

Justifying School... and Self

An Ethnography on Race, Recognition and Viability in Education in Ireland

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Abstract

This study draws on theorisation of ethnographic data generated in a suburban Dublin community school, during the 2007/2008 school year. ‘Dromray’, the pseudonym for the school, is situated in a region of county Dublin fictitiously named ‘Termonfort’. Termonfort has experienced some of the highest levels of change in population terms in Ireland in the past decade. Twenty-two percent of Termonfort’s inhabitants are ‘non-Irish nationals’ according to the 2006 Census, which is double the country average. Between one and two days per week were spent in the school, particularly with Junior Certificate (3rd year, usually 15 year-old) students. Time was spent observing lessons and chatting with staff and students in the staffroom, on the corridor, on the yard and while going for lunch. Recorded interviews were also conducted with students and staff, and records of 3rd year student achievement on school-set tests were taken.

The study analyses key school-social and global-local discursive relations that render institutional racism as a highly mobile process in meritocratic times. It puts forward the concept of *racist effects* as a means of analysing how ‘race’ (hierarchy), school and peer practices may be co-constructed in overt, but also oblique and contradictory ways. Concepts of global-state-school-exigency, subjectivation and identity performance, recognition and viability underpin these processes. The notion of (respectable) white-Irishness is put forward as an ambiguous normative core which is often re-effected both in oblique relations, but also directly through national/newcomer, good/bad migrant dichotomies. The study encourages a praxis which interrupts ‘racist effects’ with and beyond ‘cause-effect’ models of marginalised identities. This praxis requires the deployment of deconstructive strategies, which interrupt the privileging of white-Irishness co-constructed via self (e.g. class, gender, subculture) and school shifts (e.g. mixed ability banding and language support). The approach fundamentally demonstrates how Self and Other are situated, vulnerable and mutually implicated in processes of recognition and viability.

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I could easily come up with a lengthy list of superlatives for Professor Deborah Youdell's intellectual and personal guidance, support and exemplary academic boundary-testing. I am taking names for lifelong fan club membership instead, as 'thank you' will never quite cover it.

Learning really is a process of identity, or of working and being worked by maintained or changing cultural tools. The process is a real test of nerve(s) and wit(s). My friends, family in Mayo and elsewhere and friends/colleagues in school, St. Pats, UCC and the IoE have been outstandingly supportive, mostly by telling me things I need to hear before things I want to hear. Thanks Mark, Maevo, Rory, Jessica, John, Denis, Steve, Kathy, Eileen, Mary, Cathal, Catherine, Leona, Tricia, Róisín, Gráinne, James, Pablo, Margaret (Mam) and Colm (Dad).

Declaration

I hereby declare that, except where explicit attribution is made, the work presented in this thesis is entirely my own.

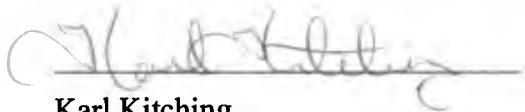
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Signed



Karl Kitching

Overview: How/why might school endure?

Generating data in this interview:

KK: [28 year-old, white-Irish, male, researcher]
MS. MORRIS: [early 30s, white-Irish, female, teacher]

KK: It's a bit unusual that the school doesn't do Leaving Cert Applied¹, isn't it?

MS. MORRIS: Mmm.

KK: And why do you think that is?

MS. MORRIS: Honestly, I think it's a school that's living on its reputation. And afraid that introducing Leaving Cert Applied will damage that reputation.

KK: But it is a community school, it wouldn't be a typical school to do that (not introduce the Leaving Cert Applied)?

MS. MORRIS: It is a community school but for a community school in Ireland... in the '80s up to the early '90s before Baltiernan, Kentstown Community Schools², Dromray picked the cream of the crop and it was very difficult to get in here. And they certainly had an idea of themselves. And it's a very different school nowadays and I think they need to address that. I can't understand why Leaving Cert Applied isn't here. It needs to be.

This thesis explores how schools and selves are maintained and changed within changing contexts, and considers what implications this might have for conceptualising institutionalised racism. It suggests that one of the ways we can understand how and why 'race' endures as a key vector of inequality is through foregrounding the complex means through which 'school' endures and is justified as a social institution. Dromray may or may not be the cream of the crop today, depending on which students were asked in various interviews. As Chapter 4 notes, it certainly has full enrolment, unlike

¹ The Leaving Certificate Applied Course (LCA) is, according to www.education.ie, a "self-contained two-year Leaving Certificate programme aimed at preparing students for adult and working life", i.e., it is a more vocational route than the traditional, more academic Leaving Certificate.

² Baltiernan and Kentstown are fictitiously named towns which developed as commuter locations just outside of county Dublin's suburban belt. They gained their own community schools some years after Dromray. A handful of students still travel to Dromray from these towns, despite having their own community school.

neighbouring Haroldstown Community School. But rather than test the quantitative validity of Ms. Morris' statement above (for example, by determining who agrees with it and what facts can back it up), I am more interested in asking questions like 'how is the idea that that the LCA is a road Dromray 'doesn't want to go down' even possible, culturally speaking'?

By reading the performance of 'race' through how one particular school justifies, maintains and delimits itself, contingent possibilities for challenging the endurance of racialised inequality arise. Despite the choreography of localised forms of racism and racialised selves in the Dublin school researched here, the theoretical plane on which the concept of racist effects works offers possibilities for schools and subjectivities in other 'new migrant' countries of recent years, post-war 'old migrant' countries which are still receiving migrants and newly emerged states asserting their nationality.

The three driving concerns of the research

There are three strands to this research which are stated separately below, but inevitably interweave. These three strands represent key concerns that have been co-constructed through the literature review, theoretical work, the research approach and the data generated. They involve:

1. Picking up and examining the thread of homogeneity as it pertains to majority national (white) Irishness in Ireland, but also with respect those constituted and homogenised as the 'newcomer' Other. This involves dealing with both the overt local specifics of 'race'³ in Ireland, but also Ireland's implication in more oblique global networks of 'race'. Given that this is something of a research lacuna in education in this country, I often look to what can be critically learned from broader Irish social research, as well as theoretical work from other globalised, liberal states;
2. Drawing on wider 'race' theories, which analyse its mutating characteristics, and are concerned with the enduring reinstatement of whiteness-as-normative/Other-as-deficient, in westernised contexts. The literature used here focuses specifically on how institutions (schools), resistant student subcultures and their wider social, political and economic contexts interact;
3. Learning from intersectional and post-structural critiques of identity-based, racist outcomes politics. These critiques emphasise the situated emergence of

³ The manner in which the term 'race' has been refuted as a biological determinant of social positions is discussed formally in Chapter 1. Inverted commas are removed from the term at that point.

selves and schools, and use a grammar that deconstructs reified, racialised identities. They might lead us to highlight how notions of anti-racist institutional ‘progress’ and policy-making can de-emphasise relationality and context in schools. These ideas are helpful in drawing implications for the praxis side of the study.

The three strands are important to take note of at this point, as they are not dealt with in a chronological manner in each chapter. While some aspects are highlighted over others at various times for various purposes, the strands are largely interwoven throughout the work.

Racist effects

These strands work together to develop an understanding of institutional racism as currently emergent through a late modern process of ‘racist effects’. The key understandings of this process are:

- Racialisation is a multivalent cultural politics involving relationships that are maintained or change over time, e.g. the school-social and local-global;
- Racist outcomes may be *processed directly* via recognised (racialised) selves, but racism may also unexpectedly, obliquely interweave with other social positions in the unstable, often contradictory articulation of viability;
- A deconstruction of rhetorically inclusive or progressive liberal state governance is constantly required to foreground the ongoing elision of institutionally racist processes.

The concept of *racist effects* is helpful to understanding the internal-external cultural politics through which liberal institutions might recognise racist outcomes and yet be constantly implicated in these outcomes as they maintain their viability. *Racist effects* interrogates the assumption of liberatory political action based on racist outcomes, and interrupts the sometimes contradictory and enduring socialisation of ‘deficiency’ in liberal times. As I demonstrate, the importance of a racist effects approach is that it can produce contingent tools for praxis in the situated contexts of race and school’s articulation.

Initial chapters (1-4)

The first chapter explores notions of institutional racism in education, and considers how identities might be recognised and addressed in unequal circumstances. It also briefly sketches some research on schooling and inequality in Ireland. Drawing on the

political and conceptual issues raised in Chapter 1, Chapter 2 outlines three key dynamics for analysing 'race' through schooling. The concept of *global-state-school exigency* refers to the permeability of governance and regulation. The concept of *recognition and viability* refers to a process of subjectivation: how contexts and selves co-emerge and are variously valued and performed (e.g. good studenthood, resistant subculture). The concept of *racist effects* is also developed and outlined in greater detail in this chapter. Using these concepts, Chapter 3 examines the politics of knowledge around 'race' in Irish education and social policy, and traces some ambiguities that arise around any notions of discrete 'white-Irishness'.

Ethnographic chapters (5-8): analysing how practice complicates 'things'

Zavos (2008) suggests that one way in which majority ethno-national dominance is reproduced in Greek state multicultural policy is the lack of contextualisation and depoliticisation of who migrants are, and where and when they are 'received'. This decontextualisation might lead to homogenised, superior/deficit identity categories such as 'national/migrant', somewhat devoid of situated practice. The first national report on new migrant students in Ireland has interestingly categorised these diverse students as 'newcomers' (Smyth et al., 2009). With these issues in mind, Chapter 4 takes up the ethnographic challenge of reading situated, multiply constituted institutional and identity practices. This chapter turns on itself, constantly troubled by productions and reproductions of Dromray Community School. Each of the four main data chapters that follow explore foundational issues about how practice is discursively configured, justified and maintained in Dromray and in new migrant Termonfort. Throughout Chapters 5 – 8, I draw on socio-historical ideas to provide alternative readings and to unearth potential tools for politicising race in education. The permeability of governance in practice is used in order to examine constraints, interrupt racist effects and produce new possibilities. The theorisation of practice itself is, through ethnographic data, potentially made politically useful through the identification of situated deconstructive tools.

Chapters 5 and 6 examine *tacit* discourses: the spatial and temporal organisation of school, home and identities in Dromray. Chapter 5 specifically concerns itself with how spatial boundaries are formed, used and redrawn physically and symbolically in this new migrant school. It particularly focuses on class-race, school/home and Extranational/National bodies and boundary lines. Chapter 6 interrogates the temporality of discourses around learning, in order to critique the deficit-implying notion that ability is a fixed, embodied essence. This critique is particularly necessary

as Dromray has changed to accommodate new migrant students and a more mixed ability ethos.

Chapter 7 moves to examine an *overt* discourse which has been the basis of rationalising (and rationing) formal education for new migrant students in Ireland: English language support. It considers how teacher and student practices in Dromray might iterate, ignore or invent new possibilities around what is proposed as a deracialised policy move, one that mirrors policy in other EU member states (Eurydice, 2006, Luciak, 2004). Chapter 8 finally moves to examine multivalent economies of perception around certain new migrant and/or minority ethnic students: what 'is' known and what might not be knowable about certain students in the school.

Chapter 9: What now?

O'Sullivan (2005) suggests:

for those so politically motivated, a project awaits in the re-signification of equality (in Irish education) and in the excavation of its texts to reveal their modernist origins (2005, p. 199, my parentheses).

The final chapter returns to deconstruct notions of race and institutional progression, not as a denial of political action, but as the *very means* of a political action that is both productive and constrained. It suggests that focusing simply on future equal outcomes for fixed identities *projects essentialism into the future*. Ironically, this essentialism symbolically and materially structures 'how we get there'. Chapter 9 puts forward the tools developed in Chapters 5 - 8, and suggests that the notion of a radical *iterated present* might help us see the need to always question and politicise the 'now' of school, self and 'race'. The ongoing 'racist effects' of late modernity suggest that the terms and boundaries of inclusion/exclusion that are both internal and external to school and self must be constantly interrogated in situated contexts rather than assumed. This interrogation must explore the maintenance of school and self's recognition, and view associated projects of viability as situated vulnerabilities.

Chapter 1

Conceptualising institutional racism as a multivalent process

The cultural politics of 'school', 'race' and 'progression'

This chapter begins by framing ways in which migrants, minorities and the marginalised may be/have been understood in Irish education. The Irish second level system is introduced, and the dominance of class and gender in 'inequality' research in Ireland is highlighted. It is briefly argued that official school structures and independent research concerns reflect, or are in some part related to, implicit imaginings of nationalised ethno-religious homogeneity. However, since the substance of Irish policy and deconstructions of 'white-Irish identity' are more deeply considered in Chapter 3, the second and third strands of the research (theorising 'race' in terms of school-social, global-local and identity relations) are given much greater attention in this chapter. I particularly explore some of the socio-historical mutations, or changing meanings of 'race' as a marker of hierarchy. Racialisation is posed here as filtering through education systems in a reciprocal relationship with wider economic, political and socio-cultural processes. Literature that is concerned with questions of political action within these processes is then discussed. Finally, notions of chronological institutional progression are formally problematised in light all of the above analyses.

