ‘law abiding and peaceful country’. For these reasons, commentators view the riots as imbued with symbolic meaning in which Brixton and black male youth are seen as representative of a disorderly criminal minority in deprived urban areas.

In the 1990s, a ‘new racism’ (Barker 1981) begins to shape understandings of the link between race and crime, where we now find not only obscured meanings of race but

[42] Detailed analysis and comment are provided by Keith (1993), Benyon and Solomos (1987), Scarman (1981), Benyon (1984), Cowell et. al (1982), Waddington (2007.

diminution in the importance of racism, particularly in the political approach to urban black male youth. Characterised by a syncretism in cultural and ethnic differentiation, it is the product of a complex form of *cultural racism* which in contemporary urban settings produce a new kind of cultural politics (Gilroy 1993) to produce 'complexities of theorising racism in the 1990s' (Solomos and Back 1996, p.17). As the outcome of 'changing dynamics' (Solomos 1993, p.233) in the racialisation of politics 'complex interactions and linkages between the institutions of the state and wider set of social relations within which they exist' (ibid, p.18) make possible what for Solomos is a 'new morphology of racism'. Describing how this give rise to the 'criminal areas' which define the everyday concerns of policing, he goes on to observe the:

> 'convergence of concerns about race, crime and the 'ghetto areas' onto the category of black youth thus involved a combination of images which linked particular areas to specific types of crime, and these crimes to specific categories of the local population. The definition of 'criminal areas' in everyday police practices thus gained a clear racial dimension... (Solomos 1988, p.100)

Official government action hence takes the form of 'plural and complex forms' that is no longer directed to simply addressing race as a fixed objective problem social category but is now 'expressed through coded signifiers' or what is described as *metonymic elaborations* (Solomos and Back 1996, p.27). This is can be now seen to disproportionately affect urban black male youth through a notion of what is argued to be the 'criminal other'[43] (Keith 1993). Ideas about race and crime in relation to urban black male youth is therefore characterised by a failure to adequately account for 'the status of cultural forms and …. the nature of ethnicity in metropolitan settings' (Solomos and Back 1996, p.17) making political action of government a symbolic representation or signifier of the black criminal other as an object of social control (Williams and Clarke 2018).

[43] Michael Keith (1993) asserts that constructions of 'the criminal other' change with time to vilify and provide the practical means of criminalisation, making Black male youth 'the pimp in the 1950s, activists in the 1960s, muggers in the 1970s, rioters in the 1980s and yardies of the 1990s

Conclusion

This review has examined ideas and debates from the literature on how explanations of youth behaviour has been used to construct the U.K. gang. More specifically in examining the thesis' research question, it examines the implications of race and ethnicity in relation to the official approach to tackling problems of perceived youth crime by giving special focus to urban black male youth. It builds a critical examination of 'the U.K. gang' by highlighting the limitation of U.S. research to examine weaknesses from conflating a narrow range of criminological ideas and political priories. It goes on explore debates within the British academy on race and crime, to show the limited ways in which some ideas have had only a limited impact on the official approach to the gang. The resulting under-theorisation it is argued has had significant adverse implications for urban black male youth.

The review explores how the U.K. gang as an academic-policy construction draws on common sense notions about the dangerousness of 'problem youth' to highlight how these intersect taken for granted idea on race and crime. It importantly shows how academic ideas rationalise the current official gang legislative policy and practice but fails to adequately account for how group behaviour is different to the gang, global context of youth crime and assumed connection to adult organised crime. It then crucially argues that the current conceptualisation of the U.K. gang substantively departs from the British academic subcultural traditions for understanding youth behaviour to outline key debates from the youth culture and street activity discourse. This is historically contextualised by tracing the roots of ideas about race and crime, by revising the work of John Solomos and considering how these connect to official policy as a form of pollical action by government. It finally examines how ideas from criminology have come to form part of a race and crime orthodoxy, allowing the construction of urban black male youth as a crime metaphor in the extant U.K. gang legislative policy-practice approach.

Chapter 3.0 Methodology

Introduction

This chapter examines autoethnography as the principal technique in a methodology that explores the thesis' research question by systematically selected publication in relation to a record of my everyday lived experiences from a personal journal. This seeks to account for a lived reality of race and crime and an authentic means of reflexively re-examining findings and conclusions from my research on U.K. gang policy/practice with special relevance to the behaviour of urban black male youth. Autoethnography is therefore examined as am appropriate methodology for testing the thesis' research question that explores U.K. gang policy-practice as a construction, expressing a taken-for-granted link between an idea of race and crime that has direct implications for the behaviour of urban black male youth.

This section starts by setting out reasons for its suitability before exploring in 3.2 debates on the purpose of autoethnography. The following section examines its nature and rationale as a research technique, with special attention to reflexivity as a means of developing authentic qualitative insight on grounded everyday lived experience. Section 3.4 is a description of the research procedure, describing the methodological considerations and practical steps taken in carrying out the autoethnographic analysis before going on to provide a legislative and policy context to the seven selected publications used for the study. This section ends by briefly describing the aims and principal findings of each, drawing particular attention to issues of race, crime and the U.K. gang.

3.1 The suitability of autoethnographic methodology

Autoethnography In recent years has gained methodological credibility as a research technique (Hayano 1979) by which to account for individual subjectivity (Ellis and Flaherty 1992) and making this distinct from the meanings which others attach to their personal reality that 'focuses on cultural analysis and interpretation' (Chang 2008 p.

10). It was seen as providing the thesis with a methodology that could tackle the personal tensions produced by dichotomies between my everyday lived experience and my professional research knowledge of race and crime through a process of inquiry which was able:

> 'to describe and systematically analyse (graphy) personal experience (auto) in order to understand cultural experience (ethno)' it becomes both 'process and outcome' (Ellis, Adams and Boucher 2010, p.1)

These three essential features would provide a systematic means of giving an account of my personal *everyday* social reality (Douglous 1970), which furthermore built on what is seen as 'individual lived experience' (Van Maanen 1995, p.32) to examine the selected publications in relation to *naturalistic events* (Lincoln and Guba 1985). In this way the methodology provided an opportunity to move the thesis' research process away from the problems of an *unproblematic scientism* or 'the belief that science is seen as the only form of legitimate knowledge which is to be applied and which unproblematically claims to be the judge of all alternatives' (May2011 p.3). Thus, uncritical support of a positivist and empirical version of the social reality through essentialist and deterministic assumptions is seen to contort the scientific method in ways that distort understanding of the social world.

In this way, the public policy issues addressed in the selected publications become abstracted from my first-hand experience. This allows ideas on race and crime which relate to U.K. gang policy/practice to be rooted in a positivism, to possess a universal external 'pre-given' objective reality that is independent of social interaction, subjective meaning or interpretations that are negotiated during social interaction. The U.K. gang is a reified representation or social construction (Spector and Kitsuse 1977) of race and crime in which my professional research activity turns toward an external social world that is largely separated from my experience of it.

Autoethnography therefore provides this thesis a means of addressing what I perceive as a disconnect between my common-place real world reality and my professional research activity, which has acted to divide my personal experience in ways that have

separated the subject and object (Etherington 2004). This bifurcation has made my personal, everyday lived experience into the subject of inquiry and, as its object, urban black male youth in relation to U.K. gang policy/practice. The autoethnographic process would provide an individual means of making sense of the personal tensions that arose for the taken-for-granted acceptance of the findings and conclusions from my published research becoming different to, placed outside of and separated from my everyday lived experience of race and crime.

The thesis would thus allow a process of inquiry and mode of knowledge production that reconciled the dichotomy between the knower and the known, directly tackling the dyadic 'self' and 'other'. The methodology provided a way for the policy issues addressed through my selected publications to no longer be part of an external objective reality but reconnected to and reflective of me/my lived reality. This allowed the thesis to move examination of U.K. gang policy/practice as it related to race and crime beyond representations there were based in a constructed social category that is argued to form part of 'realist tales' (Van Manen 1988) and which is premised in a notion of 'otherness'.

3.2 The autoethnographic purpose and process

Autoethnography is a form of ethnographic inquiry that allows links between subjectivity and social structures (see Geertz 1973, Ellis and Flaherty 1992), forming the basis for a process of social inquiry that joins personal autobiography with ethnographic study (see Ellis 2004, Russel 1998, Reed-Danahay 1997, Denzin 1989), and which allows my personal insight on U.K. gang policy/practice to be examined in a wider social and cultural context. This confers the thesis' research procedure with methodological relevance by making 'the self as both subject and object of study – as both knower and known' (Jewell 2006, p.63), enabling the view and experience which I have as an individual to become part of 'process and outcome' (Ellis, Adams and Boucher 2010). Autoethnographic practice possesses what is seen as a 'double sense' being 'part auto or self and part ethno or culture. It is also something different from

both of them, greater than its parts' (Ellis 2004, p. 32) In conjoining representations of everyday experience to a more expansive, socio-cultural reality to:

> 'negotiate notions of self and other, while simultaneously reifying the split by insisting on a representational identity as separate from both autobiography and ethnography' (Jewett 2006, p. 59)

Dismissing what is argued to as 'the fallacy of self/other, individual/social dichotomies' (Sparkes 2002), autoethnography is regarded as a 'new ethnography' (Ellis and Bocher 1996, p.18) that methodologically overlaps autobiography and ethnography (see Ellis 2004, Russel 1998, Reed-Danahay 1997, Denzin 1989). The assertion is that it allows research to achieve what is also seen as 'shortening the distance' (Ellis 2004 p3), thereby endowing the thesis with a methodology that addresses postmodern tensions in social science inquiry that questioned essentialist and foundational ideas that reject positivist orthodoxy (Latour 1993, Eistadter and Henry 1995). In recent decades, what is widely regarded as part of the 'cultural turn' (see Alexander 1990), various debates in anthropology, sociology, criminology and ethnography break down former divisions between the researcher-researched, subject-object, self-other, emic-etic, micro-macro, agency-structure.

Now established as a widely accepted research methodology (Pensoneau-Conway et al 2017), it allows the thesis to draw on self-narrative as a source of credible 'personal memory data' (Chang 2008) and a means for developing an understanding of an external cultural reality through a 'research approach that privileges the individual' (Muncey, 2010, p.2). The interpretation of everyday experience is evidence that provides the data for lived reality (Ellis and Boucher 2000) and makes the experience of self-reflection the focus of the research process (Chang, 2006; Denzin, 1997; Ellis, 2004) through what is called 'reflexive self-awareness' (Muncey 2010, 16).

Reflexivity is an important consequence of a postmodernism research crisis (May and Perry 2011, Steier 1991) that resists positivist claims about social reality as 'objective' facts (Schon 1987) to recognise instead that ideographic and subjective interpretation and individuals' social interactions bring meaning to an external world. Reflexivity has

thus become a key component to the research process (Etherington 2004) and to be an integral part of what is seen as systemic research practice (Simon and Chard 2014) that helps explore criminological themes (Lumsden and Winter 2014). Notably, despite its widespread application, the literature provides no examples of reflexivity being used to examine race and crime.

For Hertz (1997) autoethnography provides what is described as a 'a form of expression' or 'voice' about lived experience and living a moment. It enables subject and object to be brought together to allow experience to become knowledge as 'statements that provide insight on the working of the social world *and* insight on how that knowledge came into existence' (Hertz 1997, p.viii. Original emphasis). Arguing that 'reflexivity encompassed voice, but voice focuses upon the process of representation', personal experiences are the essential source of situated meaning from '[d]rawing upon self-knowledge as a central source of data' (Hertz 1997, pxii). Therefore, for Hertz, it is self-knowledge based in a personal reality, 'particularly if what we are studying we have also experienced' that provides the 'scholarly basis for understanding social life' (Hertz, 1007, p.xiii).

Furthermore, an autoethnographic voice provides a crucial means through which to address issues that ordinarily fall outside of normative mainstream concerns, thus offering the potential to tackle matters of exclusion, power and inequality by 'opening the way to a more radical consciousness of self in facing the political dimension of fieldwork and construction knowledge' (Callaway 1992, p.33 quoted in Hertz 1997, p.viii). Hence autoethnographic self-knowledge is primary data offering the opportunity to 'push the boundaries of prescribed ways of conducting social research' through what Hertz describes as 'experimental representation' (Hertz 1997, p.xii). As part of the thesis' methodology, voice teleologically corroborates grounded, everyday lived experience in which the research process becomes a series of 'experiments', in which any prior or assumed knowledge is reflexively recirculated, providing *reflexive interpretation* that is recursively reformulated to form wider meaning (Alversson and Skiodberg 2009).

Seen in this way, the practice of autoethnography gives an opportunity to what is described as 'anti-conquest' modes of representation (Pratt 1992) acting as a source of representation and transformational politics (Holt 2003). This draws into question existing constructions of social reality (Ellison and Ellis 2008) to confront dominant representation and power as forms of critique and resistance (Neumann 1996, Ellis and Boucher 1996), and to feed a politics committed to creating space for dialogue and debate. It thus acts to both instigate and shape social change (Holman Jones 2005), moving beyond a normative positivism to explicitly address wider 'issues of value, ideology, power, desire, sexism, racism, domination, repression and control' (Denzin and Lincoln 2000, p.18).

Personal experience provides the basis for examining gang policy/practice in an external world that connects the private to the cultural. This enables the focus to be placed on 'the voice of the insider' (Reed-Donahay 1997, p.3), collapsing the boundary between the subjective and objective to make it possible for personal narrative, self-stories, vignettes and personal accounts to reflect individual meaning and interpreted experience (Ellis and Bocher 2000). Links are thus created with an outside world so as to 'transcend everyday conceptions of selfhood and social life' (Reed- Danahay, 1997, p. 4) though 'that places the self within a social context…', which they go on to claim 'places the story of his or her life within a story of the social context in which it occurs' (Reed-Danahay 1997, p.9). This combination of personal narrative and ethnographic study is described elsewhere as:

> 'genre of writing and research that displays multiple layers of consciousness…Back and forth autoethnographers gaze: first they look through an ethnographic wide angle lens, focusing outward on social and cultural aspects of their personal experience; then they look inward, exposing a vulnerable self that is moved by and may move through, refract, and resist cultural interpretations.' (Ellis 2004, p. 37)

The exact nature and definition of autoethnography presents huge challenges, and a debate on what falls within the rubric of its method and practice is contested (c.f. Denzin 2006, Holman Jones 2005, Ellis and Boucher 2006, Anderson 2006). We can, however, distinguish two distinctive approaches, generally accepted as *evocative* and

analytic. It is claimed that the primary purpose of evocative autoethnography is to establish empathy and evoke emotional responses that communicate a message to others (c.f. Ellis 2009, 2004; Ellis & Bochner 2006, 1996; Bochner & Ellis (2002). This is made possible through a range of writing practises or what is called 'sociopoetic' (Ellis & Bochner, 1996) which is seen as allowing development of 'new forms of autoethnographic texts … such as performative, artistic, and poetic' (Ellis & Bochner, 2006, p. 435). Representation, however, can also be achieved through 'performance autoethnography', acting as an embodied methodological praxis (Spry 2011).

On the other hand, analytic autoethnography[44] seeks to move beyond the evocative to theoretically locate the ideographic through being 'committed to an analytic agenda focused on improving theoretical understandings of broader social phenomena' (p. 375), and, moreover, add to the 'spiralling refinement, elaboration, extension, and revision of theoretical understanding '(Anderson 2006, p. 388). However, while an evocative approach accepts an analytical 'commitment to developing theoretical understandings of broader social phenomena' (Ellis and Boucher 2006, p.437), it is criticised as causing those who read the ethnography 'to become a detached spectator' (ibid, p.431) with the result that the analytics it provided disqualified the research process from being autoethnographical, but rather 'just another form of realist ethnography' (ibid, p.432).

Autoethnographic methodology is also criticised as an exercise in self-obsession that is ethically questionable (Delamont 2007, 2009, 2012). Furthermore, individual experience and personal narratives are seen to generate data insufficiently robust for establishing construct validity, a general lack of scientific rigour rendering it incapable of converting individual experience into any wider reality. The inability to establish external validity ultimately undermines its reliability in ways seen as common to ethnography generally to make it a 'less technically sophisticated' method (Hammersley 1998 p2). Furthermore, accounts of events based on memory abrogates a need for collecting data from field study. This is seen by some commentators as 'lazy'

[44] For Anderson (2006) analytic autoethnography contains four key features: 1) complete member researcher status 2) analytic reflexivity 3) dialogue with informants beyond the self, and 4) commitment to theoretical analysis.

(Delamont 2007, p.2). Its evocative nature is seen as insufficiently analytical, from which a failure in adhering to established scientific procedures results in not establishing correlation between variables, identifying quantifiable indicators or arriving at testable propositions. A focus on individual experience is seen as narcissism and forms of emotionalism and exhibitionism that undermine the established conventions of the scientific method which generate and test theory. Finally, personal accounts give rise to ethical issues of personal disclosure and any failure to comply with established fieldwork practises has traditionally ensured the quality of data, which overall is seen to ultimately undermine its scope for use in social research.

3.3 The nature and rationale for the methodological approach

The thesis' autoethnographic research procedure would allow the thesis to revisit publications from previous research and compare it to entries in a personal journal, comparing the different types of text as what might be generally regarded as 'new sources of qualitative data' (Strauss and Glaser 1967). Although content analysis has conventionally been used to interrogate textual data, what is seen as methodological weaknesses (Bryman and Burgess 1994) soon dismissed it as a fully appropriate tool for intertextual comparison. Examination of existing text becomes a form of self-referencing which does not substantively move the thesis beyond the original public policy administration research orientation. Any consequent data labels generated from a deductive procedure would not account for my lived experience. Conventional test of research validity and reliability do not allow for subjective interpretation or cultural context so as to not move the analysis from describing 'manifest' content (Berelson 1952) so as to answer more insightful 'why' questions by examining 'latent content' (Holsti 1969) or what is said to be the 'meaning that lie beneath the superficial indicators of content' (Bryman 2017, p.284). Finally, emphasising what is measurable gives no opportunity for the reflexivity crucial to accounting for my personal everyday lived experience and building an autoethnographic voice.