The ultimate goal of the chapter is to test the conceptual and political limits of *discrete knowledge of racist outcomes and racialised selves*. The rationale for this goal is to interrupt the deficit thinking that implicitly occurs when treating 'race' as a singular vehicle for political action. School exclusion and inequality is regarded here as dynamic and often oblique, rather than (or as well as, or perhaps making inequality appear) static and predictably based on discretely racialised selves. The chapter ends by arguing that a sharper examination of the relationship between identity-based political action and these dynamic processes is necessary. This argument ultimately leads to a discussion around how best to understand fundamental sociological issues of agency, the body and oppression. This discussion is developed in, and largely forms the basis of Chapter 2.

Racial subtexts and inequality constructions in Ireland

Before examining the international 'race' and education literature, it is necessary to become familiar with (a) emergent research on new migrants to Ireland and (b) Irish school structures and previous research-based understandings of educational inequality.

Three broad approaches have come to prominence in researching inclusion, migration, ethnicity and 'race' in Ireland in recent times:

- There are those who argue that Ireland has to accept it is 'not homogenous any more' and thus must begin to become more inclusive;
- Some argue 'Ireland always was heterogenous', highlighting the non-recognition and exclusion of minorities and the marginalised;
- A third approach might further question the very notion of a discrete 'Irishness' itself, often drawing upon the politics of religion, class and gender within Ireland, Ireland's relationships with other national groups, and constructions and experiences of Irish minorities and Irish diasporic groups.

These approaches are not mutually exclusive, and their framing above is linked to their goal, audience and publication format. The first approach might be seen in emerging state-commissioned studies of 'newcomers' (Smyth et al, 2009), and the second in more politicised and overtly theorised work, which attempts to advance the politics of minorities (Lynch and Lodge, 2002). The third might be seen in other politicised work which targets the shifting ways in which Same/Other power relations are constructed and maintained over decades within and beyond the modernising Irish state (Lentin and McVeigh, 2006).

Social research that tends more towards the first approach might use the terms 'race' and ethnicity interchangeably, a problematic that is teased out later. Trends towards very fixed categorisations and self-reports are apparent in much research carried out for the state and the EU. A recent report from the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI), for example, refers to 'black' and 'Asian' peoples as ethnic groups who are subjects of racism (O'Connell and McGinnity, 2008)⁴. Other work in this vein indicates a very urgent need to incorporate theories of power. The European Intercultural Workplace report for Ireland (2007) discusses teachers' reporting of a 'work ethic' hierarchy amongst new migrant students unproblematically. These hierarchies are interpreted by the researchers to be due to home (cultural, religious) 'difference'. McGorman and Sugrue's (2008) extensive work provides hugely compelling claims for the need to understand the impact of migration and housing politics on the Dublin 15 region. But 'repeated reports' of Nigerian boys' (mis)behaviour from teachers are taken

⁴ This study shows that black immigrants are found to be 'nine times' more likely to be unemployed than Irish nationals and 'seven times' more likely to be discriminated against when seeking a job (O'Connell and McGinnity, 2008).

at face value as ‘challenges’ in the study. In other words, institutional racism is largely not considered a feature of school dynamics.

Lynch and Lodge’s (2002) *Equality and Power in Schools*, perhaps an early example of the second approach, places ‘minority issues’ in a ‘minority paradigm’. This paradigm appears to emerge against the dominance of Irish monocultural constructions. The ‘minority recognition’ aspect of the research itself is hugely revealing and worthwhile. But it is based on student interviews and responses to a (majority ethnic) student questionnaire about minorities, largely focusing on Irish Travellers. As Mac an Ghail indicates, this representation cannot continue with white-Irish students who have grown up with minority ethnic, migrant and Traveller peers in the 21st century: “anti-racist policy informed by a principle of exclusivity is unable to address the ethnic majority’s current experiences, concerns and anxieties” (1999, p. 142). The study does not address racism at institutional or structural level beyond implicit white/black colour dichotomies, and perhaps given the late-1990s sample population, regards streaming and tracking as more or less class-based issues. The approach potentially minimises the possibility of non-class or gender-based structuration:

The inequality experienced by the economically marginalised has its generative roots in the politico-economic domain. It would be altered if people could move out of the space of economic marginalisation, into economically advantaged social classes in society. The generative source of the inequality of many other marginalised groups, however, is in the socio-cultural domain. It is expressed as non-recognition, misrepresentation and lack of respect for cultural differences (Lynch and Lodge, 2002, p. 131).

The policy drive for inclusion in Ireland has been critiqued in the third approach as part of a liberal Irish equality ‘industry’ (Lentin and McVeigh, 2006). Contradictions regarding policy on inclusion for new migrants particularly come to the surface with this type of approach. In recent years, the Irish Department of Justice expressed ‘interculturalism’ and ‘partnership’ aspirations for their work with refugees (Interdepartmental Working Group on the Integration of Refugees, 2003). It virtually simultaneously represented (Nigerian) blackness as infecting a then thriving Irish nation and EU⁵. This official representation occurred in the lead-up to the 2004 Irish citizenship referendum:

⁵ Former Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform Michael McDowell stated on radio that the then citizenship law was being abused, and that 787 children had been born to Nigerian parents in Irish hospitals in 2003. Less than one percent of the 60,000 births in 2003 were to foreign national mothers (O’Mahony, 2004). As Hennessy (2004) relates, McDowell never actually gave a breakdown of how

People with no other claim to be present in the European Union and no substantial connection to Ireland are arranging their affairs so as to ensure the birth of a child in Ireland in order that it will acquire (Irish and EU citizenship) status and (social, economic and political) rights, with an eye to increasing the chances of the parents securing for themselves... some claim to be able to remain in Ireland or the wider EU territory or some rights within that territory (Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, 2004, p. 5).

Bryan (2008; 2007) and Devine (with Kelly, 2006; 2005) have been perhaps the most interrogative of the link between racist inequity and Irish schooling. Devine and Kelly (2006) understand the dynamics of racial inclusion and exclusion amongst peers to work with and through gender, sporting and academic ability. Bryan (2008; 2007) particularly draws upon a critical discourse approach. In one paper, she highlights how Travellers and migrants are represented and marginalised in the Irish second level Civic, Social and Political Education curriculum (Bryan, 2007). She notes the failure to acknowledge Traveller oppression as racism, stemming from the idea that racism is premised upon skin colour. She reports an overemphasis on racism as experienced by so-called illegal (black?) immigrants, “a discursive strategy which legitimates anti-immigrant sentiment and projects the blame for racism on the victims themselves” (2007, p. 251). Bryan demonstrates rhetorical strategies in curricular texts which suggest Travellers *feel* they are discriminated against, thus downplaying acknowledgement of quite brutal experiences of structural and individual racisms. She highlights how identity claims are wholly capable of being reworked and diluted through ‘political’ education curricula which assume and reinstate a neutral, even benevolent social order. In other papers (2009, 2008), Bryan excavates social and educational policy for its claims to interculturalism. She finds ultimately a reinstatement of nationalism, suggesting that in Ireland, “intercultural education is, in fact, more likely to reproduce, rather than contest racism and racist ideologies” (2008, p. 42).

Whichever approach to research-for-inclusion is used, emerging social research outside of the settled/Traveller dichotomy strongly suggests unequal patterns across minorities and relative to the ethnic majority in Ireland. These inequalities are engineered by interrelated global, national and local dynamics. Different paths are worn to Ireland and then, within Ireland, because of migrant status (e.g. highly skilled economic migrants, asylum-seekers) and residential formations (e.g. large family networks, one-parent families, single adults, unaccompanied minors, etc). At the height of applications

many of these births were to ‘non-national’ mothers living here legally. By mentioning Nigeria, McDowell played the ‘other’ card to its most powerful degree.

around 2004, asylum-seekers to Ireland mostly came from Nigeria and Romania (prior to Romanian accession to the EU; ORAC, 2004). Ireland mirrors international trends which demonstrate that contemporary asylum seekers and refugees are largely women and children (Lichtsinn and Veale, 2007). In Dublin, this population is concentrated around the inner-city and in two major suburban areas, due to social housing provision (Kelly, 2005). The little research available on institutional practices is not hugely positive. Institutional racism and a ‘difficult relationship’ with Traveller, Nigerian and Muslim communities has already been highlighted as being of critical concern within the state police body, an Garda Síochána (Ionann, 2004). At the same time as evidence of exclusion emerges, it must be borne in mind that new migrant and minority ethnic communities within Ireland are not passive, or necessarily silenced in social and educational processes. Various movements have developed in recent years, including the African and migrant women’s group AkiDwa,⁶ and diasporic education which focuses on cultural and linguistic maintenance, e.g. the Cork Polish weekend school (O’Brien and Long, 2008). The Islamic Cultural Centre of Ireland (ICCI) has existed since the 1990s, serving an ethnically diverse Muslim population⁷. These movements have been accompanied by multiple NGO supports, including the Migrant Rights Centre, the Immigrant Council of Ireland and Nasc, the Cork-based immigrant support centre.

I will locate myself within the second ‘recognition’ research camp, but simultaneously and more fundamentally in the ‘deconstructive’ camp through this study. In Chapter 3, I reference how the text of nation-state homogeneity drew/draws on subtexts of national (white-Irish) belonging, particularly when it was emergent, boundary setting, or placed in question. There are examples of a fluctuating subtext of (white) Irish privilege available historically and contemporarily, despite, or as a feature of, the early Irish state’s inward-looking focus. Issues here include the complex exclusion of Travellers, the racialisation of school admission through Catholicism, sectarian divisions, and often unrecognised discourses of white-Irish privilege in charitable work overseas. Using this socio-historical perspective, it is shown that current contradictions in Irish social and educational policy might not be solely attributable to the ‘newness’ of immigration in Ireland. Inclusion of new differences in education might not be a question of chronology, or of perfecting an already existing system: it may be a relational question of ongoing power exchange (Butler, 2004). However, Irish research constructions and

⁶ AkiDwa is an abbreviation for the Swahili ‘Akina Dada wa Africa’, meaning ‘African Sisterhood’.

⁷ The ICCI developed out of the Dublin Islamic Society, founded by Muslim students in 1959.

school structures that do not take account of, or are unwittingly implicated in a subtext of seeing ‘race’ as a ‘newcomer’ issue should by no means be dismissed. They have their own important merits and developments, particularly in terms of understanding class and gender in education in Ireland. While ‘race’ is not directly used in such research as a vector of power, it is centrally important to keep in mind how ethnicity-religion, class and gender are produced by and productive of implicitly *national(ist)* boundary setting, through school provision and research agendas. These research and school trends are briefly sketched below.

Looking at class, gender and school provision in Ireland

Critiques of entitlement and privilege in school admission and school outcomes are strong in Ireland. Social class has intuitively become and continues to be the most prominent concern in inequality research in education, perhaps followed by gender (e.g. Downes and Gilligan, 2007; O’Sullivan, 2005, Lynch and Lodge, 2002). The above research also recognises ethno-religious and/or sectarian exclusions, as class and gender dynamics have been historically mediated through the dominance of a *de facto* institutionalised Church: Roman Catholicism⁸. There are three main types of post-primary school provision in Ireland:

1. Voluntary secondary/religious-run sector⁹;
2. Vocational school sector, and
3. Community/comprehensive school sector¹⁰.

Research substantively outside of ‘race’ very much demonstrates the strong protection of certain Irish schools’ and students’ interests and positions. Lynch and Moran (2006) argue that there is a strong convertibility of economic capital *outside* the public education system, which impacts on classed student inequality. This includes parents’ use of direct economic resources to send their children to private or shadow education. However, it is also argued in *Equality and Power in Schools* (Lynch and Lodge, 2002) that the Irish secondary school plays an important role in its own survival, perhaps even when the catchment area is limited to more ‘working class clientele’. The three sectors are associated with established class differences, with respect to academic/professional

⁸ Catholicism was instituted as having a ‘special position’ in the 1937 Constitution. Ireland moved to being a secular state by referendum in 1972.

⁹ The term ‘secondary’ specifically applies to religious-run schools, while ‘post-primary’ is the wider term used to describe all schools at this level. These schools are largely run by either Catholic (in the vast majority), or Church of Ireland management.

¹⁰ This study’s ethnographic work is based in one community school. Their constitution as a more equitable school provider (as Ireland began looking economically outward) is sketched in Chapter 3.

and technical/manual divisions of labour. Almost half of students in secondary schools are recorded as coming from middle and upper middle class backgrounds. This drops to one-third in community/comprehensive, and one quarter in vocational schools (Hannan et al., 1996). 50% of students on average do not attend their nearest school: this figure rises to 58% in secondary and drops to 30% for community/comprehensive schools (Smyth et al., 2004, Hannan et al., 1996). There are numerous criteria affecting initial student intake. More than one-fifth of schools operate limiting student admission criteria, particularly single-sex schools. Not having a sibling in a particular school constrains entry to most schools, as does not coming from a linked, feeder school (Smyth et al., 2004, Hannan et al., 1996). Schools, Lynch (1989) demonstrates, operate unofficial yet equally strong dynamics of (class) exclusion: a 'hidden curriculum' of school traditions, extracurricular activities, sports, pressure of voluntary contributions (indirect fees and internal school privatisation) and uniforms. The school's inherited, classed identity is seen as playing a major role in its attraction of middle class families (Lynch and Lodge, 2002). Public knowledge of 'desirable schools' is available through broadsheet publications of the top feeder schools to universities and local parent networks. Such knowledge has somewhat intensified due to a recent move by the Department of Education and Science (DES) to publish whole school evaluations (Sugrue, 2006).

Alternative routes to achievement in post-primary education, such as the Junior Certificate Schools Programme (JCSP), have been evaluated to a very vague extent, suggesting slight increases in student retention without accompanying data on actual student achievement (DES, 2005b). There are indications from the DES' only report on the JCSP that its students, who are 'at risk' of early school leaving, are tracked into different classrooms and have a lower range of subject choices, should they stay to Leaving Certificate. Additionally, its curriculum is unproblematically reported as often used for students with special educational needs (SEN). Indications are that the move in certain schools in Ireland and internationally towards 'detracking', or the creation of mixed ability groups, is only likely to have an impact if institutional structures, teacher expectations, curricula and forms of instruction change (Rubin, 2006). In other words, teaching 'mixed ability' groups still leads to inequitable outcomes if all that changes is the grouping of bodies and not a lecture-style pedagogy. This has already been echoed in research on Irish primary schooling: little has changed with regard to the lower achievement of students in designated disadvantaged schools, despite a move to smaller class sizes (Eivers et al., 2004).

Ireland has an unusually high number of single sex (Catholic) schools, catering for 38% of the second level student population (DES, 2004). This ethno-religious institutional differentiation infers historically heteronormative constructions of student gender-sexuality (Inglis, 1998). The number and type of subjects provided in Ireland often reflects the gender and social class mix within schools (Smyth and Darmody, 2007, Hannan et al., 1983). Girls are far less likely to be offered, or choose, technological subjects such as engineering/metal work and materials construction/woodwork. No girls' secondary school in Ireland provided metalwork as an exam subject in the 2003 Junior Certificate (Smyth and Darmody, 2007). Recent research indicates that while some changes have occurred, schools in Ireland remain largely unchallenged sites of overt homophobia and extreme, institutionally accepted heterosexism (Mayock et al., 2009; 2007; O'Higgins-Norman et al., 2006).

It is worth noting at this point how existing texts around class are being reconfigured in Ireland by forces that work within and across the boundaries of the state. Lynch and Moran (2006) argue that the education system might not need to work on overtly formalised market structures in producing classed inequality. Ireland may have a *de facto* highly divided school marketplace, driven by forces internal (religious heritage and parental rights) and external (clientalism and family/individual choice) to the state. The *de facto* nature of these processes may mean that the ideology of 'market choice'

Has limited resonance with education stakeholders... because choice already exists but within a more morally plausible discourse of religious and parental freedom. Parents are defined as the 'primary and natural educators' of the child under the Irish Constitution (Article 42) and are free to send their children to any school they wish. While options are limited by school transport arrangements, local regulations regarding school 'catchment' areas and, where it arises, personal resources, there is a great deal of flexibility in the system (Lynch and Moran, 2006, p. 224).

Mercantile and theological paradigms have been complexly theorised by O'Sullivan (2005) as intertextually working in Irish education, and will be further considered in Chapter 3. Their forces may work reciprocally, suggesting Irish post-primary schooling has both its own specific dynamics, and a number of transnational parallels. Perhaps most importantly for the purposes of this study, the above quote disrupts any notion that schooling in Ireland is nationally, culturally or socially bounded, i.e., that it is exempt from global or transnational cultural, economic and social patterns.

The contemporary dynamics of 'choice' in Irish schooling cannot be seen to be 'just about class or gender'; they carry a now emergent text, and have always had a subtext

around migration, race and constructions of Same-Irish and Other-Newcomer. Since little critical qualitative work has been done on these dynamics in education in Ireland, a later section examines how racist hierarchy might be emergent and enduring in education systems elsewhere. First however, it is necessary to take *the* step back and sketch how and why ‘race’ emerged socio-historically to have significantly enduring effects and dynamic appearances.

Questions and mutations on ‘race’ and power: progress from deficiency?

The term ‘race’ has developed in sociology to signify a highly mobile, shifting, yet enduring marker of inequality historically, infused with varying conflicts, research approaches and social movements. While other descriptors (class, gender, etc.) might have the possibility of endurance and avowal through shifts and repositionings, ‘race’ has been highly excavated for its mobility, and ability to contradict or undermine apparently ‘race’ conscious, liberal western school systems.

‘Race’ must be understood as referring to much more than groups of humans divided according to politically neutral physical differences or phenotypes. While it is heavily related to ‘ethnicity’, ‘religion’ and ‘culture’, ‘race’ cannot be rendered empirically synonymous with these terms. Paraphrasing Hall (1990) provides useful distinctions between ‘race’ and ethnicity:

- ‘Race’ can be understood as an organising discursive category of ‘natural, immutable difference’ around which has been constructed a system of socio-economic, socio-political and socio-cultural power, exploitation and exclusion, i.e., racism.
- ‘Ethnicity’ can be understood as generating a discourse where difference is grounded in cultural and religious features. The articulation of difference with nature is often again present, but with ethnicity, this articulation can be displaced through a focus on kinship and marriage (cited in Gunaratnam, 2003).

Polygenism was one of the original colonial concepts of ‘race’, which designated different human origins, biological inheritances and most crucially, different places in a hierarchy of superiority and deficiency. This emerged to guard an orthodox Christianity against growing discoveries of the Other, and to support slave trading (Spencer, 2006). Banton (1979) suggests much of the political ideology behind race stems from the pre-Darwinian doctrine that “natural variations were to be interpreted as deviations from

pure types” (1979, p. 16). Historian Audrey Smedley delineates the epistemological basis of a racist science as entailing

(1) the classification of human groups as “discrete and biotic entities” measured by physical and behavioral variations; (2) an inegalitarian ethos that required hierarchical ordering of human types; (3) the belief that outer physical characteristics were but markers of inner intellectual, moral, or temperamental qualities; (4) the notion that these qualities were heritable; and (5) the belief that the “imputed differences, believed fixed and unalterable, could never be bridged or transcended” (Smedley, 1963, p. 27 in Jacobson, 1998, p. 32).

Various enduring typologies emerged through polygenist, pseudo-scientific discourses. In Sweden for example, Linnaeus’ biological classification system asserted that the Americanus (Native American) was reddish and temperamental, the Africanus black, relaxed and negligent, the Asiaticus sallow, avaricious and easily distracted, and the Europeanus white, gentle and inventive (Hällgren and Weiner, 2006).

Rizvi states:

Racism is an ideology which is continually changing, being challenged, interrupted and reconstructed, and which often appears in contradictory forms. As such, its reproduction in schools, and elsewhere, can be expected to be complex, multifaceted and historically specific (Rizvi, 1993, p. 15).

Foucault also suggests race struggle/oppression is “a discourse that has a great ability to circulate, a great aptitude for metamorphosis, or a sort of strategic polyvalence” (Foucault, 2004, p. 77). Sketching discourses around immigration to the United States in the 19th and 20th century provides useful examples of how an overtly biologist, racist ‘explanation’ of inequality mutated, but held its own, as new ‘Others’ crossed US borders. Banks (2004) describes the ‘science’ of ‘race’ as further taking hold as masses of European (Irish, German, Italian, Polish) immigrants posed a threat to the old stock white Americans. Interweaving discourses of evolutionism and of ‘race’ *as class* and *as culture (religion, ethnicity)* moved dominating narratives beyond simpler notions of ‘non-white deficiency’ in the 19th century at this time. A nativist Anglo-American paradigm emerged, deploying craniometry to claim that southern, central and eastern Europeans were genetically inferior to northern and western Europeans. Black and Jewish peoples were also pronounced intellectually inferior using these methods.

Writers variously used genetics, and parallels with the animal kingdom in terms of species and subspecies of human, implying or overtly stating social Darwinism as a fact

of human existence¹¹. This survival of the fittest discourse was widely accepted in public policy. It was a useful justification for not tackling poverty, as racial deficiency was viewed as poverty's 'cause'. Practices that may today be more linked to the power dynamics of spurious racial meanings, social class and social distinction, were viewed as a consequence of biological distinction (Spencer, 2006). Reinforcing and producing discourses of 'race' and class were vectors of gender and sexuality, perhaps most commonly through miscegeny taboos. Notions of miscegeny particularly revealed the social reach of racial categorising and boundary setting, well beyond simplistic notions of skin colour. The famous 'one drop rule' compelled mixed race children in America to *be black*, given they had at least 'one drop' of African blood. This had the effect of policing and 'safeguarding' whites, to ensure that miscegenation did not occur in their communities (Somers and Gibson, 1994).

Race as ethnicity? Making culture a quasi-embodied, superior/deficient trait

Around this time, biological theories of 'race' were being undermined by the work of W.E.B. Dubois and the Chicago school of sociology, amongst others. Yet despite protests from social scientists from marginalised ethnic communities, a eugenicist, anti-immigration US Congressional Committee concluded in 1911 that there were significant intellectual differences between immigrant groups. Eugenicist movements still had important political force in the US, particularly in the pre-World War 2 era.

An ethnicity-based paradigm first challenged biological notions of race in the US (Omi and Winant, 1994), and remains widely used even today (see the reference to O'Connell and McGinnity [2008], above). This paradigm was politically important in dislodging biologism and arguing for rights and recognition. However, its development also had costs and limits: its use of *physical difference as an indicator of ethnicity* was "solidly based in the framework of European (white) ethnicity, and could not appreciate the extent to which racial inequality differed from ethnic inequality" (Omi and Winant, 1994, p. 16). In many ways, ethnicity theory simply reclassified 'race' as an inevitable socio-cultural, rather than natural hierarchy, where deficit was *still embodied through culture* as opposed to (or alongside) phenotype. Its use of *white minority ethnic group success* as referent for its theory of the varying economic, political and social fate of all immigrants failed to account for the racist, structural exclusion of non-whites.

¹¹ Key texts drawn on for these arguments included Darwin's *On the Origin of the Species* and Cuvier's *Animal Kingdom*.

It is worthy of note from the US example how political exigencies continuously influence how 'race' becomes depoliticised and used in research. Social inclusion via ethnic assimilation was politically, economically and morally necessary to legitimise the US as a post World War enlightened, world leader (Omi and Winant, 1994). Contradictorily, civil rights reform in the US may not have happened, were it not initially couched in such depoliticised, 'enlightened' terms (Winant, 2002). Despite later rights and recognitions, the broad economic, social and cultural integration of whites failed to happen for non-whites in the US. Ethnicity theory could be inadvertently used to blame racialised minorities for their 'lack of integration', or more accurately, 'failure to assimilate'. In addition, this theory would recognise various certain (white) ethnic groups, but render black US Americans as ethnically homogenous. To this day, the ethnic and national groups that interweave across the terms 'black', 'Asian' and 'Hispanic' (e.g. African-American, Mexican, Vietnamese, Chinese) are far more likely to be racially collapsed when compared with the diversification of American whites (Irish, Jewish, Italian, Anglo). Cultural difference frameworks carry an assumption of progression, and became orthodoxy in Europe also. As Lentin (2004) notes, Claude Levi-Strauss' replacement of race 'pseudo-science' with 'cultural difference' has been central to UNESCO's global teleological tradition in anti-racism. Levi-Strauss viewed progress as coming about as a result of the interaction between groups. The 'historical chance' that modernity took hold in the West, in this view, meant other cultures that came into contact experienced more 'rapid progress'. Those remaining isolated did not (Lentin, 2004). Thus, while there has been a recent trend of naming culturalism as the 'new racism' in education (Bonilla-Silva, 2005), the history of knowledge-politics around race suggest culturalism may have emerged decades previously from good intentions: to dispel biologism.

The historical effects of powerful ideas about a fixed racial nature, boundaries and hierarchies are often regarded as having congealed through, and *as* social structures. A racialised social system is a largely structural concept now widely used to describe a patterned set of phenomena, where "economic, political, social and ideological levels are particularly structured by the placement of actors in racial categories or races" (Bonilla-Silva 2005, p. 11). While fundamental 'race'-difference is now widely accepted¹² as a biological fiction, the fact that 'race' is still widely employed to make

¹² Tenuous links were drawn recently between the signifiers of race and IQ in Herrnstein and Murray's *The Bell Curve* (1994). It is not difficult to undermine the claims of the book, given that it made basic mistakes about the fidelity of quantitative statistics and clearly twists its own 'science' to racist effect. For example, the authors assume correlation statistics imply cause-effect relationships, and they go as far as

sense of group circumstances as well as to partially signify the distribution of political, economic and cultural privilege means it must be continuously referred to and problematised. Having sketched how biologist claims of ‘race’ were somewhat replaced with culturalism, and how the term can be considered to refer to the structuring of inequality, I will proceed to use the term ‘race’ and ‘racial’ without single inverted commas, except where they are being emphasised or particularly problematised.