Different types of texts and documents are seen as important sources of data for qualitative research (Prior 2003, Grant 2019 have eBooks) with distinctions made

between personal and official documents (Scott 1990 in Bryman). They are widely seen as a way of providing what, for Atkinson and Coffey (2011) refer to as a 'transparent representation' of deeper underlying and social patterns expressed through what term they describe as a 'documentary reality'.

Even though general *qualitative content analysis* is seen to offer 'little technical detail on the procedures associated with data collection and analysis' (Bryman and Burgess 1994, p.9), recent developments have methodologically improved the credible use of text. The inadequate account given to reflexivity and subjective understanding has prompted development of *interpretative content analysis* and *qualitative thematic analysis* (Tonkiss in Searle 2005). Further, *ethnographic content analysis* develops latent content analysis through 'recursive and reflexive movement between concept development-sampling-data collection-data coding-data analysis-interpretation' (Altheide and Schneider 2013, p.26).

Developing an autoethnographic narrative that gave adequate account to my everyday lived experience was seen as unachievable, through either simple abstracted deduction from theoretical ideas or induction from a content analysis. Rather, this could be satisfactorily achieved through a reflexive process of examination in which my personal journal provides a valid data source. Recursive examination of the selected publications would allow exploration of wider theoretical ideas in relation to my lived experience so as to iteratively build new perspectives and contingent ideas on the data as what is described to be *middle-range theory* (Merton 1967). Significantly this was seen to move the thesis' research procedure towards exploration of unseen causal mechanisms or 'retroductive' causes of observed social reality, which account for subjective meaning and individual interpretation in ways expressed through personal language as what Blaikie (2004) agues to be an *abductive* approach.

Reflexivity therefore opens the way for a recursive process to move the thesis' research beyond a single cycle of observation and logico-deduction (see Wallace 1971). It establishes instead two-way links between theoretical ideas and an empirical interrogation of the raw data in a process of *constant comparative analysis* (Glaser and Strauss 1967), comprising iterative cycles (Strass and Corbin 1998). This reflexive

examination would be guided by key discourse on race and crime as a form of 'theoretical sampling' (Glaser and Strauss 1967) that would continue until further iteration provided no substantive new knowledge, thereby reaching the point of what is described as 'theoretical saturation' (Strass and Corbin 1998).

Importantly this recursive process would identify and summarise patterns in the textual data to provide 'labels' for categorising the raw data or 'themes' for its analysis. Thematic analysis, despite its widespread use within the social sciences, is argued to not have 'an identifiable heritage or that has been outlined in terms of a distinctive cluster of techniques' so that 'thematic analysis is an underdeveloped procedure in that there are few specifications for its steps or ingredients' (Bryman 2016, p.584). However, despite largely lacking clear specific procedures, as a distinct research technique it is nonetheless seen to have distinguishable characteristics [45] (Ryan and Bernard 2003) and these are carried out in discrete stages[46] (Braun and Clarke 2006).

Although it is not widely used in autoethnographic research, it is of note that Bryman (2016) argues it provides a powerful practical means of categorising raw data to build codes in ways that directly relate to a research question and to develop theoretical understanding. By drawing extensively on Braun and Clarke (2006), who argue thematic analysis makes it possible 'to describe patterns across qualitative data' (ibid, p.8), Bryman (2016) asserts its merits as a generic qualitative data analysis approach[47].

Thematic analysis intentionally seeks to move the thesis beyond an emotive or evocative autoethnographic account to critically examine U.K. gang legislative policy-practice from a theoretical race and crime perspective. It would accordingly advance a personal level of analysis developed in reflexive grounded knowledge in order to infer

[45] For Ryan and Bernard (2006) thematic content analysis can be compared using six dimensions: (1) appropriateness for data types (2) required labour (3) required expertise (4) stage of analysis (5) number and types of themes to be generated (6) issues of reliability and validity.

[46] Braun and Clarke (2006) suggest six phases: 1) familiarising yourself with your data 2) generating initial codes 3) searching for themes 4) reviewing themes 5) defining and naming themes 6) producing the report

[47] Bryman (2016) suggests thematic analysis as a technique of quantitative data analysis includes: 1) sampling the material to be analysed 2) coding the material 3) elaborating codes into themes 4) evaluating higher order codes/themes 5) examining links and connections 6) Include insights from previous stages

wider ‘generalisability’. Crucially, this moves beyond the specificity of individual experience to give a wider representation of everyday lived experience by accounting for *typicality* (Gomm et al 2000) associated with wider culture to allow the *transferability* of the everyday (Williams 2000, Searle 1999).

3.4 The research procedure

The thesis’ research procedure would seek to develop an autoethnographic narrative describing the tensions between my professional research and my everyday lived experience of race and crime by drawing on selected publications from my body of work and a private journal as sources of textual data. Reflexivity would therefore provide an essential means for testing a research question, exploring U.K. gang policy-practice as a construction that expressed an idea of race and crime that has direct implications for common sense perspectives on the behaviour of urban black male youth.

From the very start of the research procedure, marked differences in the styles, formats and language of the selected publications and my personal journal as forms of textual data, made direct comparison difficult. The published documents were structured and written in a formal style whereas my journals were oftentimes, shall we say, more expressive. It became quickly clear that consistently linking the formal policy/practice language of the selected publication to the vernacular in any of my journals would be problematic.

Content analysis was originally seen as an appropriate, but was quickly seen as not allowing the thesis’ analysis to move beyond the methodological limitations of the original studies Any analysis based in deducted predetermined categories did not allow the data itself, particularly accounts from my personal journal, to satisfactorily inform the knowledge production process and to adherence to conventional methodological replicability would limited accounts to context, cultural and subjective understanding of the raw data. Further limiting the way in which theoretical ideas might recursively guide the formation of new ideas could result in a form of self-referencing that would not take

the thesis' analysis much beyond the public policy administration orientation of the publication's original research.

Developments in qualitative content analysis (Bryman and Burgess 1994) take forward the strengths of *interpretive content analysis* and *qualitative thematic analysis* (Tonkiss 2005) to offer the thesis a way of moving from what is seen the 'manifest content' (Berelson 1952) on the content of the original publication to provide thesis opportunity to uncover 'latent content' (Holsti 1969) on ontological status by giving 'transparent representation' to deeper underlying organisational and social patterns that are expressed through what is termed a 'documentary reality' (Atkinson and Coffey 2011)

This would require 'recursive and reflexive movement between concept development-sampling-data collection-data coding-data analysis-interpretation' (Altheide and Schneider 2013, p.26) through what is regarded as *ethnographic content analysis.* The research procedure developed therefore a grounded approach (Glaser and Strauss 1967) based in my everyday lived experience of race and crime by moving beyond an analytic induction from the findings and content of the original publications to build more directly on the subjective meanings, language and interpreted perspectives of data from my journal through what Blaikie (2007) argues as an *abductive* approach.

Recursive visual examination of the selected publications and journal entries provided the means for intertextual analysis in a reflexive research procedure. This made it possible to identify individual words, or associate headings or phrases in each data source that shared a common meaning in ways that linked to theoretical ideas and concepts from the literary review. What were seen as 'conceptual topics' provided a contingent form of *middle-range theory* (Merton 1967) that in a process of *constant comparative analysis* (Glaser and Strauss 1967) guided further analysis of the raw data and direction of theoretical thinking. This process of constant comparison through a series of iterative cycles (Strass and Corbin 1998) continued until reaching a point where further recursive examination provided no substantive new insight so as to reach what is seen as 'theoretical saturation' (Strass and Corbin 1998).

Emerging patterns from this intertextual analysis also provided a practical way by which to categorise and label the raw data. Developed over a number of iterative cycles data labels and conceptual topics would be rejected outright, merged, or subsumed with another topic or label until reaching a point of satisfactorily describing the text data and where further iteration provided no substantive new theoretical insight. In some instances, topics and labels in this iterative process continued for several weeks. For example, individual and group behaviour in the raw data was described in several ways that included: 'criminal', 'troublesome', 'problematic', 'disruptive', 'feral' and so on, but also more positively as 'compliant', 'accommodating', 'responsive' etc. Links between theoretical ideas and raw data were recursively explored, that in this case for instance balanced Downes' (1966) idea of delinquent solution with Cohen's (1955) status frustration of delinquent boys. Over several weeks descriptive categories/ labels were iteratively refined, to eventually provide 'themes' for analysing the textual raw data. Hence, relevant parts of the selected publications or journal entries referring to any of the above words were categorised under the 'perception/ definition of behaviour' label. Crucially, the recursive process generated four analytical themes[48] for the thesis' intertextual interrogation of the raw data which in turn structured the evidence in chapters 5 and 6.

3.5 Legislative and policy context to the body of work

The selected documents are chosen from a wider body of work comprising applied research and evaluations addressing effective practice and policy implementation in relation to youth crime and justice between 2000 and 2015. In general terms, these examine the ramifications of a restructuring of public welfarism during the 1980s (Clarke and Newman 1997). Politically driven models of public service provision (Pollitt 1990) and introduction of local government reform brought intended change to what is widely referred to as governmentality (McKevitt and Lawton 1994) as a context for new forms of public sector managerialism (Ranson and Stewart 1994) with the specific aim

[48] The four analytical themes used for the thesis intertextual analysis included: a) perception/ definition of behavior b) policy response c) service approach d) practice orientation

of achieving best value through increased competition and optimising efficiency/ effectiveness in public spending from improved performance (Rogers 1990). This moved corporatist strategy away from conventional concerns about youth justice, welfare and causes of offending, to focus instead on the purpose of intervention and management of delinquent behaviour (Pratt 1989). For Parker et al (1987) this has direct implications for the administration of youth justice variously through the creation and control of sentencing 'packages', the centralisation of authority, growth of non-judicial agencies and coordination of policy.

The policy research examined in the selected publications were each directed to exploring implications for race of policy implementation connected to a facet of youth crime and justice legislation. Of particular significance is the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act (CADA) that is widely seen as marking a key departure with an established youth offending orthodoxy, to create a new policy-practice framework in a 'new youth justice' (Goldson 2000). Crucial to the main interest of this thesis in relation to policing, this involves four principal interconnected areas.

The Act firstly draws on previous legislation and policy to emphasise the importance not simply of prevention but evidencing *crime reduction*. This new direction conflates previous political and academic discourse on enforcement/ penalism, situation/ community crime prevention to advance a political and policy pursuit of 'community safety' wherein '[s]topping crime is thus referred to as *preventing* or *reducing* crime, or achieving *community safety'* (Pease 2002, p.948, original emphasis). It therefore secondly advances previous approaches to situational and community crime prevention through a requirement for joint working between service providers[49]. New statutory duties now require collaboration through Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships that would involve local and health authorities, the police and probation services, to deliver prevention programmes that achieve crime reduction and community safety.

[49] This specifically advanced finding and recommendations from the Home Office's 1991 Safer Communities Report, commonly called the Morgan Report.

Thirdly, focus is now most importantly directed to tackling the causes of crime[50], turning now to pre-emptive early intervention that address 'disorder' that is variously expressed as 'nuisance', 'delinquency' or what came to be later defined in law as 'anti-social behaviour'[51]. Critically, drawing on the established 'risk factor prevention paradigm' (Farrington 2000) tackling early risk would predict and prevent delinquency development and criminality. The approach in practice would be delivered by establishing a national framework of local Youth Offending Teams[52] that would devise and submit youth justice plans for approval to a newly formed central Youth Justice Board (YJB) for England and Wales.

Finally, the Act prescribed a new youth crime and disorder administrative infrastructure that provided direct Home Office accountability. Partnership was now required for carrying out ongoing monitoring and evaluation, producing reports to demonstrate not only crime reduction but in line with ideas contained in the 1996 Audit Commission report *Misspent Youth,* requiring that the youth justice system adhere to the principles of value for money through achievement of the three E's (i.e. economy, efficiency and effectiveness). The requirement for an evidence-based approach would mean that three-year local strategies and action plans for crime reduction would be based on the findings from comprehensive local consultation as part of official 'crime audits'. Despite an extensive academic literature on prevention and community safety[53]. Despite what is seen as it direct implications, it is argued there has been only limited research of how the legislation effects the issue of race (Fitzgerald 2001)

Historic tension between the police relation and black minority communities but urban Black male youth in particular (Bowling and Phillips 2003) has in the past has resulted in direct violence and confrontation (Keith 1993) that is at least in part explained by the racialisation of British policing (Holdaway 1996) produced out of their routine

[50] The 1997 No More Excuses White Paper was seen as narrowing the socio-economic causes of crime to factors centered on poor parenting, school exclusion/ truancy and delinquent peer groups (Pitts 2003)

[51] The controversial use of anti-social behaviour orders – frequently referred to as ASBOs – is a civil order that can be made by the police/ local authority on those over 10 years who behaviour is thought likely to cause alarm, distress or harassment as a instrument for controlling low-level disorder and incivility.

[52] Local Youth Offending Teams brought together the different system and service provision of social services, education, health probation and the police.

[53] Comprehensive examination of the key debates is covered in: Gilling (1997), Crawford (1998), Tilley 2005), Hughes (1998), Hughes et al. (2002)

operations and practice (Holdaway 2003). Duties imposed by CADA for joint service planning and delivery are seen as providing a means of addressing breakdowns in policing by consent and creating good police-community relations. This has taken place within a wider context of changing expectations about the police's role and functions, and expectation of public sector organisations to demonstrate value for money and continuous performance improvement. Expanded marketisation/ commercialisation has caused a fragmentation in the policing function to be gradually replaced by a civilianisation, involving a wide range of public and private service providers in delivering the public order and safety agenda. This has seen the emergence of new forms of policing from the modernisation and transformation of its conventional public service role, to produce a hybrid or blended form of 'plural policing' (Crawford 2008).

What is seen as 'new policing' (McLaughlin 2007) and requirements of the Police Reform Act 2002 at the time, introduced important developments[54] which have direct implications for issues important to this thesis. These are an official acknowledgement that '[t]he police service alone cannot tackle the problems of crime. They need the active support and involvement of the communities whom they service' (Home Office 2004). To better reflect the expectations and priorities of local communities, resources and management are devolved to local commanders as a way of responding more effectively to their priorities, so as to set objectives and make changes relevant to the framework in which the police operate. Furthermore, better consultation, broader local representation and public accountability becomes central to achieving strategic priorities and preventing crime. More practically, extension to the 'police family' takes place through the introduction of community support officers, greater powers to accredited special constables and neighbourhood wardens. Meanwhile, the police's legal power to stop and search under Code A of the 1984 Police and Criminal Evidence Act comes under greater scrutiny becoming the sharp end of debates on police-community relations and community policing, to which the discretion powers of

[54] Importantly was the scrutiny into policy malpractice by the Independent Police Complains Commission, introduction of the community support officers, identifying key function and strategies priorities in annual police plans as part of demonstrating increase efficient

individual officers to assess 'reasonable grounds' continued to attract widespread criticism (Bradford 2016)

Bowling and Phillips (2002) propose the police discrimination can be explained fours ways[55] but it was failings in the investigation of the Stephen Lawrence murder in April 1992 and the subsequent 1999 McPherson report that resulted in the monumental finding of 'institutional racism'. This was to raise fundamental challenges to what McLaughlin (2007) identifies as *policing of multi-cultural society* and developing a diversity agenda to address the 'cultural crisis' created by discriminatory management and practices which created so as to eliminate the racist police culture (Rowe 2004).

The final area of legislation providing a policy context to the selected publications is the 2009 Policing and Crime Act that for the first time gives a legal definition of the gang. In years preceding this, politicians and policymakers alike had no standard means or common criteria on which to formulate policy. With no legal definition, the police and criminal justice system engaged common law precedence of 'common purpose' or joint enterprise as the basis for legal action. Being present, giving support to or encouraging a criminal act could result in an individual being charged with the same offence as the main offender and allow all group members to be liable for the main offence but has been found to disproportionately criminalise black male youth (Williams and Clarke 2016).

3.6 The selected publications

Seven publications were selected to represent a cross-section of policy issues investigated and types of applied research/ evaluations carried out between 1999 and 2011. Importantly, each was chosen to examine different aspects of effective practice and policy related to gangs and serious youth violence and had implications for race and crime which were directly relevant to urban black male youth.

[55] According to Bowling and Phillips (2002) the four thesis that help explain discrimination in policing are: 1) the 'bad apple' thesis 2) the 'reflection of society' thesis 3) the 'canteen culture' thesis 4) the 'institution racism' thesis.

Publication 1. Policing for London (2002)

The study was commissioned in 1999 with joint funding from three separate Foundations, the study was a collaboration between London South Bank University and the London School of Economics. In light of the far-reaching implications of the MacPherson Report's (1993) findings on 'institutional racism' in the Metropolitan Police Service, the study would revisit the *Police and People in London* research by the Policy Studies Institute[56]. Its research had two principal parts. The first was a London-wide survey based on a random sample of about 2,800 respondents that was to complement the 2000 British Crime Survey by providing a range of comparative statistics. This would be used alongside qualitative findings from four case study areas selected for statistics on their socioeconomic, demographic and crime profile.

I was part of a core team of four researchers but spent most of my time working alongside another research assistant employed to give specialist insight on issues affecting 'the Asian community'. My primary role was to provide research assistance and advise on race issues pertinent to the African-Caribbean community. Although much of my time was used for administration and organising meetings, I had direct responsibility for arranging four public focus groups and nine focus groups with Year 11 pupils and interviewing key informants from statutory and community organisations that had regular contact with the police. Other more rewarding activities included observation in a custody suite, a car and foot patrols, front counter of police stations and a drug raid that provided opportunities to talk informally, see first-hand how policing is carried out and their interactions with the public.

After general background and context, key report finding focuses on public concerns, needs and wants to show that 'ethnicity' is linked to higher levels of anxiety about a range of different crimes[57] but also intrusive police tactics, stop and search in particular, seen as undermining trust and cooperation. Moreover, some young people

[56] Findings from the research was set out across four reports giving the results from a public survey, an examination of the police in action and most pertinent to the thesis research, a qualitative study of black youth experience of the police (see Smith 1983) .

[57] Finding show black, Indian and Pakistani/ Bangladeshi respondent as having higher levels of anxiety about female rape, mugging, burglar and race attacks comparted to those who are white.

expressed concerns about a sense of 'threat' in relation to those from other particular geographic areas. Further, black males are pointed out as more likely to be stopped on foot or in a car by the police and are over-represented in the increase of those that have been stopped more than once. Reaction to police contacts showed young black people as most likely to be annoyed with their contact with the police. As a consequence, those who are poor, young, from an ethnic background or a deprived area have a lower rating and less confidence in the police. Negative labelling by the police is found as important to how the public and police perceive each other and therefore police-community relations and creates the potential for confrontation in ethnically diverse areas.

Publication 2. Street Crime in Southwark: a hotspot analysis (2003)

Commissioned by the Drug Action Team as part of the borough's 2003 crime audit and action plan, the study examines patterns of street crime connected to both illicit drug markets and use by dependents in a geographic area surrounding a borough 'hotspot'. The location was seen by the police and local authority's community safety team as at the epicentre of drug dealing and a thriving local illicit market. Growing public concerns prompted the community safety partnership to commission research that would help devise strategies for addressing the problem.

The study was a collaboration with another independent consultant, for which I was directly responsible for all aspects of the research design, carrying out fieldwork and producing the report apart from information related to drug treatment. The study used a mixed method approach bringing together survey and interview data. Findings came from two separate surveys, the first was carried out in the hotspot area sampling a total of 101 local residents with the second involving 31 local business proprietors. Survey findings were supplemented by two focus groups with drug using offenders and drug workers from a local agency and analysis of 3,975 street crime offences from 2001/ 2002 Metropolitan Police statistics.

The large BME population (30% with the African-Caribbean community as the largest group) which experienced high levels of deprivation provided relevant context to the

study. Results show that most of the street crime involved robbery of personal property (71%) with snatch theft comprising the rest: most is found to happen in and around Elephant and Castle followed by Peckham, particularly in an area west of Rye Lane. The majority (39%) took place between 19:00 and 24:00 although a significant 35% were between 13:00 and 18:00 hours and were more or less evenly spread across each day of the week. Slightly higher numbers taking place in the autumn (29%) and winter months (27%). Most of those charged with street crime offences were male (88%) of which 82% had a median age of 17 years, notably, 64% were younger than 17 years and 76% were from what was described as the black community. A total of 3% of recorded crimes were drug related (i.e. supply, possession or other) with National Arrest Referral Monitoring Data showing the majority were white (81%) recidivists with high offending rates who were heroin, crack and cannabis users.

Shopkeepers considered there to be too few beat offices which contributed to a slow response to dealing with street crime but importantly felt that the police generally targeted the 'wrong areas' (such as failing to tackle local gun crime and concentrating on race relations). Most local residents saw drug use (88% of respondents) and drug selling/markets (83%) as serious local problems but also there was a strong association between street crime and drug use in the area (80%). Most viewed the perpetrators of street crime to be local (74%) and that it was linked to drug users (52%) but also gangs (21%) and were being carried out by young adults (42%) with most being white (50%) rather than black (20%). This caused many of them to have concerns about their personal safety (71%). Hence, hotspot crime was seen as driven by opportunism and dependency of white young adult drug users linked to 'a semi-open drug market' that was increasingly operated through gang and intimidation. Hence, common sense links were made between dependent drug use and street robbery. Stop and search was seen as an ineffective, heavy-handed way of dealing with drug using offenders.

Publication 3. A study of serious violence conflict among African-Caribbean youth in Nottingham (2003)

In response to a growing number of incidents and homicides from firearms offences, with funding from the Home Office's Active Communities Unit, a local community organisation commissioning research to better understand serious conflict among African-Caribbean youth in Nottingham. The study would focus on the parts of the city with established African-Caribbean communities and involve a collaboration between a number of stakeholders including the police, local authority and youth offending. It would address what was thought to be drug related shootings between 'gangs' and would seek to develop a better understanding of the root causes and help develop community-based solutions to the problem.

Importantly, the study's approach would seek to avoid the types of negative stereotypes often attached to black youth while developing an in-depth, rounded picture on the circumstances surrounding the increasing number of serious violent incidents. To do this, the research methodology would capture the experiences first-hand and accounts of the local community and young people on the nature and cause of the events, allowing the everyday language and situated knowledge of local people and other service stakeholders to be at the forefront of study's findings. The report also included a review of the academic literature on gangs and youth crime and examined local crime statistics and relevant policy.

In practice, much of the fieldwork was carried out through observing and sometimes contributing to community meetings and in-depth personal interviews with a wide range of statutory sector and community stakeholders, that included the police, teachers, youth workers, probation and youth offending. Critically, emphasis would be given to speaking directly with black male youth as a way of developing more direct insight on those who might be exposed to or involved with drug dealing or serious violence. With access initially provided by the community and service providers, these took the form of semi structured and unstructured interviews activity with an intended ethnographic focus and observations of youth activity and music sessions of a local D.J. Fieldwork was concentrated in an intended 'immersive' four-month period.

The study found high levels of social/ economic deprivation and effort to regenerate part of the city provided important context to the local black community and voluntary/ community action within it which had for many years provided not only a range local

services but proactively worked to prevent drug-related crime that was seen to cause much of the territorial conflict and gang shootings. Although seen as a serious and growing problem, young people (generally those between 12 and 19 years) were not seen to be at the main cause of the problem but those who were older and had a powerful local influence. From this, distinctions were made between 'economic' and 'peer' gangs although there was some evidence for progression between them through 'precursory gangs'.

The economic activity of gangs was not only characterised by criminal activity but accompanied by varying types and levels of drug market involvement which in turn directly determined exposure to serious violence conflict. Importantly, these different types of involvement distinguished different roles and levels of gang involvement, showing that any typical group would contain those who are leaders and followers but also others that were influencers, as well as crucially showing the participation of young females. A scope of national initiatives highlighted the importance of community involvement in a partnership approach to youth offending and sustained problem-orientated diversions over a prolonged period.

Publication 4. The Group Offending of Young People: a national study of gang activity and youth involvement with weapons and violent crime. Source report (2006)

This publication and the next resulted from a commercial tender from the Youth Justice Board (YJB) for England and Wales for research to identify types of gangs/ group offending and their involvement with violence, weapons and wider gun-related offending. The study would examine related risk factors but also describe the availability of criminal justice and other early intervention/ prevention programmes and identify opportunities/ barriers to effective policy and practice. This source report provided data findings and initial comments that were used to inform the YJB official publication called *groups, gangs and weapons*.

The successful tender proposed a mixed method research approach in which existing crime data, a survey of YOT provision would be triangulated with qualitative findings from in-depth interviews/ focus groups (involving young people, parents/ carers and

practitioners) and an in-depth ethnographic study of a group of young people. The research would be carried out in four sample areas containing a representative mix of deprivation, ethnic composition and size to include a metropolitan area, a large to medium sized city, a smaller city or town and suburban locations with proximity to the countryside. The methodology would give emphasis to developing an understanding of gangs and violence from the perspectives of young people and those working directly with 'gangs' so as to adequately account for the local conditions and circumstances which may cause young people's involvement in group crime or delinquency. From the outset therefore, taken for granted assumptions about 'gang' were seen as restrictive and personal correspondence clarifying the contractual terms for the study therefore argues:

> 'I remain unconvinced of any approach that will dispose the study to preconceptions about what "gangs" are or where they are found. It is an area of policy that is at present dominated by the subjective judgements, anecdotes and professional opinion that if allowed to dominate our approach are likely to result in serious bias and distortions to the study' (Personal correspondence 8.3.2004)

It is instead suggested that the study should move beyond requirements of the original tender, for the research to be based on 'case studies' of areas with high incidents of 'gangs' and include the 'collation of national YOT and police data on the extent of gun-related offences.' Further, highlighting the implications of this in relation to race this personal correspondence also observes:

> 'If we fail to move beyond examining known gang activity, the study's findings could suffer from taking us little further than what we already know and provide little new insight to the complex causes, character and processes effecting increased gang activity. The proposed methodology seeks to objectively ascertain the conditions associated with gang activity and then let the facts speak for themselves. Failure to do this is a form of cherry picking that … is likely to open the study to justifiable criticism. (Op. cit)

In Addition to being the main contractor with responsibility for the study's overall design, I was directly responsible for carrying out in-depth personal interviews with a

group of 16 young people known to the local YOT but in building a rounded picture, also with a majority of their parents/ guardians and professionals working with them. Moreover, as a way of developing a more detailed picture was built from an ethnographic study of a core group of eight young people and their friendships/ relationships with a wider group of twenty to give 'views from the streets'. The research was designed for this to shape other parts of and inform the questions used elsewhere. It proved impossible to secure support for this qualitative focus, my consternation expressed again in personal correspondence with the comment 'sample size is not a precondition to validity in qualitative research'.

A key finding of the source report was social networks contain different types of friendships/ relationships, simultaneously involving what might be seen as gang and non-gang members and who are influenced by patterns of leisure activity and exposure to involvement in deviance/ crime that vary in seriousness and persistence. Everyday behaviour was contingent upon situational factors involving personal circumstances, the local environment and local services. Although many had easy access to drugs and violence, an atmosphere of aggression provided a constant backdrop to everyday routines, but the activities of the young people studied was not sufficiently structured, organised and included involvement with serious or persistent crime to be defined as a gang. At best, group delinquency for a small number of individuals would position them in social networks at the margins of adult dominated serious organised gang activity.

Publication 5. Groups, gangs and weapons. The official publication (2007)

The official publication draws on evidence from the source document, addressing concerns about the violent group activity of young people and what is stated to be 'a lack of hard evidence' which identifies underlying factors and trends so as to consider the implications for policy and practice. It reviews statistical evidence on youth violence and weapons, including gangs, guns and knife statistics, findings from the survey of YOT and practitioner personal interviews in the five case study areas[58] before

[58] The characteristic for these case study areas are given in Appendix A

summarising findings on the collective offending of young men and young women and the gang.

The source report departs from the qualitative focus of the source report in several important ways. Failing to interrogate patterns in violence/ weapons against a detailed analysis of socio-economic conditions, decontextualises the result of the report in important ways which ignore key causation influences relevant to YJB policy and service planning. It, as a result, provides limited detailed insight on how 'gang' activity relates to more specific everyday local social conditions highlighted in the original research methodology so as to not go far enough in exploring important issues such as unemployment and school exclusion. It finally draws on data about collective offending of young men to make inferences about youth involvement with 'gangs' not intended in the source report. For example, the group offending of young men was seen as related to school behaviour, family members and local crime in ways by which '[g]roup offending – including gang related offending – often grew out of relationships between young people from early childhood…' (YJB, 2007, p.133).

Publication 6. Life on a knife edge: a community-based approach to preventing gang and the wasted potential of Black boys (2010)

Research for this publication was the result of an evaluation of services provided by a small community-based charity[59]. This was mostly a desk-based exercise examining the pupil records but also included a number of more interesting in-person interviews with the young people and observing supplementary education classes provided by the organisation after school and on Saturdays. This more granular assessment was eye-opening and was something closer to the research that I wanted to do. This all took place in a run-down community building, but the atmosphere was nothing like the

[59] The report called 'An evaluation of Eastside Young Leaders' Academy' was an internal document completed in 2006 examining the impact of a community-based youth leadership programme on the academic achievement, school engagement and general behaviour of 52 black boys. Findings showed the greatest impact was on educational achievement and school engagement. Those with the worst behavioural problems and the poorest academic achievement when admitted tended to perform better than their peers and those with less severe problems.

pupil referral units or alternative provision with which many of the ‘problematic’ black boys were familiar. Many were on the verge of or had been excluded from school (some since an early age had by now been permanently excluded from several schools) while others had contact with the youth offending system, with several seen as involved with drug-dealing and gangs. It was in many ways more disciplined than a normal mainstream school but was in some ways more informal. It was surprising to find little of the deviance, disruptive behaviour or noise that might be expected in any of the sessions that could contain 25 or more pupils. In fact, apart from boisterous and youthful exuberance during some activities, like sporting activity, the building was mostly eerily quiet when working in their classes.

However, it was while formally presenting the findings of this evaluation at a meeting attended by the organisation’s staff, its Board of Trustees and parents that the CEO and founder asked a question that would eventually result in the research on which this report is based. With no intended hostility he inquired ‘but how do we know for sure that it is making a difference … how can we keep on improving what we do so that we can help other boys?’ This prompted a successful funding application and an eighteen-month research project that was to spill over into ongoing community involvement over a three-year period.

The research allowed a fully immersive ethnographic approach through the use of participative action research as a way of looking in detail at how the organisation’s interventions practically supported the educational underachievement of black boys as a way of preventing their involvement in gang activity. The fieldwork involved working as a member of staff and carrying out a range of office duties, but as a result of having Qualified Teacher Status with classroom experience, I actively prepared and taught lessons, and provided one-to-one learning support for the organisation but also as a classroom learning assistant with pupils’ return to mainstream school. The research also included learning from making a large number of home visits, formal meetings with other service providers, collecting pupils from school/ accompanying them home or devising special activities/ programmes. These provided a wide range of opportunities to observe interaction and form relationships as a way of understanding friendship networks and the wider influences on behaviour.

The study provided an opportunity to draw together ideas from previous studies to clarify and provide greater insight on the 'problem behaviour' that commonly characterised black male youth that commonly connected them to youth crime and gangs. Importantly, it highlighted the importance of 'low level disruptions' that in a school setting grew into broader deviance and rule-breaking to become cycles of increasingly negative, disruptive behaviour. The community-based interventions studied were found to successfully instigate cycles of positive intervention to frequently circumvent the status many young people were found to gain from interactions and friendship groups which increased exposure to gang activity. Particularly important were the friendships and social encounters taking place at margins of alternative criminal cultures and provided the epicentre of core gang activity. It crucially highlighted different types of youth exposure to marginal gang involvement[60] and effective intervention would depend on adequate accounting for their specific needs and vulnerabilities.

Publication 7. What' a gang and what's race got to do with it? Runnymede Trust (2011)

The Eastside study was followed by parallel community activism and consultancy contracts, in a period in which I completed additional research/ evaluation and published reports.. Ongoing discussions with community service providers encouraged greater collaboration and joint action, resulting in an international community conference,[61] examined innovative community-based interventions with black male youth, gangs and violence. This included a public launch of the Eastside research report. Recommendations from the day's events were subsequently taken forward in

[60] The report identified three principal types of 'marginal- youth vulnerability to serious organised criminal activity: a) eyes wide open who willingness engaged in gang criminality of status and economic gain b) the calculators who make calculated risks but as too clever to get too involved and c) the status gainers who want only to be associated with and gain protection or status but have no direct involvement in crime or violence.

[61] The collaboration led forming the organisation *Capital Men* that organised on the 24.6.2010 organised the "Young Drifting and Black" conference that included speakers from the University of Virginia and Johns Hopkins University in the USA and attended by the Mayor of London, senior police and GLA community safety officials and included a video link with the Police Commissioner for Baltimore, USA.

discussions with the Greater London Authority to from part of a subsequent London-wide intervention programme[62].

The policy focus of my research, in emphasising practical service developments, helps detract from making connections to theoretical ideas or wider examples of effective practice found within the academic literary or wider policy debates. As a result, much of my research therefore failed to address the gathering speed of academic debates on the U.K. gang, its links to policy/ practice but also their implications for race and black male youth. This paper for the Runnymede Trust[63] directly addressed through a critical examination of politics, policy and practice of race in relation to gang violence and urban black male youth. It argues that an inadequate theorisation of race and crime has allowed politics priorities and realist criminology to pathologise and essentialise black male youth in ways that link policy to drug dealing and serious violence associated with 'gangs'. Furthermore, ideas about collective problem youth behaviour has given rise to a *three-tier gang typology* and ideas on the notion of *reluctant gangsters* that serve the interests of a 'gang industry' which do little to adequately explain the real cause of contemporary youth violence and the policy/ practice needed to protect vulnerable youth.

By highlighting limitations in the current gang legislation policy and practice, it goes to argue that effective policy-practice must recognise the importance of the friendships which exist in young people's social networks and the contemporary urban road youth culture that produces it. It claims this cannot be achieved through 'the current structurally determinist pre-occupations of policy makers and academics' but will require a move away from a distorted policy agenda geared toward disaffected, at-risk and bad kids. This can only be achieved through an approach to research capable of accounting for the dynamic cultural forces that shape their everyday lived experience,

[62] Ideas from the publication 6, the Eastside knife on a knife edge report, was used to inform a commissioned report for the Greater London Authority entitled 'more than mentoring: a rationale and methodology for targeted action in tacking serious youth violence in London'. Recommendation from this helped rationalize the subsequent Mayor's Mentoring Programme carried out between 2011 and 2014 and Mayor's Leadership Clubs Programme (aka the Supplementary Schools Programme) from 2012 to 2015.