Signposting around race, progress and institutions

Dealing with problems and knowledges around the idea of ‘race’ in education are very much part of this work. The problem of ‘progressing’ from biologist race-science to virtual ‘embodiment’ of culture may be an example of a routine failure to adequately deal with the elision of structural racism, and changes in how race is made known. The manner in which ‘progress’ and racial deficiency become linked within the racist effects of late modernity will build as a thread of this thesis over the coming chapters.

Issues with naming race and using race-identity in theory and politics (whiteness studies, critical race theory, white-Irishness, etc.) are returned to in due course. For now, I wish to particularly consider the endurance of racial hierarchy in education. Below, I examine ways in which race inequality is reiterated as education systems are multiply maintained and reworked in translating school-social, and local-global relations. Part of the purpose of the forthcoming section is to think of change around race in schools not chronologically or progressively, but in terms of shifting and maintained relationships of policy and practice on state, local, and global planes. The term ‘racialisation’ has a variety of interpretations for analysis purposes (Murji and Solomos, 2005). Here, I view the term racialisation as referring to a dynamic cultural politics as opposed to a linear process. As previously noted, there is a lack of conceptualising around *race* in the Irish education research. Yet I attempt to refer back to the initial section on Ireland when discussing wider issues of inclusion/exclusion in modern societies and schools.

Race in education: School-social relations

The idea of race as a structural category helped initially to think about institutional racism beyond a sum of individual-psychological attitudes and biases. Gillborn (1990) initially described institutional racism as ‘prejudice plus power’. Individual and group

converting scores from other people’s studies into IQ scores (Kamin, 1999). The main sources used in the book were part of the *Mankind Quarterly*-Pioneer Fund circle, a journal and foundation respectively that have questionable backers and links to eugenicist ideas (Lane, 1999). The authors construct an argument about East Asians having the greatest IQ advantage before their discussion of black-white difference. Lane (1999) argues that this prepares the reader to accept racial categories as units of analysis, and arguably to see links between race and IQ as unproblematic.

prejudices were thought to interact with structural positions “whereby the individual or group has the power to influence others’ experience and life chances” (1990, p. 8). Rizvi (1993) states:

First, the notion of institutional racism highlights the idea that the defence of a system from which advantage is derived is based on a pattern of racial differentiation. Racism is thus viewed as a structural relationship based on the subordination of one group by another (1993, pp. 9 - 10).

Rejecting individual attitudes as the (only) source of wider social exclusion, social formations were assumed “to be constituted by the presence of homogenous groups which have hierarchical relationships with each other” (Rizvi, 1993, p. 10). Racism within institutions and racist outcomes (such as the educational ‘achievement gap’ or ‘debt’) can be understood as overlapping with and made meaningful through wider social processes. It is often argued racism works at a covert level. For example, it is suggested that depoliticised and ‘deracialised’ social and educational policy often fails to recognise the material circumstances of black and/or minority ethnic groups through universalising statements. Legislation that is seemingly equitable and common-sense can disproportionately affect racialised minorities. For example, the Unauthorised Encampment Order made ‘trespassing’ illegal in Northern Ireland in 2005, thus preemptively criminalising Traveller and other nomadic peoples. ‘Zero tolerance’ policies on drugs and crime can disproportionately affect certain black youth in the US (Giroux, 2001) and elsewhere. Parental involvement in schools is unequally influenced by a ‘one size fits all’ approach (Crozier, 2001). Furthermore, notions of nationalism and national spirit have long been regarded as subtly deploying exclusionary race-thinking (Gillborn, 2008; Spencer, 2006). This point has been taken up in works such as *There Ain’t no Black in the Union Jack* (Gilroy, 2002) and in UK education policy critique in terms of ‘cultural restorationism’ (Gillborn, 1997). Finally, racialisation can be obliquely drawn upon and perpetuated within apparently race-sensitive policy itself. Notions of community cohesion and community policing are examples of nationalistic discourses which implicitly prioritise surveillance of racialised minorities over social cohesion (Pilkington, 2008). Anti-racist educational policy often strikes liberatory postures in the UK, but frequently encodes deficit perspectives of black children, their parents and communities (Gillborn 2006). These issues are further considered in Chapter 2.

Class and other social positionings

Race inequality in education may be intimately bound to a lack of understanding of the links between race and other social positions. But explanations of these processes are

the stuff of great debate. Robert Miles developed a Marxist-inspired theory of race through class structure. Avoiding race as a 'real' or useful category for analysis, Miles interpreted racialisation as a process fundamental to capital accumulation for states. Miles' view of racialisation has been important in pinpointing the concealment of conflict and politics within everyday social processes (Lentin and McVeigh, 2006) and for somewhat capturing the shifting manifestations of racism in different historical periods. Discourses of multiculturalism in education in Britain have been described from a quasi-Marxist perspective as a surface rhetoric on the part of the liberal state to contain minority interests and to defuse conflict; thus maintaining the conditions necessary for capital accumulation. As an ideological slogan system, this interpretation argues multiculturalism elides economic and social processes (Troyna and Williams, 1986). Multiculturalism has been critiqued as a 'minimalist' version of recognition and equality, which only grants access to institutions that may reproduce inequality (Rizvi, 1993). The lack of understanding of class as key to the life experiences and practices of various minority ethnic groups is regarded by Troyna and Williams (1986) as a fundamental flaw with multiculturalism: it again interprets minority ethnic life practices as determined by 'their cultures', thus essentialising them and refusing to take account of how such practices are infused with socio-economic positioning. Socioeconomic position has been regarded as perhaps the most crucial factor in British school achievement, one that destabilises any homogenous picture of achievement-by-ethnicity, and vice versa. These categories of course, are also inflected with gender (Gillborn and Mirza, 2000).

Certainly, arguing for the importance of class might help foreground how race inequality in schools must refer to wider social processes. But class reductionism has been criticised in terms of how seriously it takes the endurance of marked *racial* prejudice within school systems and policies. Class-based explanations of race may also elide the fact that economic circumstances are not as significant for all racialised students (Gillborn, 2008). A class-based view can tie the dynamics and complexity of race-formation to economic shifts. Furthermore, the subsuming of racism into notions of 'inner-city' problems has long been criticised, e.g. by the British Swann Report (1985), and likewise in terms of its connotations around 'urban' US students (Leonardo, 2007)¹³.

¹³ It is worth noting that one of the most well-respected research studies carried out in the pre-migration period in Ireland was Lynch's *Hidden Curriculum* (1989), using a neo-Marxist framework. This work focused on the specifics of class and gender in schools, but equally how schools *maintain their legitimacy*

Gender, sexuality, dis/ability, parental/family interests and multiple other social positionings impact upon policy which targets racialisation, and vice versa. For example, the overrepresentation of black (male) students in special educational needs (SEN) designations means that decisions on special education are more likely to disproportionately affect certain families (Artiles et al., 2006). Diniz (2003) has argued that SEN research in Scotland can elide substantial politics of race and ethnicity through a prioritisation of 'linguistic competency' issues. The intersectional dynamics of multiple social positions with race are drawn out as the study progresses.

Within local school walls: institutional discipline with and through race

Artificially locating institutional racism 'within school walls', we may understand it as the systematic, differential treatment of students and families with and through social (racialised) positioning. It may manifest itself in social exclusion, overt racial discrimination, failure to actively adopt an antiracist stance, or failure to interrupt the reproduction of inequalities. Richardson (2003) offers one definition amongst many for schools:

The term 'institutional racism' should be understood to refer to the way a school may systematically or repeatedly treat, or tend to treat, people differently in respect of race, ethnicity, culture or religion. So we are not talking about individual teachers, but about the net effect of what they do... a second source of institutional racism is our culture, the culture of the teaching profession as a whole, the culture of the individual staffroom. The occupational culture within the teaching profession, given the fact that the majority of teachers are white, tends to revolve around white experiences, white beliefs, and white values (2003, p. 299).

Gillborn (1990) suggests ethnocentrism is a key way in which 'well-meaning' teachers can act to racist effect within the boundaries of the school. The costs of assumptions about students – including 'positives' about British Chinese students - have been made repeatedly apparent. Archer and Francis (2007) relate one British Chinese mother's account of how her son's teachers expect him to be upfront and participate, when he would rather be quiet and 'absorb knowledge':

Her son's behaviour is constructed and interpreted through Enlightenment and Orientalist lenses as deferent and 'passive'... such subdued learner behaviour is in turn constructed as inappropriate within a Western model that valorises learning by (active, assertive) questioning (Archer and Francis, 2007, p. 87).

through universal provision aspects. As it will later become clear, this thesis has developed to share the notion of 'justifying school', without using class as foundational.

The above raises a number of questions about the extent to which this child's teachers will view him as succeeding, given the norms of 'correct' learner behaviour articulated above. Many researchers have exposed prejudice within schools in terms of both positive and negative discrimination, reiterating the salience of skin colour, cultural and religious background in experiences of school and achievement. These include the construction of black youth styles as a threat to school authority, and constitutions of Asian students as model minorities (Archer and Francis, 2007; Youdell, 2003; Connolly, 1998; Gillborn, 1990, Mac an Ghail, 1988). Such work helps understand how particular students may be constructed as pre-dispositioned/in opposition to academic effort through routinised school notions of 'ideal client' students. It also helps understand why certain students overtly or strategically resist the social position that schools can reproduce through its own micro-structures, teacher and peer cultures. Despite 'new ethnicities', inter-ethnic alliances and the destabilisation of terms like 'black' and 'white' (Hall, 1992), peer racisms can constantly emerge on the back of elided race inequalities, e.g. "white youth always have racist mythology and structures to fall back on despite their (sometimes genuine) espousal of 'equal opportunities' catechisms" (Gillborn, 1997, p. 347).

In *Rationing Education*, Gillborn and Youdell (2000) offer an important explanation of racialised and classed exclusion in English schools emerging as a function of both school and student viability. 'Educational triage' is a concept coined in the study, describing "a means by which scarce resources are rationed, leaving some to perish while others survive" (Gillborn and Youdell, 2000, pp. 133 – 134). Schools may focus their resources towards students who are most likely to push their league table standing up (measured by GCSE grades). This includes lower tracks, where the conversion of a 'D' to a 'C' grade is valuable to the school's overall performance. As Gillborn and Youdell (2000) describe, educational triage relies upon a fixed notion of ability and the subsequent ability to 'predict' which students will succeed. It presumes 'underachievement' as something that can be known and acted upon. This, they suggest is a 'new IQism' which perhaps effects a re/production of social Darwinist class-race-IQ links. Those who 'underachieve' and those who are considered 'beyond help' are those at the bottom of race and class hierarchies. Gillborn (2002) further delineates how 'ability' is *practiced from* in schools as largely immutable, and quantifiable (e.g., through standardised tests). *Rationing Education* returns the review to the dynamics of global, school and social relations, and particularly to the local specifics of modern competitive individualism.

Global-local relations: A key shift in privilege/deficiency formation

Individualising, neo-liberal shifts in economic and social policies cannot be disregarded as wider, constantly cited logics which translate locally to engineer contemporary social hierarchies (Youdell, 2004). These shifts are often mentioned in the same breath as ‘global economics’, but do not and should not imply a reduction to labour and trade. The globalisation of socio-cultural and socio-political formations equally infuses economic processes. According to Bale (2008), some of the most common interpretations of globalisation prioritise changes in temporal and spatial organisation. As a result of globalisation, worldwide social relations intensify, distant localities shape and are shaped by each other, the constraints of geography on economic, political, social and cultural arrangements recede, and practice is reconfigured in certain ways. Two key processes occurring within late modern times, according to Bale (2008) are:

- Mass migration, changing and intensifying border control and the unsettled nature of certain states, e.g. such as Kosovo-Serbia or Moldova-Romania. The enduring and growing presence of national minorities and diasporic groups across European states troubles the originating meaning of ‘state’ as ‘sovereign (ethnic) nation’ (e.g. nationalists in Scotland, republicans in Northern Ireland and new migrants in Ireland),
- The adoption of market economics and the varying extents to which states adopt social democratic, liberal or conservative welfare regimes (which address priorities such as poverty, income inequality and gender equality). Ireland and the UK are considered by Bale (2008) to be somewhat in the middle ‘liberal’ state category.