[63] Although co-authored I was responsible for an initial draft of the paper and devising the principal policy/ practice arguments.

the holistic nature of needs and by raising their aspiration in ways which build on the effective practises of Third Sector agencies working within communities.

Conclusions

This chapter has set out a rationale and described a research procedure for an autoethnographic methodology, showing how reflexivity would be used in a qualitative intertextual analysis of seven selected publications and accounts of my everyday lived experience of race and crime from a personal journal. This it has argued this will allow the thesis to build an autoethnographic narrative giving voice to a view of policy and practice that has a central focus on the policy-practice implications for issues of race and crime. Moreover, in testing the thesis' research question it develops a critical perspective on the taken for granted views about youth behaviour that are used to rationalise U.K. gang legislative policy-practice. Additionally, developing analytical themes which are recursively informed by theoretical debates within criminological gang discourse, it is furthermore seen to provide the opportunity to consider wider academic informed political and policy debates which have implications for service intervention that target urban black male youth.

Chapter 4.0 Youth behaviour, race and 'gangs': policy implications of contrasting perspectives

Introduction

Entries from a personal journal is used in this chapter to re-examine findings/ conclusions from selected publications which are used as forms of textual data in order to test thesis' research question looking at U.K. gang policy-practice as a construction expressing an idea of race and crime which have direct implications for urban black male youth. More specifically, it draws on my everyday lived experience of race and crime, to critically examine the ways in which official views on 'problem youth' behaviour is used to support an official idea of the gang and connected scaled punitive/ corrective youth policy approach.

This section begins with an examination of two early publications which are seen as typical examples of research that I had carried out for large statutory sector bodies and illustrate key feature of an official policy/ practice approach to the behaviour of urban black male youth. Section 5.2 begins by highlighting ways in which their behaviour is seen as problematic and how some recommended policy/ practice developments is found to encourage a particular official youth justice approach. However, this goes on to examine how entries from my personal journal reflect evidence presented in some of the other selected publications to offer alternative perspectives on race and crime and the policy/ practice implications for black youth. Section 5.3 goes on to considers how the idea of problematic youth behaviour is found to fit in a formulation of the 'gang', but by drawing on contrasting evidence from YJB source and official reports, starts to develop alternative understanding of youth behaviour. Section 5.4 continues this by revisiting the original data to consider how friendships as a means of understanding youth behaviour offer an alternative to the gang.

4.1 Getting to grips with perceptions of race and crime

The street crime in Southwark and policing for London studies, are examples of work carried out for large statutory bodies that is typical of my public administration policy

research. Their main aims were to explore the effectiveness of policy implementation, with a view to addressing issue of race, both are found to do this in markedly different ways. While the policing for London report publication 1 explicitly seeks to improve policing services and concludes '[t]he legacy of discrimination and over-policing continue to overshadow the service's relation with black people' (policing for London report, p.xxiii) it fails to spell out and give specific detail on what this means for practical policy and improved practice. For example, noting the higher incidence of stop and search among young black people, it gives no detailed comment or specific recommendations for improving contact with the black male youth in deprived, inner-city areas, where many of the problems exist, but merely concludes that 'stop and search can undermine trust and cooperation, especially among young black people and ethnic minorities' (ibid, p.48). Also, on other key issues such as contact with the public, community relations and confidence in the police, its conclusions and policy recommendations are similarly obtuse, making only general reference to 'ethnic minorities', 'young people' or 'the community' and so fail in any detail to address specific concerns about race and crime that may be associated with black male youth.

As my work on this study was to assist the senior researchers most entries to my journal were comments on completing practical tasks. Some however began to show signs of frustration on how far the study looked at race. Ruminating on the practical challenge of organising public focus groups, I commented on how I was 'unclear on what is this the best way of hearing from the local community and hearing from those with first-hand experience'. Another comment expressed doubts about the involvement of senior researcher in fieldwork I had organised. Another entry described how the insistence of 'a white researcher' to remain in the classroom made a group interview with a group of year 9 black boys awkward with the result that they were less willing to speak openly. This is seen to express a frustration, which despite being brought into the research team to provide community contact, I had little, real influence, which is again reflected in an extract from personal records:

> 'Team leader A to do interviews with police and run focus groups but Ian and Asian researcher to observe these focus groups also' (Team meeting minutes 5.5.02. Actual names apart from author are anonymised)

The Southwark street crime report publication 2, would contribute to the local authority crime audit as part of its duty to produce a crime and disorder reduction strategy. The study was commissioned amid widespread concerns about the involvement of local black male youth in drug dealing. The contract however failed to specifically mention the need to specifically explore issues of race. The final report nevertheless found that 'black offenders accounted for the vast majority (76%) of those arrested and charged for street crime offences in the borough' (p.4) noting in relation to reported street crime that 'almost two-thirds (335) of the whole sample were under 17 years old and the vast majority (76%) of those arrested and charged were black' (p.5). Additionally, a respondent's comment from qualitative interviews also reveals local residents' changed perceptions on those who control the local drug market:

> "They are not local people nor born in this country and they come here to make money…all drug dealers are Black, it is very hard to find a White dealer" (Southwark street crime report Publication 2, p.37)

Another respondent also expressed concerns about growing tensions and local conflicts among those selling drugs due to the increasing organisation in the drug market through gangs that are believed to have tighter control on the trafficking and street retail supply:

> "They (new dealers) have the market organised and sorted. They have their own mule over carrying their gear, the supply, outlet, everything sown up. They're bringing in 'posses'…. and bring in a 'Don' from whatever area they come from". (Southwark street crime report Publication 2, p.37. Original emphasis)

Although the research explicitly finds race and crime as an issue of concern, the publication fails to reach specific conclusions or make policy/ practice recommendations with regard to this. Findings from these early studies have obvious implications for black male youth, but their conclusions and recommendations fail to advance any progressive policy or practice developments.

Reflexive examination of these early studies helped me to highlight their shortcomings as partly the outcome from wider issues of race that personally affected me. Although the policing for London report directly addresses race it fails to go far enough in developing an in-depth analysis, I simply felt grateful for the opportunity to be involved in a high-profile project and working with established white academics gave a rare career opportunity not enjoyed by many black researchers at the time. This gratitude fed a willingness to be obsequious to their greater research knowledge and in retrospect I did what I thought necessary to fit in and not rock the boat. The Southwark report by contrast, makes only a single oblique reference to race, connected to a need for more work with drug-using offenders and the 'cultural differences of ethnic groups' (p.48) forming part of what Solomos (1989) regards as 'coded' ways of speaking about the urban problems of young black people . Despite having overall control of the study, keen competition for local authority contracts, meant that to stand any chance of securing future work required not doing anything to make work more difficult for council officers, elected members or other key representatives from local organisations. This included highlighting any difficult or controversial issue that might be attached to race.

The Nottingham report publication 3, in retrospect is seen as a direct reaction to frustrations arising from earlier studies. From research commissioned by a community organisation it begins to outline an understanding of serious violence among African-Caribbean youth based in the view of local people and the young people themselves. For the first time it provides me with a degree of independence to develop the research in ways that 'allows people to explain their everyday experiences in their own terms' (Nottingham report, p.11). My formal research proposal therefore argued a community-based perspective on race and crime as the credible context from which the serious violent crimes of young African-Caribbean youth is:

> 'best understood through an appreciation of the values and meaning that they themselves generate but it is favourable to understand these as they are generated and unfold in a specific context.' (Research proposal from personal records. December 2002)

Although speaking directly with local people, consulting service providers, in-depth case studies and participant observations provided a new depth of much of my thinking

remained aligned to common-sense, mainstream views of youth behaviour and its relationship to race/ crime and gangs. Personal notes about emerging data from my own work concurs with research findings from a Home Office, multi-agency initiative (see Bullock and Tilley 2002, Shropshire and McFarquhar,2002) that found '[g]ang involvement is most frequently associated with young men' and that 'much of this (gun-related incidents) is related to drug and gang related activities'. In line with this, the final report asserts that:

> 'Gang related criminal activity is seen as widespread in our target area and across the city. Gangs are involved in a wide range of other crimes that include any profitable activity such as car and street crime, burglary, shoplifting, fraud and selling stolen goods' (Nottingham report, p.4)

A view of youth behaviour based in everyday local experience therefore became the start of new ideas that, in significant ways, departed from emerging policy and academic explanations of the gang. In this way, the report was able to make distinctions between 'economic gangs' as business units that operate in crime markets and 'peer gangs' which result from the informal leisure and recreational activity of friends similar to those identified by Downes (1963). Additionally, between this polemic are 'precursory gangs' whose increasingly deviant activity increases their formal structure. These initial ideas on youth behaviour and their implications for race, crime and formulation of the U.K. gang for urban black male youth would become a major recurring theme of my subsequent research.

The issue of race and crime in relation to gang legislation policy and practice is seen as coming into sharp focus following what an entry from my journal describes as 'truly horrible and terrifying'. The tragic deaths of best friends Letisha Shakespeare and Carleen Ellis from a shooting at a New Year's party in 2003 profoundly affected me in ways that sharpened my personal convictions and research interests. Gangs and serious violence were suddenly no longer something that happened far away - it involved people like me, those that I knew and happened in communities not dissimilar to my own. Amid a 35% rise in gun crime, as reported in the Daily Telegraph, on January 11th of that year saw the first ever gang summit at Downing Street. It started

a government consultation with community representatives[64] to bring race and crime to the forefront of political discourse regarding legislation, policy and practice.

Continued freelance work and contact with a national network of community organisations, allowed ongoing participation in debates about youth violence and a series of short articles developing ideas from the original research[65]. A key theme was the limitations of policy that was premised on an idea of the gang and the importance of alternative ways of understanding youth behaviour as a way for effectively tackling serious violence they were set out in a series of newspaper articles, conference paper and public events[66]. Importantly, this included an invitation to contribute on a panel debate about youth crime and violence at the 2003 YJB national convention that would eventually result in a contract for a national study.

4.2 Problematised black male youth: from policy to practice

Limitations of a public administration policy research when addressing race in the early selected publications are seen to have direct policy/ practice implications for urban black male youth, their generic approach or restrictive analysis, obfuscating deeper concerns in which a 'hard core' (John 1970) is taken to represent concerns about a mythical essentialised black criminality in which:

[64] As part of a continuing collaboration with community organisations and, in preparation for this, personal correspondence on 6.6.03 to the CEO of the community think-tank Race on the Agenda outlines what it describes as a 'few key issues arising from our recent research', in particular those which highlight a need 'for diversionary and preventative work in Black and Minority ethnic communities, particularly among Black youth'.

[65] This included providing a series of short articles that included: 1) Drugs and gangs: community participation. ARVAC Bulletin, No.90. October 2003; 2) Anti-social behaviour: a gateway to crime? Race on the Agenda. Crime and Disorder Supplement, issue 22, October 2003

[66] In this period many wider ideas and findings from data were discussed in a variety of press articles and conference presentations including: 1) 'Criminal captains of commerce, The Guardian Newspaper 20.6. 2003; 2) 'Into the underworld' Regeneration and Renewal 4.6.2003; 3) 'Young people, community and group crime' presentation to Bearhunt Youth and Crime Conference 26.2.2004; 4) 'Youth work approaches to gang culture' presentation to Nation Youth Agency conference 25.11.2003; 5) Findings from a national study of violence connected to gangs and youth crime to QMW public policy seminar 2.10.03

> ‘The emphasis on black culture legitimates the idea that any black, all blacks, are somehow contaminated by the alien predisposition to crime which is reproduced in their distinctive cultures’ (Gilroy 1987. P.112-113)

Consequently, black male youth in the urban context becomes the interface between official action and common-sense ideas on race and crime, evidencing what for Solomos (1989) is a government mechanism that operationalises racism through the politics of public policy and service practice supported by a ‘mainstream criminology’ (Hudson 1993). For these reasons Agozino (2003) argues that this type of criminology as representing form of colonialism that has acted to shape modern definitions of crime and justice to provide what a foundation for knowledge in the social sciences (Smith 1999).

The YJB official report identifies education as a key area of policy development important to black youth, in which their over-representation in the number of unauthorised absences is seen as a significant contributing factor to gang involvement. To address this is goes on to not only suggest ‘[s]chools need good links with the police and be willing to share information’ (Official publication, p.173) but moreover asserts a greater need for an enlarged poling role. It hence proposed that change to the policing role in schools is key to early prevention, asserting that ‘[p]olice searches are one of the most important ways of discovering offensive weapons’ (Official publication, p.174) but also arguing the need for better intelligence and greater use of technology, such as search pens or wands, to effectively tackle knife crime.

The approach of these interventions illustrates an official strategic approach[67] aimed at ‘breaking the cycle’ of gang-related offending that we shall also later see, places youth behaviour along a continuum, containing levels of increasing serious deviance and criminality that signifies growing risk. These levels provide the basis of a scaled youth justice framework. Crucially, urban black male youth are attributed with the most problematic or criminal behaviour and therefore assigned to the most serious risk category which attracts the most severe or punitive interventions. The official report

[67] This strategy specifically sought to build on a public health model idea of crime prevention (see Brantingham and Faust 1976) which suggests three levels of intervention based on corresponding primary, secondary and tertiary prevention.

also argues these ‘risk factors’ give service providers practical policy and practice tools for ‘addressing the stages leading up’ so as to allow the early detection and prevention of gang involvement, such as through providing appropriate leisure facilities and extra support to parents/ foster parents and care home staff.

This approach was to feed mounting questions about the purpose of the policy research I carried out and its links to politics, which at the time I found to reflect academic debates about the failures of positivist-based knowledge production. This period saw not only policy studies on youth involvement in gun crime (Bullock and Tilley 2002) but also research examining ‘gangs’ in the U.K. (Bennett and Holloway 2004). At the same time, qualitative research allowed contingent multivocality (Mizzi 2010) that was seen to provide greater representation to the lived experience of the socially marginalised (Denzin and Lincoln 2011). The Nottingham study is therefore reflexively seen as a personal attempt to address weaknesses in my earlier research, in ways that is now seen to have had an important influence on the direction of my later work.

The study’s largely qualitative approach specifically examines violent conflict between African-Caribbean youth, starting a process in which, my research begins to critically examine academic and policy ideas. However, although we have seen how it makes widespread use of the term to generally agree with the idea of the ‘gang’, but drawing on debates within the literature and how young people and other residents’ describe a common problem of ‘drug-related gang warfare’ the report notes: ‘[w]e found the label “gang” to be inappropriate to many types of young people’s collectives we encountered …many young people and the African-Caribbean community more generally, did not identify with the label’ (Nottingham report, p.6). Moreover, although violent crime was a major concern to local people, respondents made clear distinctions about how it related to the experiences of drug-related gang warfare, with a respondent observing:

> “ Not every one of them (gangs) is shooting up each other over drugs. Some of dem do though. Some of the young people dem jus bored have nowhere to go and so make a nuisance of themselves on the street. Dem can get up to wrong-

doing, but mostly is not anything serious, dem mostly just cause noise". Adult focus group participant. (Nottingham report, p.38).

Crucially, data suggested marked differences between a range of anti-social rule breaking and criminality activity of young people and adult organised crime in what was seen as self-sustaining alternative economy. It went to note how young people were either users or most commonly only 'small scale dealer' which despite creating exposure, produced very different types of danger to illicit drug activity for which it observes:

'Young people that become involved with gang related drug activity normally do so through transporting small amounts … normally as 'runners' … can expose them to greater risk of detention by law enforcement agencies and potential violence with other gangs.' (Nottingham report, p.45)

Street sales produce a type of public visibility that can cause direct for violent conflict between young people that a young person explained in the following way:

"It make you a target for another click (street term for gang), They might see you walking and think you are repping (representing your gang) on their turf, checking some girl or poaching customers (a reference to drugs)". Teenage male respondent. Brackets added. (Nottingham report, p.44).

These kinds of insight are also crucial in pointing to important distinctions made between different forms/ level of criminal activity which make those who are involved with low level dealing distinct from who were described as 'a few older dealers' who could carry substantial local status and influence:

"the big man them and look up to them cos they would be dress crisp, have a nice ride and carry respect. You wanted to be like him … when you young and hanging with your click and he ask you to do him a favour and drop something off, you glad. You get big up and he give you ready cash". Male respondent, 19 years old. (Nottingham report, p.44).

The study also showed these older individuals as being at the centre of social networks and controlling a range of legitimate and illegitimate activity. Therefor in relation to the gang, it goes on to make important distinctions between what it calls ‘leaders, followers and influencers’ of group activity by also discriminating between those who are at the ‘core’ as opposed to the ‘margins’ who only have only an indirect involvement with crime through friends or relatives. In making these distinctions it argues that social deprivation as well as economic gain/ profit are important motivations for crime:

> “Its like once you’re in the ghetto there is no way out, they, the system makes sure of that. They give you just enough to get by and expect you to be happy with your little Giro money. The only way to survive, to save your mind and get some respect is to do a little ting. Its what most man deal with when all they want to offer you is little shit jobs for shit money”. Male respondent 20 years old. (Nottingham report , p.50).

Similarly, another respondent described how:

> ‘Well me now, when I see them robbing and shooting, I know it is cos the little benefits can’t feed you and your youths and keep them in trainers and buy all them games and things the youngsters want these days. Not when you see other man doing a little dis and dat and making ends meet them ways. Few man want to rob and steal really, but if you have no choice what can you do?’ Male respondent aged 17 years old. (Nottingham report, p.50).