It is often argued that the most damaging aspect of neo-liberal shifts is the manner in which they move responsibility for quality of life further away from the state and more into the hands of the individual, regardless of his/her material circumstances. Using a more socio-economic basis, Michael Apple’s words capture some key aspects of neo-liberal logics:

What has been accomplished is the successful translation of an economic doctrine into the language of experience, moral imperative and common sense. The free-market ethic has been combined with populist politics. This has meant the blending together of a “rich mix” of themes that have had a long history – nation, family, duty, authority, standards and traditionalism – with other thematic elements that have also struck a resonant chord during a time of crisis. These latter themes include self-interest, competitive individualism...and antistatism (Apple, 2000, p. 22).

A number of macro-level parallels have been drawn between a hegemonic, conservative whiteness, and neo-liberal translations into education (e.g. Giroux, 2005; McLaren and Muñoz, 2005; Apple, 2000). Indeed, both phenomena are considered to share common characteristics in their ability to adapt and intersect with multiple public policy logics. McLaren (1997) argues that both conservative and liberal multiculturalism are really about the politics of assimilation because both assume a ‘mythic’ egalitarian culture. Race-neutral perspectives on education can represent so-called deficiency as an individual phenomenon, absolving education systems of the responsibility to actively culture the success of their students (Ladson-Billings, 2004). Nikolas Rose provides a most evocative description of the impact these ideas have. Neo-liberal governments assume subjects who are free and rational agents of democracy. This demands something else of the self, that s/he:

is ‘capable of bearing the serious burdens of liberty’... each individual must render his or her life meaningful, as if it were the outcome of individual choices made in the furtherance of the biographical project of self-realization ([1991, p. 12] in Walkerdine et al., 2001, p. 2).

Part of the acceptability of such individualising work may be due to an over-emphasis on the autonomy of the *self* in fragmented ‘risk’ societies, where the project of self-invention is equalised as everyone’s burden. The refined structuring of school competition and school markets - which prioritises viable students and schools – may be a key factor in compounding the overlap between structural racism and institutional outcomes (Gillborn and Youdell, 2000). In these senses, the ‘extra-state’ aspect of globalisation and individualisation is simultaneously a local-level issue: it quite directly speaks to less linear practices of the self and understandings of the local.

Local translations and actions: Ireland and the self

As briefly read earlier, the Irish context has its own specificities around religious and parental rights which interact with schools’ positionings, producing a particular type of competitive individualism on the part of schools and families (Lynch and Moran, 2006). Globalising cannot exist without the local self; indeed evidence suggests that local formations of community remain comparatively strong in Ireland (O’Connor, 2008). Particular local-global translations in Ireland are mentioned below.

- Ni Laoire et al. (2009) conducted a compelling study of children who have migrated to Ireland from Africa, Latin America, central and eastern Europe. They also studied ‘returning Irish’ children. The research demonstrated the transnational childhoods of certain central and eastern European children, who

attend school in Ireland but spend summers in, e.g., Poland. There was evidence of hybridisation of styles (e.g. Cork-based Nigerian boys consuming gangsta rap clothing) in negotiating local and global planes of acceptability.

- Work on Irish youths' gendered narratives has productively used individualism as a construct to read youth as no longer a preparation for adulthood, but a reflexive project of the 'becoming' self in its own right (O'Connor, 2008). O'Connor's study found some young peoples' feeling of having 'no time' due to planned sporting, or the control of their lives through a dictated timetable: school, homework, part-time jobs, etc. Both the presence and absence of gender structuring was of note, as girls that referenced an ambitious contingent future "completely ignored possible difficulties as regards reconciling work and family" (p. 76). While varied in its emphasis, there was a strong reference to the local in the texts through family in particular, but also through references to place and sporting activities.
- Inglis (2003) depicts a move towards overt individualism as somewhat based around a shift away from a Catholic, shared denial to one of the pleasures of consumption¹⁴.
- Phenomena such as 'extended adolescence' in higher-income families and the early onset of 'adult' responsibilities for working class young people in Ireland and the US suggest a patterned and fundamentally unequal dynamic continues in both new and old ways. These include earlier parenthood, jobseeking and being out of home (Mayock and Carr, 2008, Arnett, 2001).

Later in the thesis, notions of relationality and vulnerability are drawn upon as a means of countering somewhat disabling notions of individualism and fragmented community, as well as notions of meritocratic autonomy and binary identities (e.g. Irish/Newcomer, white/black, etc; Adams, 2003). The very notion of 'shifts' in school-society relationships infers human practice and meaning-making, suggesting that enduring inequality might be more about interrelated practices than the simple transmission of educational failure to passive recipients. A complex interaction is apparent in the literature on school resistances and subcultures, for example. It is particularly important to highlight youth's meaning making and negotiations, and that students who might be particularly marked by unequal structural and institutional processes do not passively

¹⁴ Notably, the Conference of the Religious in Ireland (CORI) has argued for a return to communitarian values and welfare statism in the wake of the recession (Burke-Kennedy, 2009).

accept marginalisation from day to day. Students can constantly test and expose the limits of these choreographed mind/body, work/leisure white/black, school/home, male/female teacher/student dichotomies in practice. Certain overt and subtle resistances reveal that enduring inequality is never a *fait accompli*.

Taking action? Subculture and resistance to institutional exclusion

The notion of 'subculture' often conveys a closed status of subaltern difference in opposition to a group labelled as mainstream. This may include minority ethnic subcultures, L/G/B/T/Q subcultures, etc. *Subcultural* groups are often self-positioned or reciprocally positioned by mainstream discourses as deviant. Youth in Ireland, as a broader subcultural formation, are not dissimilar in their frequent mainstream positioning as having problems or being problematic (Devlin, 2005). The term 'subculture' is at times synonymised with working class, poor and minority ethnic youth, but also with the politically radical, with football 'hooligans' etc. (Thornton, 1997).

Schooled subcultures came particularly to be known as resistant or alternative initially with and through processes of 'capitalist educational transmission' and classed production. According to Ball (2004), much research on school inequality and student subculture was initially characterised by the 'opposing' fields of 'macro' neo-Marxism (e.g. Bowles and Gintis, 1976) and 'micro' symbolic interactionism (e.g. Hargreaves, 1967). The development of polarised student groups with and through school differentiation processes (streaming, tracking, banding) and teacher perceptions are important themes in the schooled re/production of student subcultures and classed achievement gaps. Willis (1977) focused on 'the lads' active, leisure-based resistances and interpretations of schooling through working class frames, which implicated them in their own exclusion from school. Resistance was understood as emerging through a 'consciousness' of the inequalities that are perpetuated by schooling. The 'lads' may have been reacting to a lack of respect on the part of teachers for certain students; with a subsequent refusal to be submissive and a questioning of the relevance of the curriculum to their lives. *Learning to Labour* largely disregarded racism and sexism amongst other issues. But its ability to somewhat transcend macro/micro dichotomies, and to afford students some agency in a cultural politics is perhaps a reason for its strong relevance to empirical work decades later (Dolby and Dimitriadis, 2001).

Ball (1981) nuanced Hargreaves (1967) and Lacey's (1970) work on pro- and anti-school student subcultures by suggesting such groups position themselves/are

positioned in quite complex ways in relation to school norms, values and practices. For example, students may not simply 'be' pro-school; they may be manipulating school norms for instrumental purposes. Eckert suggested that the significance of the successful Jocks and the leisurely Burnouts in her study is that together, they 'achieve' hegemony "in the social structure of the school... it is not the categories themselves, but the opposition between them that is hegemonic" (1989, p. 5). In other words, she works on the basis of both 'groups' being present: this double presence is itself constituted, and thus *required* by dividing practices of school hierarchy. Eckert suggested strong overlaps rather than oppositions between Jock and Burnout youths. The punks, beatniks and freaks in the school tested and exposed the limits of the high status 'Jocks' and low status 'Burnouts' through their opposition to categorisation. Fagan's (1995) *Culture, Politics and Irish School Dropouts* is an Irish, Marxist-based work which regarded students as working on a continuum of oppositional behaviours, from minimal, non-participation to violent reaction. Fagan disagreed with Willis about consciousness origin of resistance, suggesting it is "derived more from... suppression by the education system than from a culture creatively producing this resistance" (1995, p. 115). Regardless of its perceived origin, a traditional working class/middle class consciousness is no longer empirically assured. Neo-liberal cultural politics contribute to:

the fragmentation of consciousness, or the inability to grasp the totality of experience. This condition leads to the false impression that the 'class situation' within a given nation is improving because much of the manufacturing and hard labor remains out of sight and out of mind (Leonardo, 2002, p.30).

In this sense, resistances are now read as even more subtle and fragmented than previous interpretations. Across student groups, dichotomies between good/bad students cannot be assumed. The reproduction of pro-school/anti-school, worker/work-shy dichotomies with respect to class alone are now rare in school research, as such work has drawn upon gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality and other social categories. Certain students, through institutionally racist and other school practices come to be known as identifiable with certain subcultural groups whether or not they identify with that group or a certain practice of resistance. Certain minority ethnic youth cultures have been read as perceived threats to school authority, such as in the case of male African Caribbean students in the English midlands (Gillborn, 1990). Mac an Ghail (1988) characterises the group of black female students he studied as having developed a calculated conformity strategy of 'resistance within accommodation'; their strategy was anti-

school but pro-education. He captured a rarely overt resistance, e.g., through completing homework late, or refusing to partake in group discussions. The ‘Black Sisters’ in this study were reported as viewing teachers and curricula mainly in instrumental terms, while high status academic qualifications were seen as a more neutral and objective evaluation of themselves. Mac an Ghail’s reading suggests “conformity and even cooperation neither deny nor overtly resist subjugation, but retain the latent possibility of turning it to resistance” (Matthews, 2003, p. 199). Crucially, it displays how resistance does not necessarily exist within an oppressor/oppressed school/student relationship. Mirza (2006) suggests her work presents black women’s identification with exclusionary meritocracy as not all it seems: she reads women as working both with and against the grain, challenging and changing from within. Readings of gender-sexuality hierarchies which position ‘high status’ anti-school and/or male youth subcultures have become more complex in their reading of strategy in an institution that requires degrees of docility from learners (Nayak, 2003, Mac an Ghail, 1994). Perceived resistance to school work then, by both teachers and researchers may be considered more a judgement of an act rather than an objective category of an act (Barker, 2008). The need to focus on white (working class) youth identities in studies of race and ethnicity has received greater attention as research on ‘whiteness’ has gained prominence analytically (Nayak, 2003). Finally, while the resistant practices of certain youths have gained great attention, the practices of ‘mundane’ or low key’ students of minority or majority ethnic background can be overlooked in terms of what it reveals about their practices of meaning-making in particular ethnographic contexts (Harris, 2006). The importance of context to framing acts as resistant is further considered in the next section.

Racialisation as a multivalent, dynamic process of systemic preservation

We might understand racial inequality in education as manifest through reciprocal, shifting, mutating processes both within and outside school walls. Racism in education can be understood as a cultural (meaning-making) politics, drawing on school-social and global-local translations which are variously worked at different levels of the system, both overtly and obliquely. ‘Cultural politics’ refer to symbolic planes: *racial meaning* can be invoked indirectly through its long-term, enduring, forced association with certain contexts, selves and their ritualised practices (school, class, gender, etc).

Conceptual categories like “school achievement”, “middle classness”, “maleness”, “beauty”... become normative categories of whiteness, while categories like “gangs”, “welfare recipients”, “basketball players”...

become the marginalised and de-legitimated categories of blackness (Ladson-Billings, 2004, p. 51).

But cultural politics do not work solely at the level of representation; they are constituted by and emergent through material conditions. Ladson-Billings' (2004) and Leonardo's (2007) work suggests that the maintenance of educational inequality's complex foundations and signifiers (urban, black, disadvantaged) is crucial to interrogate at multiple, simultaneous points. The walls of the school need to be read as permeable, and the institution needs to be understood as reciprocating with the social in racialisation. Three partial examples of the *at once oblique and overt* nature of racialisation, as a dynamic process, are suggested below.

1. Systemic thinking and the 'moment' of institutional racism

The MacPherson definition of institutionalised racism has had a major impact on highlighting the reach of racist practices and depoliticised assumptions. But the definition and the report itself are subject to ongoing problematisation in critical sociology. Neither the definitions nor the report were received into a neutral or unchanging social system. Certainly, Trevor Phillips has indicated the problematic manner in which the meaning of 'institutionalised racism' is taken up and injected into institutions already infused with racial hierarchy:

The phrase 'institutional racism' has become cloaked in misunderstanding when it should be a way of helping to understand the blockages in the system that turn organisations of decent, fair-minded people into opportunity deserts for women or ethnic minorities"... (Phillips) argued that people had come to think it meant that an organisation is permanently infected by racism from top to bottom; that somehow police officers become racists as soon as they don their uniforms and that they can never change (National Policing Improvement Agency [UK], 2009, p. 6, my parentheses).