However, despite finding what is identified as a type of everyday criminal enterprise (Hobbs 2008) respondent made clear distinction with the serious organised crime connected to violent gang activity:

> ‘Yes I do a little (supplying drugs), it’s easy money, but there is no way I would shoot somebody, that for them big time criminals.’ Male respondent aged 17 years. (Nottingham report, p.51).

Additionally, the study not only found that gun related drug crime as having direct implications for black male youth but that this also increased the vulnerability and involvement of girls and young women, highlighting how:

> ‘The number of girls becoming involved in gang type activities and behaviour was said to be increasing, as is the number of girl-only gangs …. Loyalty to boyfriends or male family members exerts a major influence on young females’ continued involvement in male gang activity’ (Nottingham report, p.7).

By pinpointing a general lack of policy and practice specificity in relation to urban black male youth, a draft consultation version of the final report in critically assessing a generic policy approach to race and crime argues that ‘misaligned interventions and diversionary activities are major driving force behind the growth in gang related violent crime’. It would exemplify a gap between community-based experience on what the report claims as a ‘bottom up’ as opposed to a ‘top down’ understanding of youth behaviour related to gang, drug crime and serious violence. It is a contrast that would widen and become more clearly defined in subsequent studies.

My thinking on race, crime and black male youth would be expanded in a subsequent report carried out on behalf of the YJB for England and Wales. At the time, there was still no specific gang legislation, little policy/ practice guidance or U.K. academic research with the result that issues of race and crime was still largely overlooked, leading the source report to observe that:

> ‘knowledge about gangs was often imprecise, with uncertainties on their definition and demarcating them from other forms of delinquent group behaviour was found to be widespread. Different organisations within the same local authority area, or even separate partners working collaboratively may understand and apply the term in different ways.’ (YJB source report, p.245)

This perspective would encourage an approach to examining youth behaviour and gangs that would build on young people’ everyday lived experience and give direct account to issues or race and crime. Later sections explore in more detail how this produced important differences in the findings of the source and official reports, with

consequent implications for gang policy practice and urban black male youth. These differences are reflexively seen to find full expression in the Eastside report publication 6 which develops previous ideas to set out alternative explanation of youth behaviour. This crucially moves beyond what had become taken for granted ideas on the gang to specifically examine a community-based approach to preventing gangs and wasted potential of black boys.

The Eastside study, for the first time in my research career, was based on method of investigation that intentionally moved 'toward a typology of the kinds of interventions' that was based in developing 'a deeper understanding the problems associated with the deviant behaviour of black boys' (Eastside report, p.vi). It would go further to resist what had by now become mainstream official gang legislative policy-practice approach to critically examine:

> '[g]angs therefore are something beyond many of the popular characteristics used to define them such as durable street-based groups with a structure, hierarch and leadership – it is virtually impossible to find such things with any consistent accuracy.' (Eastside report publication 6, p. 30).

Although this ethnographic based participative action research would draw on grounded learning to develop alternative perspective on the 'gang' the policy focus in much of my research to this point failed to explore academic ideas on gang policy/ practice and the implication for race. The Runnymede report publication 7 takes this forward by arguing that taken for granted ideas on race and crime intersect academic ideas and political priorities in a way that have direct implications for how gang legislative policy and practice develop coded inferences about urban black male youth. These are moreover argued as promoted through the self-interests of a 'gang industry' that in under-theorising race and crime where an:

> 'unwillingness to explore the road culture, as well as the macro structural, drivers of black youth off ending and victimization, has created a space whereby the right-wing media have continued to dominate (and racialize) the public debate on gangs and urban youth violence; through the sensationalist characterizations of violent

black young gangs fuelled by grime and rap music.' (Runnymede report publication 7 , p.13)

4.3 Youth behaviour as a gang problem

Early research on gangs in the U.K. prior to the YJB study (see Bullock and Tilley 2002, Bennett and Holloway 2004, Shropshire and McFarquhar,2002) give no specific consideration to race and provide no new insight on taken-for-granted views about black criminality and its implications for urban black male youth. In light of this, analysis of the YJB source report and the official publication show how both documents draw from the same raw data to reach at times markedly different conclusions about youth behaviour. Important to this thesis' autoethnography, this parallels key aspects of a personal tension between my everyday lived experience and professional research.

Crucially, we find the source report presenting data in ways that resist conventional views on gangs, especially a popular view based on ideas from the U.S., to suggest these as mostly inadequate for explaining much of the observed youth behaviour, particularly involvement with crime and violence in Britain. In support of this an observation of talk of gang and violent reprisals between two pupils in a pupil referral unit, rather than providing evidence of gang conflict, is instead described in fieldnotes interactive 'derogatory exchanges' which as a consequence of a potential classroom conflict notes:

'Kerim causes disruption by frequently swearing … Raphael, as the bad boy, is now usurped. As a consequence, Raphael quietly gets on with work while Kerim rants … they talk about gangs, who they know and what they can do. Kerim continues to rant and threaten, accusing others in class that no-one backs him up…' (extract from fieldnotes)

Despite the threat of follow up gang violence in class by lunchtime the incident was clearly forgotten and there were no reprisals after school (as was threatened during the classroom exchange). My notes also describe how both were even seen leaving

together at the end of the day. Another journal entry, reflecting on individual and collective youth behaviour rejects the idea that the vast majority of rule-breaking, crime (minor or more serious) or violence can be in any way attributed to what is commonly regarded as the gang. Recognising this a journal entry observes that:

> ‘Gangs is problematically used as a generic term for a collective or group youth activity to generally describe/ explain many different forms of deviance’ (Journal 1, p. 41)

Practitioners, but also young people, use the term ‘gang’ to describe themselves and their behaviour in ways that make different inferences, which can have markedly different and even punitive consequences. Used by practitioners to summarise behaviour in ways that help guide service interventions or policy responses, a typical description of ‘gang’ related conflict included:

> ‘This treatment (harassment, name calling etc) from Young Person 6 (and a close friend of his) in particular is nothing new to the Young Person 5. It emanates from the fact that he has friends from the Gang C area and is often in this area. The two young men are part of what Young Person 5 calls the Gang B which are often involved in altercations, harassment and bullying behaviour with young people from the Gang C and Gang B’ (extract from a young person’s case file)

Many young people interviewed during the original research were aware of the existence of gangs, but many were reluctant to be seen as a member even if they met regularly. Although case studies contained groups that could be called gangs, not all had the same notoriety or were equally involved in crime or anti-social behaviour. In response to being asked about local gangs, a respondent explained:

> ‘round here just about every young person belongs to some group. Some just meet up after school and muck about behind the flats and sometimes get chased by the police. Some have joined or want to join, you know … that gang ….but they aren’t real… they’re just a bunch of wankers’. (Male respondent, age 15)

The original data shows how the understating and use of the term ‘gang’ varies. In the everyday experiences of young people it is used by individuals when referring to others that they know and with whom the socialise, for which some ‘saw gangs as a good thing, a group of friends who would “watch your back” and ‘provide help, advice or money if needed, or providing protection against violence from others’ (source report, p.154). On the other had it was however also used instrumentally in a variety of ways connected to ‘keeping safe’, ‘getting respect’ or ‘earning money’. A young person in describing their own gang involvement explained:

> “it (the gang) provides a way of dealing with life, like making corn (money) but also got you doing things or a reputation that could end up getting you killed” (male ex-gang member, age 17 years)

The official publication acknowledges the difficulties in adequately defining gangs. It notes young peoples’ and practitioners’ resistance to an idea of the gang, to explain how ‘some young people involved in offending would draw distinctions between themselves and gangs proper’ (official publication, p.164) with practitioners ‘concerned about what they saw as the indiscriminate use of the term ‘’gang’’ (ibid, p.8). by arguing that:

> ‘distinguishing between gang-related and more serious forms of group-related offending may, in reality, be less than clear-cut, especially as the gangs, many young people would recognise, may now be far more fluid and amorphous that those classically described’ (official publication, p.164)

As a consequence it therefore concludes:

> ‘Hard and fast distinctions, therefore, are difficult to make and could risk, on the one hand excluding some gangs while, on the other, conferring status on wannabe groups …’ (ibid, p.164)

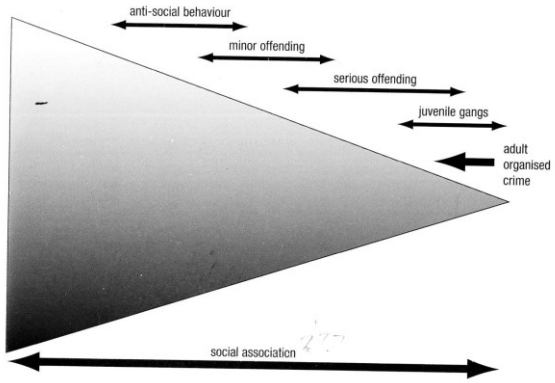
Nonetheless, the official publication goes on to examine the gang, as what it describes as a ‘real thing’, to unequivocally state that ‘juvenile gangs do exist in some urban areas’ (ibid, p.60) but also that:

‘The research evidence from the study suggests that in some urban areas there are examples of youth gangs who use serious violence (and threats) to assert control locally – often in competition with other such groups.’ (ibid, p.14)

It goes on to theoretically locate this assertions through the idea of *social association* that shows strong parallels with Sutherland’s (1939) established theory of differential association. This is used as a means of connecting youth group activity that is ‘purely social’ to varying degrees of serious offending, arguing that ‘[i]t is more appropriate to see group-related offending among adolescence on a continuum…’ (YJB official report, p.164). Although this notion of a continuum in collective youth activity is introduced in the findings of the source report, it is applied differently in the official publication wherein everyday group behaviour is viewed in ways that creates what Muncie (2004) describes the dangerousness of ‘problem youth’. Whereas the source report views the continuum as a means to discriminate between and separate everyday social and leisure activities from serious, persistent crime, it is seen by the official publication to link them. The contrasting interpretations are shown diagrammatically in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Contrasting views on a continuum of youth behaviour

Diagram A. Continuum of youth behaviour



From YJB official report

Diagram B Separation youth leisure and criminal behaviour

From YJB source report

4.4 Friendships as an alternative to gangs

A number of journal entries in exploring debates from the literature, many reflecting on U.S. academic and policy discourse, focus not simply on the gang but group processes which result from social interaction (Short and Strodbeck 1965) and the importance of everyday events (Douglas 1971, Highmore 2002, 2010, Martin 2003m Moran 2005) in shaping behaviour. Instead of distinguishable group characteristics as a way of understanding youth behaviour, the source report instead points to the interactions of mundane events during naturally occurring social episodes. In this way a journal entry comments that 'gangs are an event' (journal 2, p.49). Further, fieldnotes on observed interactions between 'a known gang member' and other young people at a youth club, developing this idea, by noting

> Gang member A spends most of the early part of the evening on the DJ turntables. Others surround the DJ area listening, while he spins discs and raps over the top of records.' (Journal 1, p.19)

Importantly, this notes the behaviour and activity of 'a gang' member is not substantively different to those who are not (see Morash 1983). The source report therefore goes on to note that 'not only did many young people have similar lifestyles but their social patterns evolve along parallel lines' (source report, p149) and goes on to describe how 'they walked home from school together, met at the same places at the same times, knew when others were on holiday, and so on'. For these reasons it asserts that an easy demarcation between gang member and non-gang member is far from clear[68]. Figure x, show an extract from the source report and contrasts gang risk factors for young people who see themselves or are seen by other as either being a gang member or non-gang member.

[68] A comparison of gang members and non-gang members showed individuals from both groups are exposed to risk factors. A summary of this, taken from the source report, is attached as Appendix A

Figure 2. Comparison of personal characterises for gang and non-gang members

Risk factors	Gang member	Non-Gang member
Family		
Poor parental supervision and discipline	No	Yes
Family conflict	No	Yes
Family history of problem behaviour	Yes	Yes
Parental involvement/ attitude condoning problem behaviour	No	No
Low income and poor housing	Yes	Yes
School		
Low achievement beginning in primary school	No	No
Aggressive behaviour including bullying	Yes	No
Lack of commitment including truancy	Yes	Yes
School disorganisation	Yes	Yes
Community		
Disadvantaged neighbourhood	Yes	Yes
Community disorganisation and neglect	Yes	Yes
Availability of drugs	Yes	Yes
Lack of neighbourhood attachment	No	No
Attitudes, friends and peers		
Alienation and lack of social commitment	Conditional	Conditional
Attitudes that condone problem behaviour	Conditional	Conditional
Early involvement in problem behaviour	Yes	Yes
Friends involved in problem behaviour	Yes	Yes

Taken from YJB source report

Assessments from observation and personal interview, show both groups share the majority of risk factor/ characteristics; the do the same kinds of things, share a similar outlooks and have the same sort of background. Notable both are from low income households and share a history of family problems, come from the same communities and have comparable friendship groups. The only significant difference is gang members' propensity to aggressive behaviour or bullying.

Hence, another personal note speculates that 'a primary driver of gang involvement is the connections which happen through family, friends and community' in ways which cause the friendships between individual young people and within their peer networks to form

patterns of what is more broadly seen as group behaviour (Warr 2002) to provide what is common sense understanding of the gang.

The original data also showed that the most significant friendships of those studied, started in early childhood but evolved with age and as individuals developed new relationships. As a result, 'friendship patterns are determined largely by daily routines such as assembling on the way to school, meeting together at lunchtime or breaks, and again in the evening or weekends' (source report, p.150). A conversation with a young person about his friends, everyday events/ activities and their view on gangs described how:

> "We (members of the gang) all grew up together, round here…he (closest friend in gang) moved next door when we were three and since then we have gone to the same schools, bunked off and got chucked out together…Tom and I went to the same primary and secondary school and his brother went to my primary school as did my sister…I've known them years... yes there's a big group of us…(Source report, p.149)

Furthermore, the original data shows how everyday activity is tied to dynamic interpersonal relations and social processes of friendship groups. A detailed case study of these in a group of eight young people, using unstructured interviews and regular observations at a youth club, is diagrammatically set in Figure 2.

Figured 2 Levels of closeness in a group of friends

Taken from source report

In figure 2, each number represents a different individual in the group, showing that number 4 has the highest number of close friends (five in total), number 5 know the fewest number of the group (four in total) and number 1 the greatest number loose of friend with which they have limited contact (five in total). Further, observations while at the youth club, showed individual spent varying amounts of time with others from the group and throughout a session, different individuals almost continuously split off or would re-join others and even on occasions interact with those from other peer groups. Also, informal conversations/ unstructured interviews showed that outside the youth centre different combination of individuals would meet but not as a whole group. Fieldnotes described the observed relationships and interactions 'intricate and often dynamic interplay of positive and negative, individual and group affiliations' (publication 3 source report, p.171). Accordingly, the group did not contain homogeneous friendships, but differing levels of interaction/ contact and varying degrees of 'closeness' between individual members. Hence, peer/ friendship groups can typically contain some individuals that see each other frequently (some friends were together daily) but others who are not close (individual in our case study only met others at the youth club) to most often contain a mix of close as well as loose friendships.

Observations and in-depth conversations with young people about their friends and those which they had 'beef'[69] showed that while some friendships developed over weeks, months and could last for years others were highly transient. In this way, breakdown in friendships and conflicting allegiance to different friendship groups were found as important to what is commonly seen as gang involvement and violence. A young person in attempting to describe the connect between friendship/relationship and two separate 'gangs' explained :

> "they argue among each other as well as among themselves but certain of them are related so they don't really get far" (source report, p.172)

He goes on to further explain how some of the complex relationships and differing friendships feed the conflict between gangs:

> "People from Gangs B and C want to beat up Gang A, and they are trying to fight back, it's like a war thing, but they are madder…Group A boys are young like my age but Gang B and C boys are older, have cars and drive round looking for them." (ibid)

Figure 3 compiled from data compiled during observations and personal interviews attempts to show diagrammatically how friendships between young people brings contact with others which produce patterned relationships seen as 'gang involvement'.

[69] A colloquial term frequently used by young people when speaking about their disagreements, conflict or even violent incidents.

Figure 4. Group membership and exposure to gang involvement

Diagram A. Connects to local gangs

Young person	Gang A	Gang B	Gang C
1	Δ	O	Δ
2	▲	O	O
3	▲	O	O
4	▲	O	O
5	Δ	O	▲
6	O	▲	O
7	Δ	O	O
8	Δ	O	O

Key
▲= Direct regular involvement
Δ= Limited or associated involvement
O = No involvement

Taken from source report

Diagram B personal friendships and gang relationships

Taken from source report

Diagram A shows varying levels of friendships between individual young people and how this links to their involvement with different gangs. Diagram B highlights how positive and negative friendships become the source of tensions that result in gang violence. Therefore, young person 6 who belongs to gang B, as a result of a close friendship with individuals in Gang A produces conflict with someone in Gang C. Importantly, this challenges convention views about the distinctiveness of a gang and the allegiances of individual young people to which the source report asserts the 'conflict and rivalry between gangs, sometimes blur the distinction between separate gangs or even where individual loyalties were located' (source report, p.173).

Original data from the YJB study suggests that peer groups and friendships have a significant bearing on what is commonly regarded as 'gang' involvement and the nature of these friendships and strength of personal relationships play a key role in determining how different gangs are connected. The source report summarises this by observing:

> ‘the nature of friendships influenced how gangs related to each other, which in turn determined the type and level of friendship that a young person would have with individuals in other gangs’ (source report, p.176)

Critically, the close relationships and regular contact between individual in a small central core or sub-group which is important to the dynamics, cohesion and interactions within a larger collective. In view of this a journal entry speculates that ‘the gang … can be a generic term that is commonly used by practitioners or even by young people themselves as a type of ‘shorthand’ (journal 1, p.34).

Conclusions

Analysis of textual data from a personal journal and publications on selected policy research I have carried out critically examines the race and crime implications for official views of problem youth behaviour and how its connection to gang policy/ practice has significance for urban black male youth. Section 5.1 has shown how these early publications are examples of ‘the pragmatic position’ of my administrative public policy research which in proving medico-legal support of the penal system (Garland 1988) that as part of a criminological imagination (Young 2012) in different ways inadequately address issue of race. Section 5.2 shows how this has direct implications for the identified problem behaviour of black male youth by critically examining how recommendations for a policy/ practice approach is made to link with a scaled approach for tacking gangs. It looks at how my subsequent research gradually builds alternative ideas on how race, crime and gangs to argue that urban black male youth provide what Solomos (1989) argues as a coded means of addressing wider policy-related political considerations.

Section 5.3 explores evidence that more directly resists mainstream ideas about problem youth that are used to support ideas about the gang which is found to synchronise with a youth policy punitive turn (Muncie 2008) that forms part of what is identified as a new youth justice (Squires 2005, 2008). However, everyday experience

and friendship patterns of young people show important distinctions between group activity and mainstream official idea of the gang so as to agree with the argument that suggest '[r]ather than taking these [gang] characteristics for granted, it would seem to be much more theoretically fruitful to examine the processes that give rise to such group variations' (Bursik and Gramsmick 1995 p.12).

Finding from this analysis suggests the construction of the U.K. gang builds on ideas of a postclassical criminology allowing 'the reappearance and redirection of classical themes' (Roshier 1989, 68) as the premise for realist perspectives in the gang (Andell 2019) from racialised understanding of youth behaviour in which the 'othering' of black youth (Palmer and Pitts 2006) is essentialised. Hence, an essentialisation allows the over-representation of black male youth in criminal justice and police data, Williams (2018) therefore highlights how the algorithms and scoring system of Trident Gang Crime Command[70] allocates the highest harm scores to gang nominals, creating a disproportionality in which 78% are identified as gang. Although this is seen as 'compelling' evidence by Pitts (2020) can also be regarded as 'voodoo statistics' (Young 1997) produced by the bogus positivism of a fake scientificity (Young 2007) as part of a racialised ecological fallacy (Coleman and Moynihan 1996).

The chapter ends in 5.4 by moving away from understating youth behaviours based in ideas about the gang to instead examine how the data offer alternative perspectives that draws from everyday observed patterns of friendship and social processes. By accounting for leisure activities, anti-social as well as criminal opportunities young people are found to engage an alternative youth culture that reject the mainstream to which they may aspire but are excluded. This gives rise to what Hebidge (1976) views as counterculture, but more poignantly, exclusion from wider mainstream economic and social opportunities result in coping tactics as 'alternative careers' in the informal economy (Craine 1997). This perspective crucially, draws on the British, academic, subcultural tradition, recognising the importance of culture, subjectivism/ interpretivism and social interaction to make conceptual connection to new deviance and cultural diversity theory that since the 1960s has rejected, positivist criminological orthodoxy (Tierney 1996).

[70] This was set up 2012 by the MPA as a service response to violent offenses in the capital

Chapter 5.0 Friendships and social processes as an alternative to the U.K. gang: policy and practice implications

Introduction

The YJB source report and official publication is reflexively seen to most sharply contrast my professional and everyday experience in ways which have parallels with the official policy/ practice approach to race and crime and how this relates to urban black male youth. In testing the thesis' research question this chapter draws on the textual data to critically assess how far gang legislative policy-practice effectively addresses what is seen as problematic youth behaviour. This begins in section 6.1 by continuing to examine the key role of friendship and looking in detail at how the original data show how dynamic social processes and not the gang provide insight to youth behaviour. Highlighting differences in how the source report and official publication interprets the original data, section 6.2 goes on to describe how everyday youth behaviour tied to patterns of friendship are located within not only peer/ social networks formed in wider structures. The chapter concludes in 6.3 by drawing on entries from my journal to comment on findings/ conclusions from the selected publication to advance a critical on current U.K. gang legislative policy-practice in relation to urban black male youth.

6.1 Dynamic social processes and not the gang: reconceptualising youth behaviour

We have seen how the YJB source report starts to develop an understanding of youth behaviour that resists the conventional mainstream view of youth offending, 'gangs' and orthodox risk-based policy approach. Section 5.4 begins exploring these alternatives by resisting the continuum of anti-social/ criminal behaviours that the official report argues determine gangs and is an adequate basis for effective policy/ practice by calling into question its assertion that 'juvenile gangs do exist in some urban areas' (official publication, p.160) that these 'exert control over a specific, geographic

neighbourhood' but also the criminal activity of young adults is the same for those 'who are younger and aged between 10 and 17 years'.

Comments on my lived experience from my personal journal support arguments made in the YJB source report by noting these rely heavily on 'taken-for-granted assumptions and not individual circumstances' and calls on the evidence to that '[t]here are several different forms of affiliation/ membership/ association and collective behaviour' (journal 1, p41) for which the source report in commenting on responses by service providers concludes:

> 'many fell back on stereotypes as the only common point of reference… leading to the criminalisation of some groups or kinds of youth activity… identification of gang activity is addressed primarily through local crime audits, many of which rely heavily on police data' (YJB source report, p.245)

Evidence of these alternative perspectives are found in early journal entries that starts to question how mainstream views on collective youth behaviour/ offending, violence and gangs to instead speculate that:

> 'group activity are affiliations from naturally occurring relationships which happen in the context of community networks to determine action, values and continuing group involvement. Because affiliations determine action, it shapes the structure and function of gangs. These provide common understanding or shared knowledge that are defined, reflected on, developed and used to make sense of ongoing interactions and social relations' (Journal 3, p.49)

This is seen as the start of early attempts at exploring alternatives to policy/ practice aimed at gangs based on a view of youth behaviour as 'offending which regularly involves a minimum of three young people and which is above a certain point on the seriousness scale' (Official publication, p.181). However, comments from personal notes examining youth crime statistics observe that 'the offending by young people in groups of three or more is part of a wider phenomenon' that it goes on to see as not

simply the result of action by young people themselves but its connection to adult-organised crime. For these reasons the YJB source report asserts youth behaviour:

> ‘may involve anti-social behaviour that may, in turn, shade into offending of various degrees of seriousness. At certain times, in different places where groups are involved in more serious offending, this may take the form of gang-like activities, which are often influenced in some way by the presence of adults in the area who are involved in serious organised crime’ (YJB source report, p.164)

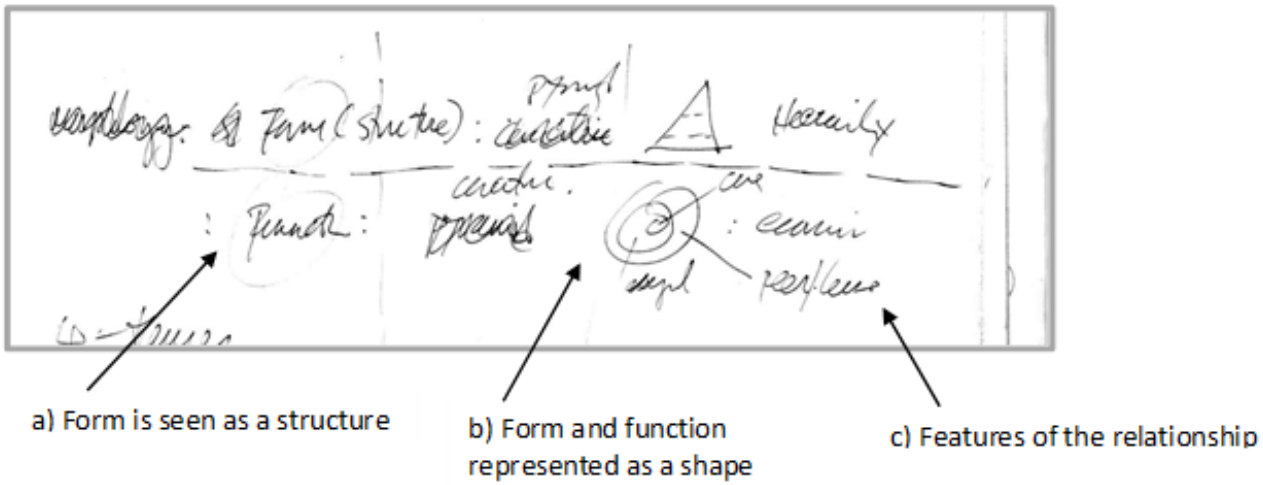
This therefore argues that to some degree youth behaviour is explained by patterns of friendship and mundane, social interactions of everyday events connected to non-problematic cultural and leisure activity not connected to the violence or crime of gangs. Scribbled journal notes provide initial, tentative explanations by introducing the idea that friendships produce observable, social interactions from which ‘groups must be seen as adaptive types of collective behaviour for which form is a result of function’ (Journal 5, p. 41). Crucially therefore, the function of social interactions and the friendships they produce determine the form that they take, to link form and function so that ‘any youth collective needs to be understood in terms of form and function, in which function determines form (structure) that in turn allows groups to function successfully’ (Journal 6, p.41).

In this way, youth behaviour is dynamic and constantly changing social processes which fundamentally oppose the idea of gangs as containing identifiable group characteristics and static structural features. A journal entry reflecting on the essential nature of youth speculates that ‘gangs are interactive arenas (that are like social theatres) composed of social episodes and not structured criminality’ (journal 6, p.50). For this reason, the source report argues that ‘gang’ a policy/ practice must take account for the interactive, cultural and subjective basic of youth behaviour, in which:

> ‘group action becomes a means to an end, it serves as a function, used by individuals to achieve some kind of desired outcome or benefit, which most likely are greater than what could be obtained from acting alone’ (from personal notes)

Entries from my personal journal attempts to show how social interactions create social relationships/ friendships that determine the 'form' and 'function' of group behaviour. A hand-drawn diagrammatic representation of this is given in Figure 4 which shows function of relationships/ friendships as described by concentric circles which are connected to its form that is shown as a tiered pyramid (we shall return in the next section to examine how friendship give form to youth behaviour with wider network and social structures). Form and function provide alternative ways of looking at the same thing. Friendships functionally create social processes which if viewed morphologically 'from above' give rise to concentric circles that express contact with non-problematic leisure/ recreation on the one hand or criminality/ violence on the other. Viewed in 'from the side, these rings have structural form as a hierarchical tiered pyramid.

Figure 5. Proposed relationship between the form and function of youth behaviour



Handwritten note taken from journal 6

The official report is found to call on these ideas to reach very different conclusions about the raw data. We have seen how it views young behaviour as a continuum of criminality, for which it now locates youth behaviour located within what it sees as a 'nested sites' describing different levels of influence or levels of risk to gang involvement. the largest influence on young people's gang involvement with other actors which starts with the family unt and ends with those at a community/neighbourhood level having progressively lower impact. Effective prevention therefore involves interventions targeted at the individual, followed by early

family support, addressing peer influence, schooling and action within the local community/ neighbourhood. These ideas draw heavily on ecological model[71] and is diagrammatically represented in Figure 5.

Figure 6. Nested sites for youth gangs risk factors

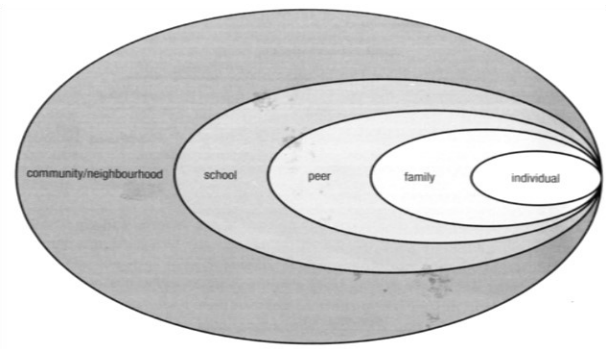


Diagram extracted from official report

We therefore find the source and official reports reaching very different conclusions about the nature of youth behaviour and the group patterns it produces. Whereas the official publication describes nested sites, the source report points to how social processes give rise to the form and function of dynamic group patterns which affect 'the manner in which friendships and other group affiliations link to gangs' (source report, p.250).

The YJB source report go on to argue that the youth behaviour which produce patterned concentric rings give rise to three distinctive types of friendship groups/ relationships which are described in Figure 6.

Figure 7. Types of friendship group and exposure to 'gangs'

Taken from YJB source report

[71] Developed by the United Nations (2002) for understanding violence in different parts of the world which build a public heath perspective to advance a typology which sees violence as behaviour resulting from influences at four levels: 1) individual, 2) relationship, 3) community and 4) societal

Young people's behaviour is therefore seen to produce three primary types of friendship group, each with a different level of gang involvement. At the centre of the concentric circles is a relatively small group of 'core' friendships which, because of regularly seeing each other, sharing common interests and similar daily routines allow close personal relationships to form. The nature of these close friendship give rise to group form and function that if focussed on the benefits of crime gives access to organised crime. In this way, what are seen as 'gangs' link not only to youth co-offending in delinquent networks (Sarnecki 2001) that situates 'getting paid' (Sullivan 1989) to wider community and social institutions (Janowski 1991). In this way, close youth friendships/ peer groups are linked to organised crime and violence. Data from the original study showed that it was not uncommon to find young adults or even those who were older being part of this core group. This type of involvement was described by a young person as:

> '… I didn't know all of them, but Richard is my friend, he's two years older than me he's my age group I used to hang around with, the others are his friends… but I was like a little youth. But I thought I was a bad boy, ye, I ain't gonna lie, me like hanging around with older people… my first opportunity to hang with someone older than me, I want to prove myself… They took advantage of me cos I wanted to fit in and be part of the crowd'. (Gang member, 14 years old)

Decreasing contact with those at the core of social networks is also found to be accompanied by less contact and closeness between friends. Groups and individual behaviour become increasingly informal, moving towards leisure rather than criminal activity, giving way to 'marginal' groups and finally those with 'associated' links. As behaviour is increasingly directed to leisure activity, friendship groups become progressively informal and structured in ways that produce less direct contact or exposure to gang activity.

Overlapping, complex relationships means that although individuals in core friendships have a small number of close friends, they will invariably know and interact with others within a wider peer network. Many will not be close friends or have no routine involvement with crime or violence. We therefore increasingly find friendships involving

less frequent contact, fewer shared interests and involvement in joint activities. As a consequence, friendship groups become less formal and structured with increased engagement with routine leisure activity.

Finally in relation to the social processes which determine youth behaviour, levels of social contact between individuals determine distinctive types of friendship, which causes a journal entry to discriminate between in the activity of 'small close-knit groups' and 'large groups of boisterous young people' that furthermore is seen as part of 'friendship networks that overlap, superimpose, intersect, to build up layers of influence on an individual's behaviour' (Journal 3, p.83). In making this distinction it goes on to apply the notion of 'social distance'[72] as a way of accounting for the cultural dynamics and social interactions that accompany young people's everyday activity and dictate the closeness of their friendships.

6.2 Everyday youth behaviour, social networks and wider structures

Reflexive examination of finding from the selected publication and my personal journal show friendships are not only functional which through the notion of social distance account for young people's exposure to serious organised crime but they also help shape behaviour in relation to wider community networks and social structure. The original fieldwork show that friendships and peer group interactions are intrinsically linked to and form part of a wider array of criminal and non-criminal activity, a journal entry commenting that 'gang culture variously overlaps with other subcultures to varying degrees – the greatest is with crime'. In this way, the everyday nature of crime beings together and superimpose what is identified as 'professional' organised crime (Hobbs 1988) that results from behaviour aimed at 'getting paid', with the effect of normalising criminality to creates what is claimed to be an *entrepreneurial youth culture* (Hobbs 2013). Entries from my personal begins to describe youth behaviour in ways

[72] The idea of social distance was first advanced by Bogardus (1925) who saw it as measure of the sympathy between people, their positive or negative feelings or 'the degrees and grades of understanding and feeling that people experience regarding each other'. Levels of subjective intimacy pervade social relations in ways that are measurable through a 'social distance scale'.

that the source report more fully sets out and which follows a direction that in key ways are opposite principal conclusions and focus of the official publication on individual/ young of young people 'known for their deviant or criminal reputation and members from these groups willingly subscribed to this behaviour' (source report, p.153).

Re-examination of the original data highlighted the importance role that a need to exert influence/ power or gain status or what several young people called 'rep'[73] had on what was oftentimes complex and dynamic interactions and friendship patterns. In showing how 'gangs' related to friendship a young person explained:

> 'The boys I used to hang around with in my area (Gang A) I don't talk to them no more. Whenever I see them they try to fight me…because I hang around with Gang C… I got punched in my face not too long ago. I grew up with them but I went football and adapted to the Gang C area.'(Young Person's comments. Source report, p.179)

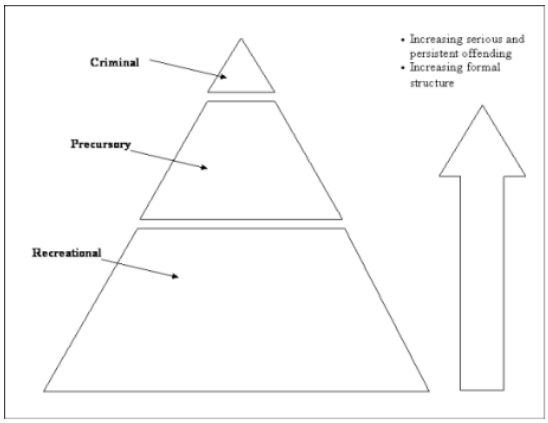
Moreover, evidence also show different types of relationships between friends which confers varying levels of group status:

> 'Well them is brethren like (other individual members of the group/gang) and so you just go down with what going on. Yes there are things that happen where you don't want to get involved, cos you know it could be big trouble, but you don't want to look like a pussyhole, you get me, it's about your rep' (Young Person's comment taken from YJB source report).