Phillips' remarks suggest that conflict and politics around race are ongoing, despite the achievements made. Moves towards 'institutionalising' policy to combat institutional racism in Britain may unexpectedly risk masking the wider conflicts hinted at above. Barry Troyna earlier had asserted that the institutional racism concept itself had become oversimplified and "dislocated from the political context in which it was constructed and had significance" for education in Britain (Rizvi, 1993, p. 11). In this sense, policy

on institutional racism can mutate to become a relatively empty signifier outside of the school walls¹⁵. Rizvi states institutional racism was coined in the US:

to stress that inequalities in urban settings were perpetuated through the interconnecting relationships of several institutional sites such as housing, schools and the labour market; and to counter the prevailing pluralist theory of the state as the neutral arbiter of competing interests which trapped antiracist reform within the existing framework of political processes (Rizvi, 1993, p. 11).

Without a focus on socio-cultural, socio-economic and political, i.e., systemic processes that are ‘bigger’ than but also invested in schools, racist outcomes in education could be reduced to the sum of unfortunate conscious/subconscious attitudes on the part of school staff. When articulated as ‘an issue’ staffs need training in, institutional racism could risk being rebranded as a collective of individual psychological prejudices and ethnocentric actions. New policies around inclusion, ability and curriculum often fail to recognise that they may already carry racial meaning and effects. Without dismissing the power of institutional practices in their own right, curricular ideologies, ‘ability’ practices and disciplinary sanctions within the school walls can only be understood as operating with and through multiple meso and macro level policies and wider social forces (Youdell, 2004, Gillborn, 2002).

2. Notions of culture as embodied: culturalist, individualising exemplars

It is useful to return to notions of cultural ‘trait’ as an example of a pervasive, multivalent, racialising force or (as Chapter 2 will suggest), a *discourse*, which preserves currently racialised distributions of privilege. Notions of cultural clash and cultural congruence have haunted school achievement critiques, even since Coard (1971) began the process of reading how social and cultural factors influenced the huge overrepresentation of ‘West Indian’ children in then ESN schools in the UK. Culturalist reifications, as Matthews states in relation to Asian Australian students, “thinly conceals a form of biological reductionism that implies that ‘Asians’ have inherent pre-dilections and pre-dispositions” (Matthews, 2003, p. 199). A culturalist theory can be taken up to explain the achievements of certain Asian students in western education systems, implying that racism is not a feature of schooling (e.g. Tomlinson, 2005), and that ‘underachieving’ groups are at best, ‘culturally’ disinterested. The idea that different ethnic groups carry cultural practices as if they were individual traits (Gutierrez and Rogoff, 2003) suggests they will ‘match’ a certain task (like schooling, or like sport) in

¹⁵ Policy on institutional racism in Irish schools has been transplanted from one context to another, co-opted, objectified and sheened with little regard for the political and socio-economic circumstances that the concept was intended to highlight. This issue is taken up in Chapter 3.

a particularly successful or unsuccessful way. These ideas elide ongoing processes of discrimination, culturally and linguistically biased curriculum and assessment, shifts in the socio-economic climate and overgenerous assumptions of student and family choice. Mirza captures the sedimented effects of a culturalist ontology in education particularly well:

It is as if cultural and religious differences are embodied in nature. In the new cultural construction of 'race', cultural and religious difference is played out when we say 'Blacks are good at sport, not so good at school. Chinese are good at maths, and make good food. Asians are good at business and love family life. Muslims cannot be trusted, they are aggressive, sexist and under all those clothes, usually a bit wild-eyed' (Mirza, 2006, p. 151).

The 'model minority' representation further elides heterogeneous Asian experiences. South and Southeast Asian Americans can suffer at the hands of model minority discourses. This particular 'group' is associated with low educational participation, poor achievement scores, estrangement from US culture and alienation from schools (Ngo, 2006). Studies suggest mainstream media successfully reinforces meritocratic ideology through the use of culturalist exemplars. The success of black and Hispanic artists in the music industry has repeatedly been held up as an example of how society cannot be inequitable. However, this apparent flattery has been described as a curious desire to consume, commodify and co-opt the Other, while simultaneously seeking to erase and ignore it:

It is a twisted embrace that simultaneously repels the Other. The complexity of this relationship allows white people... to love black music and hate black people. The mainstream community despises rap music for its violence, misogyny, and racial epithets but spends millions of dollars to produce and consume it... the mainstream fights over what it sees as the "overrepresentation" of Asian-descent people in certain industries or high-status universities but cultivates fetishes over "Oriental" artifacts – martial arts, feng shui, sushi and "docile", "petite" women (Ladson Billings and Donnor, 2005, p. 287).

While African Americans are perceived as successful in athletics, they assume few positions of leadership in American sport (see Singer, 2005 for a review), perhaps rendering them more as consumable objects of racialised leisure practices. The positionings of bodies in hierarchy through culturalism and individualism constitutes another key consideration for this research.

3. Who is learning? The politics of work, ability and framings of resistance

Schools are understood primarily as particular places of 'learning', and non-academic practices in schools are often conceived as leisure. In related ways, student subcultures can be understood as resisting hierarchical dichotomies of learning/leisure and notions of what 'proper effort' is. Messing about, disrupting or not performing the work of the school and its supporting practices (school pride, sports etc.) can become known as an institutional deviance. Style, language, demeanour, sounds and embodied politics are important to consider for raced, classed and gendered youth subcultures within the work/leisure assumptions of schooling and society.

Learning/leisure dichotomies can be understood as deeply invested with wider social power and highly equated with troubled dichotomies which make, and force the remaking of *who is useful and who resists* in given contexts. These troubled dichotomies include productivity/consumption, rationality/emotion and masculine/feminine. The spatial separation of 'work' and 'leisure' fails to recognise the home as a site of unpaid labour, largely for women. Within schools, the emotional labour teachers perform is often unintelligible within equations of teaching as a rational activity, and is assumed natural and effortless to feminine/feminised bodies (Kitching, 2009a, Sutton, 2004). Leisure can be understood as not undermining work, but *required* by work in a commodifying manner that regulates class and gender hierarchies, as well as adult/youth hierarchies.. 'Youth-as-fun' and 'youth-as-trouble' were transmuted from extreme notions of 'respectable' and 'criminal' and 'worker'/'workshy' in the 1960s as regulatory discourses of variously stylised young people in institutions . The 'teenager', was a concept largely emergent with the youth market and the greater disposable income of working class youth in the US (Hebdige, 1997). 'Mods' 'Emos', 'B-boys' 'Riot grrrls' and 'Harajuku girls' are important examples of how goods (clothes, music) can be used by youth to differentiate themselves and resist regulation (e.g. the Kinderwhore disruption of femininity).

But such stylised acts and ritualised resistances simultaneously suggest subcultures are subject to processes of consumption-production as they pursue ongoing projects of self-authentication. Accordingly, the assumed boundary between resistance and compliance for young people in schools, the home, the street and other places is insecure and contradictory (Amoore, 2005, p. 8). At the same time, while the 'old white imaginaries' of Enlightenment rhetoric are being "reworked more explicitly in response to a perceived loss of national identity, economic security, and norms surrounding sexuality and gender" (Bhattacharyya, et al, 2002, p. 7), resistance is always possible. Framings

of what education *is* can be changed. Ginwright (2007) refers to progressive, non-commercial hip-hop as encouraging a politics of relevance amongst young African Americans who are dissatisfied with the institutionalised, civil rights-based means of talking about their current realities. Hip-hop rallies, for example, can serve as a means of mass political education. ‘What is known’ as resistance thus must be considered as contextually contingent and variously made official, unofficial, accepted or deviant. Most importantly, within the walls of the school, the meanings of ‘acceptable’, ‘able’ learner and ‘making an effort’ must be explored in light of the endurance of cultural deficit theories about learners who might strategically not participate in one particular (e.g. academic) context but may excel in another (e.g. peer group or resistant). This will be returned to in conceptualising the *iteration and subversion of recognition* in Chapter 2.

The complex dynamics of racialisation have powerful, if unstable currency and hegemonic force within education. Ongoing racialisations might be considered as effects, which are implicated in the wider protection and maintenance of systemic goals, with the associated protection of the interests of dominant groups. This effect of preservation is maintained but also redrawn because of certain groups’ overt and covert resistances. This effect of preservation occurs via both school-social and global-local relations. In Chapter 2, I use notions of *governance, global-state-exigency and viability* to theorise this unstable, shifting preservation further.

Moving towards interrupting the planes of institutional racism in Ireland

As recently as December 2008, a comparative European report suggested that we simply don’t know ‘what the situation is’ with respect to possible racist outcomes for newer communities in Irish education.

The possible educational disadvantage faced by some minority ethnic, religious and linguistic groups (in Ireland) has been ignored in the construction of a policy response... and by the lack of data informing the educational situation of these groups. Although not all minority ethnic groups, nor all individuals from a particular minority ethnic group, face educational disadvantage (we know for instance from evidence collected in other countries that some minority ethnic groups achieve better educational outcomes than the majority ethnic group), the lack of policies targeting specifically those from minority ethnic groups remains particularly problematic in a country where multiculturalism has become a reality (Moreau et al, 2008, p. 22).

The first major national response in Ireland to this problematic was the *Adapting to Diversity* report (Smyth et al., 2009). As its title suggests, this report implicitly uses a

grammar of diversity as ‘new’ to Ireland and does not seek to deconstruct the fixity of (white) ‘Irishness’. It usefully framed anew the earlier, class-based concerns around school enrolment for new migrants, building on the concerns of other studies and discussion around the potential overrepresentation of SEN and minority ethnic students in vocational schools (Lodge, 2009, DES, 2007). But its main focus was on the issue of lack of English language proficiency as a barrier to academic and social inclusion. It considered racist *attitudes* over power and the local specificities of racialisation and class, for example.

There are two lessons that we can take from the preceding discussion:

- It is important to regard institutional racism as a mobile, dynamic, multi-planed process which is ultimately related to systemic preservation and thus possibly associated with national majority (white-Irish) privilege. As stated above, Chapter 2 explores this issue further in terms of governance, global-state-school exigency and viability.
- Second, it is important to begin to deconstruct notions of ‘Irishness’ and ‘newcomers’ before both are formally defined by any potential advantage/disadvantage superiority/deficiency dichotomies in school. Such dichotomies might fail to interrupt the systemic preservation of hierarchy.

Certain ethical imperatives make clear that racist and other unequal outcomes in schools must be identified. In addition, the manner in which racism is continuously challenged by students and social groups must be taken into account. But the challenger might simultaneously consider how racist outcomes can be elided, played down or co-opted through the cultural politics of racialisation. The next section thus enquires as to what might be done with research that attempts to recognise inequality and the effects of deficit thinking. What of identity and action in less certain times? How might we research race beyond reification in contemporary Ireland?

Theoretical movements in interrogating racialised inequality

Research that emerged from the 1960s onward was often not defined - or at least less defined - by its object, “as it arose in disciplines with quite divergent objects” (du Gay, 2007, p. 1). As a variously deployed set of theoretical and political movements, Feminism has impacted heavily on how knowledge of racisms in/through institutions has been researched and represented. Black Feminism in particular has been credited internationally with intervening on critiques which interpreted the social, including

schooling, largely through the experiences of white, middle class women. This work brought previously subjugated knowledges into the research arena and created sophisticated counterhistories. Black Feminism was fundamental to creating an interpretive lexicon which viewed experiences simultaneously through race, class, gender and other lenses, i.e., an intersectional approach (Ringrose, 2007).

The rise of anti-colonialist, anti-apartheid, anti-fascist and Civil Rights movements after World War Two caused a break in centuries' old, worldwide racial systems. Thus the challenge to white supremacy is relatively recent (Winant, 2002). Perhaps the most dominant theme in contemporary work on racism is Whiteness Studies, which is concerned with the ongoing centring of whiteness and white interests. Whiteness has been referred to as a racial discourse; 'being white' is often viewed here as a socially constructed identity, usually based on skin colour (Leonardo, 2002). In many ways resonant with the earlier reference to polygeism, whiteness is often understood as a framing discourse and, more importantly, a referential normative centre. Leonardo suggests that like globalisation, whiteness is flexible, adaptable and difficult to pin down. This adaptability, invisibility and so-called neutrality are some of the main strengths of white domination:

As a sort of Foucauldian... racial panopticon, whiteness remained cloaked in darkness while marking those with darker complexion for purposes of effective surveillance. As a marker of the Other, whiteness was able to dodge relative scrutiny as a positionality, a morally conditioned, socially informed perspective. Instead, whiteness has long reserved the privilege of making everyone but itself visible, lest it be exposed as a position within a constellation of positions. At the same time, whiteness becomes the ubiquitous marker of all that is right because it is associated with being white (Leonardo, 2002, p. 41).

Dixson and Rousseau (2005) comment on how assimilation and 'colour-blindness' have even been cast as racially enlightened assumptions, arguing that race should not matter. This robs ethnic minorities of the right to talk about disconnections between policy and practice, denies the reality of institutional racism, and ignores white privilege and supremacy.