In light of this, the source goes on to argue status and influence as key determinants of group behaviour that is interactively negotiated in the mundane routine events of young people. This produces dynamic group processes that directly affect the strength of relationships/ closeness to structure friendships in discernible patterns. The source report diagrammatically represents the structural relationship between different types of friendship tiered layers of a triangle seen in Figure 7

[73] Notes from the original fieldwork recoded 'rep' as the colloquial language use by young people when speaking about reputation.

Figure 8. Structured relationship of young people's friendship groups



Taken from YJB source report

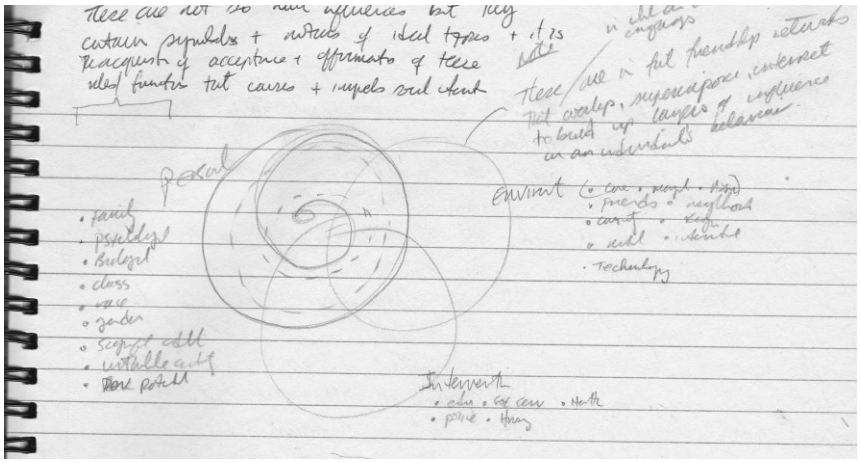
The source report therefore proposes that the closeness of friendships represented by the concentric circle seen above, directly correspond to and when 'viewed from the side' can be represented as a tiered hierarch of structured relationships. The small core group at the top of the triangle are found to have the closest friendships, respondents from the original research describing this in various ways included 'he got my back', 'they are fam', 'not grass me up', 'I would go through any beef with them'. Crucially, the closeness mutual trust and loyalty to others provide the conditions for the group and those within it to engage and profit from illegitimate activity in ways that expose young people to organised crime and gangs.

Falling levels closeness results in less formal, structured friendships and diminishing direct or frequent opportunity for involvement with crime or violence and 'marginality' that give rise to a form of 'precursory' to involvement in gang activity ow what is referred to as 'wannabe gangs' (Gordon 2000). The base of the triangle is where the largest number of friendships are found that reflect young people's mundane routine events and spontaneous cultural/ leisure activity. These social interactions are informal and naturally occurring, giving rise to friendship that have no direct involvement with crime or violence and 'associated' contact with gangs is only through other individuals.

The source report significantly departs from the conclusions of official publication by arguing that youth behaviour and their patterns of friendship are determined in some

measure by complex and dynamic forces in wider social networks and structure. An annotated diagram from a personal journal attempt to show the interstitial nature of young people's friendship groups (see Figure 8).

Figure 9. Complex and interstitial nature of young people's friendship groups



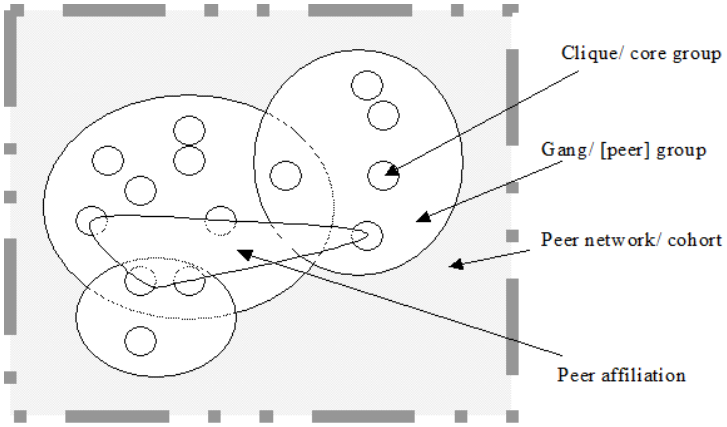
Taken from Journal 5

This annotations diagram shows that social distance not only causes friendships to fall into the three concentric rings seen above, but that the consequent patterns in youth behaviour are interlocked and layered array of influences. Dynamic interpersonal interactions and complex social processes is thus found to produce 'friendship networks that overlap, superimpose and interconnect to build up layers of influence on an individual's behaviour' (Journal 5, p.83). A resulting fluidity both creates and dissipates opportunities for criminal involvement in ways that therefore determine the 'relationship between gangs and other groups is simultaneously complex, dynamic and multi-level' (source report, p.256).

In this way, the source report argues that 'gangs' can only be adequately understood by accounting for differing types and levels of group activity which encompass a range of leisure and criminal activity and superimpose the social networks of young people. A journal entry commenting on the geography of community and neighbourhood describes this a 'roadscape' in referring what is identified as 'on road 'behaviours (Gunter 2011). Crucially, illegitimate economic activity of adult-organised crime, in

unregulated public setting are formative, generating ‘street codes’ (Anderson 1999) which produce types of ‘badness’ Gunter (2011) responsible for what Wacquant (2009) terms the ‘street thug’. Hence, the source report moves away from a notion of the gang to instead propose that dynamic friendships are the nexus of interactive processes in a wider geographic-based social networks. This results in layered and overlapping patterns which provide a wider causative context to what is simply seen as ‘the gang’ that are iagrammatically represented in Figure 9.

Figure 10. Friendship groups within wider social networks



Taken from YJB source report

Complex social interactions are therefore found to produce overlapping patters of friendship, which that rather than linking youth behaviour to ‘the gang’, contextualised it within the wider social processes of local networks and structures. From this perspective, the source report therefore argues that:

> ‘youth gangs are intrinsically linked to other young people and adult gangs as part of a neighbourhood community network, fitting together to form a social framework’ (YJB source report, p.256)

5.3 Critical perspectives on U.K. legislative gang policy-practice

Entries from my personal journal was found to reinforce ways in which conclusions from the YJB source document at times fundamentally conflicted with those of the

official publication. The reflexive process made how the experience profoundly affected my private view of the research I carried out. Formal publication of the official YJB report was followed by growing academic debate and increased government action aimed at tackling gangs and youth violence. With this came a plethora of practical interventions, many focussed on tackling drug-dealing, and increasingly in my local and more widely came evidence of stop and search, gang injunctions, joint enterprise arrests, gang diversion activities, school knife arches and various school initiatives such as police liaison officers.

The period immediately after the YJB study was a time of personal ambivalence about policy research generally and key aspects of government policy aimed at tackling gangs and youth violence[74]. Later I will briefly consider the implications of my research specifically in relation to gang legislation, policing, safeguarding and Home Office policy. Consequently, entries from my personal journal start making pointed comment about the direction of official action that I saw as exacerbating the problemisation of urban black male youth that helped increase their criminalisation.

Increasing tensions that my everyday experience brough to views about my professional research caused a change of focus in the work I chose to next carry out. The Eastside study was eighteen months of ethnographic-based participative action research examining interventions[75] for black boys who were in danger of or who had been either temporarily or permanently excluded from school. It would further consider how far mainstream services provided for their specific learning need in relation to culture/race, situational requirements, and personal circumstances so as to develop:

[74] As a result, I begin asking more searching question on political implications of so called the value free research (Becker 1967), the political implications of ethnographic immersion (Schatz 2009) for the nature of knowledge production (Sheata 2006). This also opened questions on what is argued as a political criminology (O,Brien and Littler 2015, Scheingold 1998) that would later impact my views on what is seen as the political nature of autoethnography (Denzin 2003)

[75] Inventions were based on a model of youth leadership that included supplementary educational provision, intensive mentoring support and a family/ community rites of passage programme.

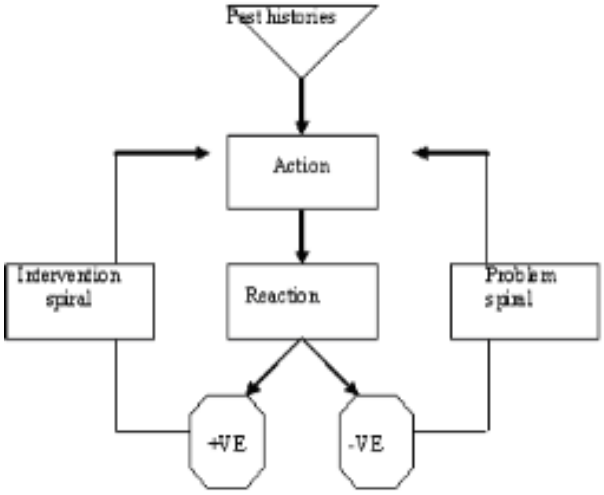
> ‘greater insight and sensitivity to dealing with local issues and thereby possess a greater potential not only to identifying where the problems are and who is involved but offer unique and imaginative solutions.’ Extract from personal notes

Crucially, its findings failed to confirm risk factors what it sees as ‘traditional checklist approaches that can oversimplify and wrong define the problem’ (Eastside report, p.2) but also addressing gangs as the for effective policy and service interventions. The education focus of the study instead highlighting importance of addressing what it described as ‘low-level problem behaviour’ attached to routine activities carried out with friends, emphasising a need for giving ‘special attention’ to the specific need to black boys and noting that what is seen as ‘reactive’ mainstream service:

> to fall back on general policy and procedures and behavioural models not developed to take account of the peculiar impact of ethnicity and race. The “one size fit all approach” has been found to inadequately address many modern personal and social pressures, especially those experienced by those living in deprived urban areas. It is perhaps little surprise to find that Black youth are over-represented in some violent crime statistics. (Eastside report, P.31)

The report goes on to argue that the roots of the gang problem is to be found in the everyday, social events and mundane interactions in young people’s social networks that if not addressed ‘progressively worsen in a smooth downward spiral of increasing recalcitrance’ (p.6). Hence the types of problematic behaviour that oftentimes result in school exclusion and gang involvement is seen as not so much the balance of risk and preventative factors but rather interactive processes that either increase or decrease problem behaviour through incremental cycles (see Figure 10).

Figure 11. Community based intervention for problem youth behaviour



Taken from Eastside report publication 6

This suggest that effective service outcomes result from a young person's reaction to the intervention that can be either negative and reinforce or amplifying existing behaviour or produce positive changes which help their reintegration to school. The report therefore goes on to argue that action and reaction forms part of an interactive process to produce cycles of change, sometimes involving the young person taking one step forward and two steps back but is central to the effectiveness of tailored personal support provided through community-based provision. It therefore identifies three typical service approaches[76] to dealing with black male youth, going to argue the need for 'proactive' interventions.

This community-based study also takes forward and develops ideas proposed initially in the previous YJB study by confirming the importance of not only of gaining economic benefits from crime but acquiring social prestige or 'status gain' that is for many of the young people included in the study provided:

> 'the only viable means of getting the things they need and unlike money and power, the other ways of getting the things they want and meeting their needs, is immediately accessible in virtually unlimited quantities' (Eastside report, p.11)

[76] Publication 6 argues that the interventions carried out by individuals and organisations in dealing with what is commonly regarded as 'problem behaviour' can be characterised as: a) Holding – action that contains or manages the behaviour but does nothing to get at its roots cause b) Over-reactive - through the disproportionate use of punitive or correctives measures c) Proactive – early action and preventative measures relevant to personal need.

It therefore confirmed that friendships and group interactions as providing a means of acquiring status or what young people saw as 'respect' where '[s]treet culture offers an alternative forum for autonomous personal integrity' (Bourgois 1995, p.8) that the report argued:

> 'does not depend on education, but instead can be created in the areas where they live and in ways that they understand and can control. This makes status a social commodity where investment gives immediate rewards. Friendships provide a limitless social market of supply and demand, and personal profits are made through the interactions and relationships with the people who they know' (Eastside report, p.11)

Furthermore, interactions within friendship groups were found to take place in the context of wider social relationships can were found to increase young people's exposure to and exploitation from serious, organised adult crime. This brough many into direct contact with street lifestyles and conventional sub-cultures to what was described as 'alternative cultures' that was linked directly to a criminal economy. The study found urban black male youth to have varying types and levels of involvement with 'environments that have become widely exciting and attractive to many black boys to the point where they are almost irrationally blind to its dangers' (Eastside report, p.25)[77] arguing that effective policy and practice needs a far more nuanced understanding of different forms of vulnerability.

The report concludes by arguing that the mainstream service focus on gangs detract from tackling the real roots of problems experienced by urban black male youth. It moreover claims effective intervention must 'recognise that gangs are people' and not abstracted group characteristics linked to gang related risk factors. Furthermore, developing an adequate understanding race and crime will make possible shift from

[77] The research identified black male youth as having three primary types of level of contact with exploitative adult organised crime: a) eyes wide open who sought economic or status gain b) the calculators who actively balanced the risk and rewards from criminality believing they can stay one step ahead, and c) the status gainer who only want the prestige or protection from being friends/ hanging around with those who actually carry out violence/ crime.

what is seen as 'reactive' policy/ practice approach to one that us 'proactive' in making early interventions that 'do the right thing at the right time'.

Academic research at this time begins to ratify official policy approach to youth behaviour through the idea of 'reluctant gangsters' (Pitts 2007) and 'getting real about gangs' (Hallsworth and Young 2004) and identifiable group characteristics in a three-tier gang typology[78] (Hallsworth and Young 2005). Moreover, findings from the YJB study provides an important background to the key role of MPA Operation Cruise[79] in shaping ideas on the nature and scale of gang-related incidents and policy guidance to communities and law enforcement agencies, on which Commander Andre Baker remarked:

> '…if we want to use the term gang accurately we need to know precisely what groups it would be appropriate to apply it to. In the context of a society that has, as the authors of the report observes, 'rediscovered the gang' getting real about its nature, and the risk and dangers it poses are urgent' (Hallsworth and Young 2005, p.iii)

Identifiable group characteristics provide objective criteria that links to levels of gang-related risk as part of a policy framework in what is seen as racism of criminalisation (Jefferson 1993) in the policing of youth (Jackson 2014) where 'each is different with its own form of collective life and risk level' (Hallsworth and Young 2005, p.16). This also provides early guidance for definitional flowcharts and MPS SCD3 Specialist Crime Prevention and Partnership 'Serious Youth Violence Toolkit'. Setting out a rationale for 'why focus on gangs' it is seen as the balance of risk and protective factors

[78] The three-tier gang typology gives rise to a 'pyramid of risk' where Level 1 is the lowest risk connected to the peer group collective; Level 2 is medium risk of delinquent street collectives; and is gang activity connected to Level 3 high risk street collective and violent entrepreneurial collectives.

[79] The report by Hallsworth and Young titled 'Understanding gangs in the UK' sets out ideas on collective youth behaviour to provide the MPA with 'a general theory' that would enable the term gangs to be applied in the U.K.

that ‘help to shape choices to engage in group delinquent behaviour’.

Formal policing policy on peer groups, gangs and organised criminal network was set out in an official ACPO response to a request from the Home Secretary following the murder of Rhys Jones in 2007[80]. Furthermore, identifiable groups characteristics provide the basis of what is referred to as ‘harm banding’ which indicate the severity and frequency of incidents and individuals that come to police notice for violence. allowing a ranking classification, based on the colours red, amber and green. Importantly, these not only guide levels of general graded response with accompanying types of punitive intervention[81] to provide the basis for the “tagging” of those with a gang profile in the MPS matrix database, activating responses that is seen to have direct implications for black male youth (Williams 2018).

We now find the logic of the pyramid of risk used to support the official gang approach of the Home Office and its policy/ practice guidelines for the safeguarding of children and young people. A very early official statement highlights the absence of specific guidance for tackling gangs, by stating:

> ‘there is also specific guidance available for schools, YOTs (both available in May 2008), parents and carers, the CPS (both available summer 2008) and the Probation and Prison Services (available autumn 2008)’ (Home Office 2005, p.8)

This initial official guidance draws directly from Hallsworth and Young (2005) to prescribe ‘three types of groups commonly referred to as gangs’ (Home Office 2005, p.23) providing a template on which wider policy frameworks developed. A series of key policy documents[82] subsequently tackle serious violence in relation to gangs.

[80] See The Association of Chief Police Officers ‘gun crime and gangs: response to the Home Secretary’. September 2007.

[81] Three levels of police intervention include: 1) Red – enforcement, partnership or both to include multi-agency partnership plan offering pathways to prevention and diversion or assessment for judicial interventions, 2) Amber – includes a multi-agency partnership plan but enforcement and assessment for judicial interventions are considered, Green - single-agency response plan containing diversion or engagement activities considered with partners.

[82] Important among these early publications were 1) the 2008 Youth Crime Action Plan 2) 2011 Violence Crime Action plan 3) 2007 Tackling Gangs Action Programme

Hence, identified gang members determined to be high-risk violent offenders as part of contextualise safeguarding practice (Firmin 2020) but mor generally in integrated offender management frameworks and multi-agency public protection arrangements receive the most intensive community-based supervision but also mental health problems[83]. Accordingly, a critical comment from personal notes accuses service innovation aimed at tackling young people's involvement in drug dealing and gangs as 'another example of how intervention can be pointed at what institutions think is black criminality'.

Notably, the 2010 Home Office/ Department for Children, Schools and Families safeguarding policy/ practice guidance, although mistakenly referring to Hallsworth and Young (2004) when referring to a 'pyramid of gang involvement', suggests that:

> 'Safeguarding should focus on young people on the cusp/vulnerable of making the transition to gang involvement as well as those already involved in gangs' (Home office 2010, p.13)

It was however from a comprehensive review and highly influential 2009 report from political think-tank *The Centre for Social Justice that* gave a single, clear, authoritative official definition[84] and guiding principles for legislation and official policy guidance[85] for tackling gangs and serious youth violence. Its definition of the gang and policy recommendations[86] came to underpin official thinking and government policy

[83] Research finds links between gangs and mental health (Coid et al 2013) that according to the Children's charity Barnados is "inextricable linked" (see http://www.24dash.com/news/communities/2009-09-29-gang-culture-linked-to-mental-health-issues-barnardos) for which we find statutory sector mental health services (for example see http://democracy.lbhf.gov.uk/documents/s40026/07%20Mental%20Health%20and%20Gangs%20Report%202013-FINAL.pdf) and street-based clinical mental health interventions (see http://www.theguardian.com/society/2012/apr/10/mental-health-street-smart-charlie-alcock)

[84] Gangs are defined as a relatively durable, predominantly street-based group of young people who see themselves (and are seen by others) as a discernible group, engaged in a range of criminal activity and violence. See HM Government (2011).

[85] These principals are summarised as the fives P's: 1. Providing support 2. Prevention 3. Pathways Out 4. Punishment and Enforcement 5. Partnership Working.

[86] Wide-ranging recommendations for what was described an 'anti-gang strategy' included setting up a gangs prevention unit at the heart of Government; the identifying of Gang Prevention Zones within small geographical localities; a targeted zero-tolerance, multi-agency enforcement approach on all offences; a strategy for ensuring a cessation of violence; increased stop and searches, knife arches and sweeps done in consultation with local community and faith leaders and youth workers; greater use of Civil Orders (ASBOs, Gang Activity Desistance Orders) to disrupt gang activity.

approach, drawing heavily on ideas from the U.S. and particularly the Department of Justice's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention[87], building on work from the Eurogang Project and Klein's (2001) elaboration of Gordon's (2000) original five-point gang typology. It additionally builds on research by Pitts (2007) that distinguishes 'different types of gang' in a typology[88] that although seen as 'specific to the borough's gangs, is invaluable in helping us to understand the nature of the UK gang problem' (Centre for Social Justice 2009, p.46).

Although the standard definition and policy recommendations provided the basis for the 2011 cross-Government report[89], this was the culmination of an approach that had gradually gathered pace over several years and which had been adopted across several public policy areas "being taken up by the police service, Home Office, Youth Justice Board and HM Prison service" (Association of Chief Police Officers 2007, p.22). The report is however government acknowledgement of a U.K. gang problem and provides the basis for a coherent and consistent interventions through the comprehensive Home Office Ending Gangs and Youth Violence Strategy and work of local action gang teams. This has however attracted notable criticism with Cottrell-Boyce (2013) arguing this official approach is based on a construction which provides a 'suitable enemy' which obscures the wider structural roots of youth violence. Its emphasis on enforcement is a counterproductive dragnet which criminalises innocent young people instead of focussing resources at the real roots of the problem.

Significantly, the Policing and Crime Act 2009 gives the first legal definition[90] but administrative procedures and statutory instruments through which to address gang-related violence. Powers are awarded to police officers, local authorities and multi-

[87] See James C. Howell, Youth Gangs, OJJDP Fact Sheet (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, U.S. Department of Justice, December 1997), p.1 at: https://www.ojp.gov/pdffiles/fs-9772.pdf. Accessed March 2021

[88] Pitts (2008) identified varying types of youth gang that includes: 1) The articulate super gang 2) The street gang 3) The compressed street gang 4) The criminal youth group 5) The Wannabees and 6) The Middle Level International Criminal Business Organisation

[89] The Ending Gangs and Youth Violence: A Cross-Government Report was published in November 2011 available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/97862/gang-violence-detailreport.pdf. Annual updates were provided until 2014/15.

[90] In this legislation 'gang-related violence' is defined as 'actual violence' or a 'threat of violence' which occurs in the course of, or is otherwise related to, the activities of a group that: (a) consists of at least three people; (b) uses a name, emblem or colour or has any other characteristic that enables its members to be identified by others as a group; and (c) is associated with a particular area.

agency gang prevention programmes to break down gang culture. This includes the provision of injunctions that prevent gang-related ‘actual violence’ or the ‘threat of violence’ related to the activities of any group that: a) consists of at least three people; b) uses a name, emblem or colour or has any other characteristic that enables its members to be identified by others as a group; and c) is associated with a particular area.

These various legislative, policy and service changes were rolled out over a period of time, by ongoing coverage of connected academic debates, press coverage and evaluation reports but also observation during my ongoing work served to heighten personal apprehensions on the relevance of the gang to effective service intervention. Journal entries variously reflect this and a comment after visiting a school that was implementing a new initiative aimed at tackling a ‘gang’ problems, suggested:

> In its present form, focus on gang characteristics as a way of targeting the programme is unlikely to identify those who are the real cause of what is happening, others that have a lesser involvement and get swept along with events or the times and actual situations when the problems occur. Asking teachers to identify those in gangs will likely take the project away from dealing with what is causing the problem’. Taken from personal notes,

The Runnymede Trust article, brings many of these together to develop a critical view on how over a period of time academic ideas support, the policy focus of political priorities to producing U.K. gang policy and practice and its implications for urban black male youth. This builds on Alexander’s (2008) analysis of how common-sense views on race, crime and culture have contributed to the construction of gangs in the U.K, going on to an under-theorisation that has provided the basis for the extant approach to divert focus away from the real root causes of serious youth crime.

I continue to critically examine the U.K. gang in relation to race and crime to argue that an intersect between criminological academic ideas with legislative policy-practice provides a constructionism for a ‘gang paradigm’ (Joseph 2019). This problematises

urban black male youth in ways that have direct youth justice implications through creation of the 'mainstream gang'[91] to align with what is identified as academic-ratified social control through official legislation, policy and practice (Deuchar and Bhopal 2017). Furthermore, seen as a dismissal of the British tradition of subcultural explanation, it has allowed taken-for-granted assumptions about race and crime to align with popular and political imperatives (Joseph 2018).

Notes from my personal journal makes was I saw as increasingly coherent comments on how criminological discourse has helped establish what is called 'definitional boundaries' (Cough and Vankatesh 2003) that support gang legislation and policy to code ideas about the criminality of black youth. In this way the U.K. gang represents an uncritical acceptance of ideas of race and crime through obscured meaning that express a 'new racism' (Barker 1981) and what for Keith (1993) is the 'criminal other'. Entries from my journal therefore allows a reflexive analysis to show U.K. gang legislative policy/ practice as giving constructed understandings and an intervention framework for tackling 'problematic' youth behaviour.

This reflexivity also exposes how knowledge about youth behaviour based on the gang provides legitimate power for maintaining social control, through norms which supplying what for Michel Foucault is a form of 'normativity'[92]. Hence, my professional and lived experience both show how gang policy/ practice as a constructed rationalisation which separates the nature and cause of serious violence from the everyday realities of young people and local communities. Legislative policy-practice therefore imposes a social reality that reflects what Habermas (1987) argues as the *colonisation of the lifeworld*, in which an individual's knowledge is created externally. Seen in this way, the U.K. gang becomes a subtle, concealed or inferred way of addressing a perceived black youth criminality, but by failing to adequately address

[91] Joseph (2017) argues that the constructed U.K. gang builds on reproductions of a racialised narrative about black youth criminality that form six overlapping stages of a periodisation that includes: 1) A post-War positivist rejection of an acceptable fear 2) The inconsistent gang (2003 -2005) 3) Embryonic gang: construction in policy-practice (2006 -2010) 4) The confirmed gang: the academic-policy compact (2010 -2015) 5) The mainstreamed gang (2015 – present) 6) A future possible subaltern counter-narration of the gang narrative

[92] Foucault asserts that effective control in modern societies is achieved through how norms and normalistion are linked to specific forms of power as ideas which are develops through his four Collège de France courses: Psychiatric Power (1974); Abnormal (1975); Society Must be Defended (1976); and Security, Territory, Population (1978).

race and crime, becomes a form of *cryptonormativity*.

These private theoretical ruminations provided an important backdrop to arguments developed in the Runnymede Trust paper. This saw gang legislation, policy and practice as the result of what Joseph (2018) [93] describes as an 'academic-policy compact' that preserves the self-interests of what is said to be a 'gang industry'. Essentialist ideas on race and crime are reinvented and connected to the gang through various policy developments, e.g. 'county lines', 'rambo knives', 'drill music', to pathologise young people and in particular black male youth through a 'misguided search for structural characteristics in an attempt to define and locate the gang' (publication 7, p12). These result in an approach to policy which:

> 'characterize youth group activity solely (or largely) through their structural characteristics will lead to some measure of inappropriate labelling, in which mundane and benign youth activity can be unfairly interpreted as deviant or anti-social' (Runnymede report, p.12)

The Runnymede report concludes by arguing that continuing to ignore complex and nuanced understanding of youth behaviour through giving inadequate account of cultural, situational, subjective and interactive factors will perpetuate present policy and practice distortions in relation to urban black male youth in which:

> 'the current structurally determinist pre-occupations of policy makers and academics unwittingly consort to signify everyday and mundane activities of young people (many of whom are black) as inherently deviant and gang-related; when in reality for the vast majority they are not' (Runnymede report, p.12)

Conclusions

[93] Joseph (2018) argues that construction of the U.K. gang in legislative policy and practice is abetted by academic failure to adequately account for: 1) The U.S. gang experience 2) Explanation of youth behaviour in relation to the British sub-cultural theory 3) A criminological enabled punitive turn

This chapter draws on entries from my personal journal to develop an autoethnographic means of re-examining findings from selected publication on policy research completed on youth behaviour and ‘gangs’. It gives particular focus to what at times are the divergent and even contrasting understandings of youth behaviour presented in the YJB source and official reports. Continuing to develop critical perspective about race and crime in gang policy and practice, it builds alternative understanding of youth behaviour by looking in detail at the nature and consequences of the friendships and social process with which young people routinely engage.

The analysis in section 5.1 shows how dynamic everyday interactions and social processes and not the gang as the major determinant of patterns in friendships and youth behaviour. Importantly, fast moving interpersonal relations shape both the form and function of friendships, to affect social distance and group structure in ways that can increase exposure to serious organised crime. Section 5.2 goes on to examine how young people’s friendships are geographically located in wider community and social networks in ways that can bring and was often found to create direct contact with adult organised crime and what is commonly seen as gang activity. Finally, this section briefly considers the development of U.K. gang legislative policy and practice to argue that the criminological discourse and political priorities generally fails to adequately account for race which has direct implications for urban black male youth.

Chapter 6.0 Final thoughts and reflections

This autoethnographic examination of important moments in my policy research career, made the thesis' research process part of a personal struggle to resolve individual tension that had simmered in the back of my mind for many years. In this way it was simultaneously therapeutic and tortuous. Looking back at past events at times gave a sense of release but other moments were emotionally challenging in ways that on several dark days left me more than a little pensive. Gradually, it became clear that the three years in which it was registered, represented a much broader process of professional and emotional development in thinking about issues or race, discrimination and social justice, many of which reached back to early childhood and growing up in a deprived working-class area of east London. In writing these final thoughts, I feel it has been a journey that had left me better able to objectively and critically assess issue that I had for many years failed in some way to fully confront.

At the heart of issues explored by the thesis is a body of research carried out over nearly four decades of a professional career that in relation to race oftentimes conflicted with what I knew to be true from my every lived experience. Much of what I saw around me simply did agree with 'the facts' from some of the research I carried out. This grew into an interest in race and crime research on gang policy-practice in the U.K. with specific concerns about urban black male youth involvement in drug dealing and serious violence, serving to deepen personal conflicts.

Use of autoethnography as the study's methodological approach, provided the thesis with a means by which to reflexively examine selected publications from my body of work in relation to content from a personal journal. This provided a form of textual raw data that gave an of account my everyday lived experience of race and crime a mechanism through which to test a research question exploring U.K. gang policy-practice as a construction that expresses ideas about race and crime and which have direct implications for ideas about youth behaviour and those of urban black male youth in particular. In drawing on my lived experience, the study is contextualised by and located in a biographic narrative of my journey from being born, growing and spending

most as career working mostly in east London and how this eventually led to doctoral studies.

Crucially, the biographic narrative of experiences as the second generation of immigrant workers from the Caribbean, valorise childhood experience as a credible and authentic form of autoethnography knowledge production on race. Furthermore, it gives account to my later career choices and thinking behind the research I carried out. It significantly shows the impact of the untimely death of two teenagers in 2003, on professional and personal questions about race and crime and their policy/ practice implications.

A review of policy or the academic literature, show the absence of a consensus on the nature or definition of 'the gang'. Although much of this is derived from U.S. research in tacking youth delinquency, involvement in violence and crime (primarily drug dealing) since the 1960s, perspective on global youth conflict, young people's group behaviour as subculture and organised crime we find as adding further heuristic or teleological doubt on the gang's ontological reality. The review found that the predominately criminological view support political policy imperatives to construct what is seen as the U.K. gang. This draws from a narrow range of ideas to under-theorise race and crime in ways that distort, or more critically confirms stereotyped and taken for granted views that corroborate constructed notions of 'problem youth'

The review goes on to identify how extant formulations of the U.K. gang have roots in criminological positivism and problem youth' that departure from the tradition of British subcultural theory. Hence, recent criminological conceptualisation of the U.K. gang, inadequately theorised race and crime, to draw from ideas connected to an approach to race that emerged out of politics and policy developments of post-War Britain. Importantly, the work of John Solomos is revisited as a way of showing urban black male youth has come to represent wider concern about race to which specific government action construct them as a metaphor for concerns about crime.

The intertextual analysis of the selected publications in relation to my personal journal, highlight important ways in which my everyday live reality of race contrast with the policy implications of finding of from my research for urban black male youth.

Importantly, publications from two early studies provide, give examples of my public policy administration research, to show different ways in which policy examining issues race and service delivery can overlook the specific implications for black male youth. A central part of the thesis' autoethnographic analysis of this, contrasts findings from the YJB source and official reports against to textual data from my personal journal. We find the official report making specific recommendations for greater police and school involvement through targeted interventions which focus on corrective/ punitive approach. By contrast, by valorising the narratives and stories from young people and local communities, data used as part of this research builds a very different picture of the problems that surround them, who is involved but how in practice local people get on with their lives.

We find the official publication advances a policy approach where youth behaviour is seen as part of a continuum of crime risk. The source report develops a different perspective, that separates the leisure/ recreational activities comprising the vast majority of what young people do, as distinct from and polemic of crime/ deviance. The thesis therefore argues the view of youth behaviour in official publication allows links with an established use of risk factors and scaled criminal justice approach. Identifiable group characterises is therefore a short step from criteria that defines the gang as the basis for a risk based actuarial approach.

The official publication uses this understating of youth behaviour to assert gangs a 'real thing' so as to unequivocally claim 'juvenile gangs do exist in some urban areas' (ibid, p.60). Reflexive analysis on the original data is used to develop an alternative perspective. Resists the mainstream official view on the gang, emphasis is instead given to the role friendships and not the gang as basis for understanding youth behaviour. As a corollary, this also sees the need for a move away from a risk based criminal justice approach as an effective way of dealing with the root causes of youth violence.

This alternative perspective does not completely ignore 'the gang' but instead reconceptualises the organised crime on which it is based within a wider social processes and structures. This furthermore, moves beyond giving consideration to the

economic profit from crime as motivation to consider the key role played by status and power in shaping the form and function of young people's friendship groups. In this way the gang and young people's exposure to its influence is located in wider social networks and structures which superimpose the geography of local community/ neighbourhood, through which what is argued as social distance determines the level of exposure or contact the young people have with the serious organised crime of adults.

Finally, reflexivity is used by the thesis to theorise race and crime developed so as to develop critical perspectives on legislative policy and practice that address the U.K gang. Accordingly, this acknowledges how a narrow range of criminological ideas have given credence to political priorities through government action. Alternative ideas aim to decolonise the construction of problem youth as a way of addressing the cryptonormative implications that the official view of gang have for urban black male youth.

The thesis' research process brought me clearer insight on several key take for granted official views about black criminality, helping me align problematic aspect of my policy research to my every lived reality. Further, it has made me realise my personal experience counts for something and critically for the first time, I understood the U.K. gang as not simply emerging after 2003, but an extension and reframing of classical ideas about crime, problem youth, essentialist ideas on race. Moreover, it gave a new understanding on how a failure to address in detail concerns about urban black male youth represented a coded or cryptonormative means of maintaining a crime control complex.

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Appendix

Appendix A. Case study characteristics for YJB study sample frame

Area types	Selection criteria			Typical area types
	Ethnic mix	Crime*	Deprivation	
Types 1 area **Metropolitan district**	High	High	High	Birmingham Manchester London
Type 2 area **Urban Authority**	High	High	High	Chapel Town (Leeds) Moss Side (Manchester) Handsworth Birmingham) St Ann's (Nottingham)
Type 3 area **Large city**	High	Low-medium	High	Derby Bristol Liverpool
Type 4 area **Small city/ large town**	Low- medium	High	Low- medium	Brighton Bedford Cardiff
Types 5 area **Suburban/ commuter town**	Low- medium	High-medium	Low	Slough Southampton Cambridge