Critical Race Theory (CRT) emerged from the legal arena as a challenge to the ideology of 'colour blindness'. It uses counter-stories, or historical triangulation of facts that impact on present-day discrimination (Parker and Stovall, 2005). CRT may often assert racism as central to the organisation of western society (Gillborn, 2006). An important element of CRT's relevance here again is its critique of whiteness (or white privilege, entitlement and domination). Those working in the field of Whiteness Studies and CRT

have emphasised that their critiques are not an attack on white people; rather they critique the socially constructed and constantly reinforced power of white identifications and interests (Gillborn, 2005). Whiteness is regarded here as maintaining its power in ways which are analogous to the preceding discussion on the cultural politics of systemic preservation. The silent conditions of white supremacy/domination are regarded as making white privilege possible (Leonardo, 2005). Critical accounts of whiteness suggest that until the dominant group's position is considered, multiethnic and anti-racist education will still be regarded as a problem to be tolerated. CRT critiques policy in radical as opposed to reformist terms, where a politics of interrogation builds upon intercultural/multicultural politics of recognition and forms of anti-racism (Gillborn, 2004, Lentin, 2001).

The umbrella approach of CRT often draws on both traditional and more representational frameworks to interpret various inequalities, generally through an epistemology of subjugated 'voice'. But given the mutations of race and processes of systemic preservation described above, can action and progress be assumed from drawing particularly on subjugated knowledge in research? Are 'racist outcomes', and racialised voices, historically sedimented as they are, enough as a politics? Certainly, some CRT and Black Feminist work examines the inconsistencies in the production of 'voice'. In some accounts, the notion of narrativity is accepted as having moved from being merely 'representational' to having an 'ontological status' (Somers and Gibson, 1994). Denise Noble's work, for example, accounts for heterogeneity of black female experiences and practices, while underscoring the marginalisation of a collective identity. She insists on foregrounding "modernity's accountability to the traumatic biohistorical formation of African-Diaspora identity and selfhood" (2005, p. 150). Such work suggests that the complexity of the cultural politics outlined above can be met with a politics that addresses inequality in equally complex and contextualised ways.

However, such a complex, intersectional approach is never guaranteed, and may often rely on a unitary self that stands somewhat outside of cultural politics. While the questioning of anti-racist progress can indeed be dangerous and allow "other, less democratic and more oppressive stories of progress win the day" (Carlson and Apple, 1998, p. 4), I wish to post-structurally consider how troubling – not rejecting – a linear notion of institutional and research 'progress' based on discrete, racialised selves can be useful. Rather than reject identity claims, I probe their limits, and perhaps narrate the current field of anti-racist research as one full of productive tensions. Carlson and Apple

(1998) suggest that ‘post’ theories can be insightful for their “focus on identity politics, on multiple and contradictory relations of power, on nonreductive analysis, and on the local as an important site of struggle” (1998, p. 4). Social change can be understood here not in terms of continuity, linear progression or development, but in terms of shifting *relationships* “among the institutional arrangements and cultural practices that comprise one or more social settings” (Somers and Gibson, 1994, p. 70). Certainly, a ‘get over it’ response is highly destructive: wounds can be remembered and recognised without becoming definitive or determining (Hey, 2006). But the optimism of Civil Rights and other movements has not overturned or equally redistributed power to subjugated groups, making issues of fragmented power and identity formation a key topic of debate. I extend a rationale below as to why a deconstructive approach to the *self’s* contextual production may be useful in going beyond objectifying reifications of race, and in dealing with liberal (and some radical) underpinnings of linear anti-racist progress.

Using relationality, temporality and location in late modernity to understand emergent selves and (institutional) contexts

Much research in the wake of new social movements assumed it was

Through the processes of reproduction of inequalities that identity formations take place. As a result, particular social injustices impart the essential nature or identity of different social groups (Haywood and Mac an Ghail, 1997, p. 264).

The late 20th century turn towards ‘difference’ as a political claim, sometimes built on the narration of multiply intersecting experiences, has perhaps underlined the impossibility of telling a unitary race tale or ‘truth’. Yet it has often ironically elided wider issues of epistemology and teleology in its production of ‘old’ and ‘new’ race knowledges.

It has become a truism of present-day social commentaries to declare that this is the age of the ‘new politics of difference’. The implication of teleological trajectory which underpins many such accounts (despite the ostensible challenge to such projections) is reflected in the ‘newness’ ascribed to many aspects of culture and societies deemed ‘postmodern’ (Brah, Hickman and Mac an Ghail, 1999, p. 5).

Brah et al. touch on two important assumptions surrounding the production of knowledge. The first assumption often made about knowledge of inequality is that its production (e.g., through rigorous research) is *always* ‘good’ and useful. Related to this is the assumption that the production of research knowledge through, for and with school equality measures is for the progression of society, perhaps as the lesser of two

evils. The manner in which dynamic operations of power might work has been raised in multiple ways in Marxist, Freudian, Structuralist, Foucauldian and Feminist thought (Hall, 2002). However, some research analyses and most policy initiatives make two more foundational assumptions which have been present in social philosophy and educational theory and policy since the 19th century. One is the idea of a neat progression in history, including the assumption of social redemption through institutions like schooling. The other accepts an individual subject of disciplinary knowledge (Popkewitz and Brennan, 1998). Ultimately, it can be taken for granted that it is fundamentally through the generation of knowledge of certain inequalities that (difference-based) inequality politics must proceed.

There may be two key questions that need to be teased out in researching race inequality in schools and other institutions:

1. How is one to hold on to the notion that enduring, unequal differences are an effect of social power, while avoiding their articulation as an essential trait?

How does research move away from viewing continued educational inequality and social inequalities as an intrinsic feature of a racialised, gendered or classed group, or as predictive of any one member of those groups? While multiple achievement differences in schooling have long been recognised, the field of difference suggests this recognition carries major risks around reinventing discrete racial categories and homogenising experiences. Within one category, an *a priori* assumption of domination or subordination, or writing in a style that suggests dominance is *intrinsic* to that category is problematic. Historical and recent research has suggested whiteness cannot be reduced solely to *the physical body*, and privilege cannot be automatically assumed on the basis of white skin. For example, in deconstructing Irishness, it is possible for groups not to be perceived as socially ‘black’ at one point in history and to be ‘white’ at another (Jacobson, 1998). Post-slavery politics of religion and economic reconstruction have been described as key factors in the whitening of east coast Irish Americans in the united US republic (Ignatiev, 1995). The 20th century ‘paddy’ in the UK may have had a qualitatively different racialised experience (Hickman, 1998).

Equally, ‘black strategies of resistance’ do not remain the same as the socio-political landscape shifts. Neither do they represent the same selves all of the time: they are highly context dependent. The contingent signifier ‘black’ is no longer used to represent Asian and African communities in the UK, defeated to some degree by “the rise of

identity politics, corporate multi-culture and an imploded, narcissistic obsession with the minutiae of ethnicity” (Gilroy, 2002, p. xiv). Gilroy (2002) argues that the African-Caribbean centre has been dislodged from contemporary British blackness by immigration from Nigeria, Somalia and Sierra Leone, and thus the politics of previous generations can fail to connect with or explain the experiences of present day minority ethnic youth in Britain. The black/white dualism in British anti-racism has also been contested via religion and ethnicity. The black/white dualism could not accommodate Muslims, and it suggested that the Irish naturally assimilated into white-British structural dominance (Modood 2006; Mac an Ghaill, 1999).

Decontextualised equations of possession of power or lack of power with certain bodies or groups have been subject to political critique for some time. The danger with such equations is that they tend to be counterproductive: oversimplifying the feelings and experiences of those constituted as ‘dominant’ or ‘powerful’, even when they are granted greater social, political and economic privileges. A backlash against racial minorities as ‘victims’ in school policy has been written about extensively (e.g. Nayak, 2003, Gillborn, 1997). The Burnage High School murder is a tragic example of an oversimplified approach to anti-racism, which failed to account for the resentment of white working class students who could be positioned through other axes as subjugated and ethno-racially unappreciated. Other single-category claims of marginalisation risk being flipped when represented solely *as* single category issues, e.g. ‘failing boys’ and ‘achieving girls’ (McWilliams, 2006, Epstein et al., 1998). Furthermore, contemporary bodies and selves might not identify with or organise around one specific group (e.g. black, female). Indeed, groups associated with certain political issues may reject that association, e.g. as in the case of individualist ‘post-feminism’ (McRobbie, 2004).

Can politics be located in bodies in these accounts? How can those bodies and persons produced as privileged be known to act in such dynamics? Leonardo (2007) and Gillborn (2005), for example, critique US and UK policy respectively as tacit ‘acts’ of whiteness/white supremacy which rely on the ongoing deracialisation of school inclusion. They write in temporal, non-determinist terms about the ongoing structuring of white privilege:

Although race inequity may not be a planned and deliberate goal of education policy neither is it accidental. The patterning of racial advantage and inequity is structured in domination and its continuation represents a form of *tacit intentionality* on the part of white powerholders and policy-makers (Gillborn, 2005, p. 485).

While the above account is crucial in exposing the ongoing effects of inequality, does the idea of tacit *intentionality* jettison the notion of whiteness as intrinsically (and almost essentially) dominant? By extension, does it disrupt the culturalist and racist notions of embodied deficit that it wishes to critique? How can the recognition of black inequality be accommodated within materialist accounts of identity authority, for example, as resistant styles of 'black masculinity' are commodified and practised by 'white men' (Carby, 2001)? There is no question that a particular material (political, social, cultural, economic) pattern accrues towards whiteness and makes it meaningful and normalisable as such. But as the previous section suggests, can 'whiteness' be singularly regarded as constantly constructed *around and over* 'white bodies' or 'whitened selves' in order to mask and secure its possession?

2. Where does inclusion of differences politically end, and what 'counts' as difference?

The manner in which 'different' experiences are ontologically interpreted can vary. A wave of categories such as 'Eastern European' and 'South East-Asian' are now used in research (e.g. Majka and Mullan, 2002), collapsing the diverse experiences and practices of contemporary migrants. Using a wider, 'more progressive' array of geo-racial research categories may only serve to proliferate further categories for inclusion and indeed, delay a troubling of the essentialised race object as an analytical category, as a symbolic identity and as a body. What counts as a right, and might some things count more than others? Let us return to the problem of social injustices as defining groups raised earlier (citing Haywood and Mac an Ghail, 1997). Calhoun states:

To count every potentially subversive rejection of culturally enforced norms as themselves normal, as normalisable, and as normativisable through law... persons are reduced to observable social attributes and practices... differences that are the effect of social power are neutralised through their articulation as attributes (Calhoun, 1994).

Otto (1999) suggests that human rights claims are legitimated "by the ordering of European and non-masculine differences in binary and hierarchial interdependence" (1999, p. 2).

Modernity's grading of binary differences constructs the dominating meta-narrative of masculinist Europe as the embodiment of the highest stage of human development and the pinnacle of human progress, according to Europe's own universal indices (Otto, 1999, p. 7).

She goes on to state:

The technique of hierarchising different categories of human rights entitlements has the effect of naturalising the inequitable arrangements of power supported by the generational graduations and shielding them from challenge (Otto, 1999, pp. 12 – 13).

In other words, assumptions of ‘human rights’, which are steeped with historical power-baggage, can readily accommodate rights ‘add-ons’ as generations make new claims. This is in as much as such claims fall into and support a binary system which ensures their recognition only within subjugating terms¹⁶.

An overemphasis on the politics of difference can become unhelpful, as the significance of the identity struggled over is almost always claimed not just on other identities but within a particular field of shared relevance (Calhoun, 1994). Even dominant groups can manipulate the principle of exclusion to their own ends (Mac an Ghail, 1999). The epistemology of proliferating identity categories fails to challenge the possibility of exclusion becoming commodified by dominant groups in terms of identity tool kits. Establishments can readily recognise ‘new’ cultural (and citizenship-based) racism for example, as it facilitates the assumption that cultural differentialism forms the new basis for processes of inclusion and exclusion, inferring colour as the primary basis of racism, and again erasing issues like religious heritage (Brah et. al, 1999).

Thus a theory which frames one’s difference *as* a vehicle of power, in opposition to other differences (man/woman, white/black) may be limited. By allowing some difference in, pluralist moves reinstate the norm. While intending to veer away from the ‘innateness’ argument, McCarthy (1990) suggests these moves particularly depend upon socio-economic status and cultural deficit underpinnings, lacking a theory of power. This critique becomes important when later examining the supposedly ‘inclusive’ modern technique of integrating mixed (essentialised) bodies:

- Academically in quasi ‘mixed ability’ classrooms;
- Socially in ‘intercultural’ policy and
- Residentially in ‘mixed-use’ housing.

It is not difficult to discredit the idea of predicting unequal school outcomes based on the accumulation of certain categories ‘in’ one individual (Gillborn and Mirza, 2000).

¹⁶ Universalising claims of human rights are only further strengthened as competing (western) camps of ‘universal rights standards’ and (non-western) ‘culturally relative standards’, invoke an intractable dualism which may silence other critiques.

Thus, failing to trouble discrete categories of whiteness, blackness etc. is empirically and theoretically shallow.

Moving towards intersectionality

More and more intersectional readings of experience and subjugation have emerged, which argue “there is a need to move away from theories that suggests that racial difference is shaped by a single overarching factor” (Mac an Ghail, 1999, p. 39). These movements have helped researchers further interpret the heterogeneity of phenomena that disrupt and re-form racialised and ethnic identities in schools and elsewhere. An important means of capturing this dynamic is to foreground race with and/or through class, religion and gender-sexuality in school research (Archer and Francis, 2007, Archer, 2003, Mirza, 1992, Mac an Ghail, 1988). Intersectional approaches provide one means of pitting differences in opposition to each other. Intersectionality is now important in Black feminism, CRT and other fields. Postcolonial theorisation has provided important political tools for understanding the production and disavowal of identity in post-colonial contexts (e.g. Spivak, 1988), but also for understanding the formation of identity and racisms in ‘former’ imperial countries, e.g. in the work arising from the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS). The extent to which young people identify with citizenship categories has been questioned. Since notions of ‘Indian’ or ‘English’ no longer have clear or stable meanings, concepts of hybridisation and creolisation have become useful in understanding identity formation. Moreover, hybridisation questions the possibility of a pure dominant/minority culture and the very idea of the centre and the margin ‘as being anything other than “representational effects”’ (Barker, 2008, p. 278). Yet again, there are varying interpretations of power and the self within these fields. Some may risk representing the self as embodying the sum of his/her parts, knowledges and experiences, despite the heterogeneity of what these ‘parts’ mean across the social both simultaneously and at different times.

Moving to the legitimisation processes of school and self in Chapter 2

Writing about the tensions and limits of and between materialist and differentialist positions on racism, ethnicity and power in institutions, Mac an Ghail suggests:

There is a continuing conceptual and political problem involved in simply moving beyond materialist-based monocausal explanations that employ ‘simple’ models of power. At the same time, there is a tendency for differentialist accounts to be rather abstract; often disconnecting from personal accounts and institutional locations... I would emphasize the need to locate these discourses in their *specific spatial and temporal*

contexts. That is, we need to acknowledge the significance of *social institutions, alongside cultural industries*, in which shifting, contradictory practices operate (Mac an Ghaill, 1999, p. 48, my emphases).

Butler's *Gender Trouble* (1999) and *Bodies That Matter* (1993) are important breakthroughs in interrogating the complex problematic of materiality, essentialism and the constant commodification and disruption of marginalised identities and bodies in given contexts. Butler's work provides an interpretive resource for questions of action, centre, margin and body. She states:

There is no power that acts, but only a reiterated acting that is power in its persistence and instability. What I would propose... is a return to the notion of matter, not as a site or surface, but as a process of materialisation that stabilises over time to produce the effect of boundary, fixity and surface we call matter (Butler, 1993, p. 9).

In other words, the maintenance of hegemonic conditions can also be explained as occurring not always or necessarily through a sum of tactily intentional actions of *a priori* legitimate (e.g. white) actors, but alongside and through the *available, contextual* conditions of overlapping material, symbolic and psychic *legitimation*. Warren (2003) attempts to transcend what he regards as the material/rhetorical problematic of the 'body of whiteness' by regarding the racialised body as a *constitutive* accomplishment; one that is constantly made in the iterated equation and reciprocity of white privilege with *knowledge* of discrete whiteness:

Such a conceptualisation of the body in whiteness steers away from the pitfalls of essentialism that the material body risks, while also denying that white people, and the privilege that subject position is granted, are completely unconnected to racism (Warren, 2003, p. 25).

Meaning-making practices of the self are only possible through norms, discourses, reified 'ways of doing things' and available ways of perceiving the world. These norms, discourses and reifications are all types of representations; we can only continue to practice, to 'do' life based upon them. Thus, as well as a politics of interrogation (Gillborn, 2004), a politics of meaning-shifting, a politics of the performative - may be useful (Youdell, 2006a, Butler, 1997a).

Rather than resorting to pre-political, essential identities (black, woman, learning disabled), post-structural concerns of temporality, space and location, and relationality may be key starting points in conceptualising less coherent, post-Civil Rights (intersecting) selves. Deborah Youdell's work offers an important intervention in school

research by presenting an analysis that constantly asks how hierarchically matriced selves and contexts are co-constructed and made meaningful:

Categorical identities might be conceived of and interrogated as shifting, non-necessary constellations of categorisations... each marker is informed by its intersections and interactions with further markers to form a constellation that comes to 'be' the apparently 'whole' person (2006a, p. 29).

School research such as Youdell's is often labelled as post-structural, as despite many similarities to other fields in its approach to race (by employing intersectional approaches), it understands power not as *intrinsically* possessed within identity categories, even if certain categories are contextually associated with greater accumulated privilege (Youdell, 2006b; 2003). In this sense, such work respects the material claims of structuralism, empirically foregrounds heterogeneity of experience, conflict and mobility within and across contingent categories, and builds a different politics from this basis. Rather than simply looking at the intersection of sealed differences, it focuses on how these differences are unstable, and work to articulate and *make* each other meaningful. It implies a strong focus on individuals' relationality and shared desire for recognition. We might begin to refer to marginalisation then as actively produced as an aspect of power, instead of simply equating it with unilateral repression and silence. This has major implications for understanding notions of action and the subject: the eventual focus of Chapter 2.

While the framework I outline in Chapter 2 should be considered to work towards social justice through socio-political theorisation, it can be distinguished in a number of ways within this field. Distinguishing itself somewhat from more determinist applications of CRT and Whiteness Studies, the study reads inequality of outcome and lack of recognition as part of a cultural politics. I attempt to excavate a web of knowledge relationships in an open-ended, deconstructive manner. Knowledges and practices are considered to be in constant, political, multivalent process of reification/maintenance, rupture, conflict and transposition. Inequality is viewed as constantly exercised, iterated and redrawn in the relationship between objects rather than amassed. Institutions and practices are understood as recycling and implicated in reifying racial meanings, both within schools and through other social processes, such as the school-social and local-global processes outlined in this chapter. Through a post-structural engagement with language, structures, categories and identities can be redefined and the possibility for contingent inclusion opened up. Selves are read as subjects who can invent, invert and break old structures and discourses at the same time that they are subjected to the

constitutive force of those discourses. Finally, in Chapter 2, I use the concept of governance as a permeable socio-historical process that attributes the emergence of modern exclusions partially to the emergence of the modern (liberal) state. This notion of 'emergence' might be helpful in understanding how current material 'racial' circumstances are constantly made and importantly, open to reconfiguration and vulnerable to recuperation.

Irish studies, such as those described as the 'first' and 'second' approaches at the beginning of this chapter may assume that acquiring (racial) knowledge *is* progression and therefore human action *is* power. A lack of interrogation of the relationship between governance and inclusion/exclusion in research often results in the continued objectification of race in social policy. I do not propose an answer to whether race can be dissolved, because I do not wish to work within the narrow terms of the question. Neither do I reject past and present theories of racialised power and objectification (what it is, and who possesses it). I want to follow others in giving primacy to an analytics of power (Deacon, 2002) - how race becomes knowable through mundane, everyday-schooled practices of the self, and usable and applicable through Irish social and education policy.

Chapter 2

Racist effects: Knowing, justifying and ordering schools and selves

Race and school as mutually constitutive in recognition and viability

Despite the largely agreed ‘post-biological’ status of race, institutional redistribution measures, identity politics and structural analyses can inadvertently risk representing race as knowledge, race as object, and race as truth in various ways. Youdell (2006a) provides an example:

The anti-racism of ethnic monitoring *and its embedded discursive practices* are sustained through the elision of its own racialised, and implicitly racist, performatives (Youdell, 2006a, p. 78, my italics).

In this chapter, I further explore the concern that the liberal recognition of ‘racist outcomes’ via racialised selves can fail to interrupt iterated hierarchical designations of some bodies as deficient and others as superior. The analysis suggests that when problems (like racism) are identified in institutions like schools, they can re-justify themselves internally through the creation of new institutional practices (Schaff, 2004). These practices are situated in a wider matrix of social intelligibilities, e.g. community cohesion policies in Britain, logics of integration and English language requirements in Ireland, or sometimes in more oblique terms, individualising logics of qualifications and professionalism in a ‘learning society’ (Macrae et al., 1997). It is important to consider that simply monitoring racist outcomes might inadvertently accommodate the ongoing, unexpected acceptance of racism, as part of wider institutional legitimation processes and policy justifications. I draw particularly on the Foucauldian concept of *power/knowledge* in dealing with some problems from Chapter 1. For example:

- Deployments of ‘good’ knowledge can be taken up to essentialist and exclusionary effect: ‘ethnicity’ was used as a means of breaking from biological theories of race. But this theory normalised white ethnicity. It was thus *recuperated*, or taken up in quasi-culturalist notions of embodied traits.
- Covert articulations of race hierarchy through institutional governance and other social positions (e.g. deracialised policies and the reduction of racism to social class) might be just as important to consider as more overtly racist or ethnocentric acts within school walls, i.e., they are reciprocal.
- Tackling inequality has more to do with the interrelationships between shifting contexts and selves, than necessarily being about linear human/institutional progression based on the inclusion of racialised bodies. Discourses of modern

progression often assume fixed, autonomous selves as their basis for ‘moving forward’.

I propose/draw upon three central concepts for a politically strategic¹⁷ research analysis of liberal institutions. These concepts attempt to remain vigilant to an analysis of racialisation beyond linear, direct cause-effect moments in history:

1. Using a decentred subject to read social processes as occurring through the mutual production of selves and contexts, of bodies and border-setting. The process of *subjectivation* is named here as a *desire for self-recognition reciprocally linked to the ordering of viability*. The self emerges in variously intelligible and viable (yet unguaranteed) contexts and shapes those contexts.
2. This governing process of recognition and viability suggests that neither does the self (e.g. student, teacher, school principal) ever fully make, shape or determine a context (e.g. state, school, classroom). Neither does a context ever fully shape the self. School-society, global-local practices of policy-making, agenda setting and participation can be thus thought of as improvisational, contingent and affected by the changes in other contexts and selves. The maintenance/iterations of and changes/resignifications in contexts and selves are understood as reciprocal, unstable, shifting *global-state-school exigencies*. It is within the very need to maintain or change selves and/or contexts where possibilities for redrawing inclusion lie.
3. My goal is to use the above concepts to consider racist outcomes as part of wider institutional-social dynamic which reinvigorate racisms, within a late modern process of *racist effects* re/production. The school, like the self, competes for recognition and viability in local and national contexts, e.g. a *de facto* Irish education market. Racist effects suggests that race and school might be implicated in and mutually constitutive of each other. Thus notions of future progression and of ‘lowering racist outcomes’ in institutions such as schools needs to be treated critically, if not apprehensively. As Chapter 9 will argue, it is always *in present praxis* that possibility might be sought out. This involves exploring and interrupting configurations of racist effects in situated contexts and Self/Other relations.

¹⁷ Patton (2003) defines critical ethnography as combining a focus on ‘culture’ with a commitment to using the findings for change. This is further discussed in the methodology chapter (4).

The above tools form the central interpretive framework of this study, and they will be developed in this chapter. In using these tools, I hope to analyse how liberal institutional practice manages to justify itself and yet simultaneously produce hidden, old or new racisms. This does not imply nihilism, nor that social actors are passive or ideological dupes. Drawing on Judith Butler's philosophy and Youdell's (2006a) application to schools, I equally focus on meaning-making and identity performance as constrained, provisional agency: selves are considered subject to and acting upon variously unstable, divided, valued and ordered contexts. Political possibility is regarded here as a feature of the very instability of what we know as 'school': its constant need to justify its existence. This view of racial inequality as set within shifting politics of knowledge is *in itself* a contingent political strategy, as it exposes latent possibilities and tools for practice. Butler (2004) suggests that theory is central to the question of social transformation, as does Brown (1995). Chapter 3 will specifically apply these tools to reading Irish policy and white-Irishness. From Chapter 5 on, examples of tools and ideas for praxis will be generated and bullet-pointed from school data, using these ideas.

Power/knowledge and the production of objects: schools, classrooms and liberal states

Foucault's work on the order of discourse deals specifically with the problem of the "intelligibility of the historically contingent" (Gordon, 1980, p. 244). Knowledges, norms, practices and identities, in this view, are not objectively present. The concept of power/knowledge largely suggests they are made knowable, or *produced* due to overlapping macro and micro exigencies, and they have particular purposes. Hence they can be regarded as *deployed*: constantly maintained, or redrawn and justified. Games of power, or the ongoing ordering of forces not only contribute to the ordering of the social. They are the very basis and substance of its knowability as ordered. Their sedimentation as recognisable 'truths' has emerged through the closing down of conflicting knowledges, and modern applications of knowledge *as* power. For example:

The battles between opposed wills to power that created such things as morality, conscience, Christianity, the philosophic will to truth, the aesthetic temperament, and so on are not the focus of historians, and so we are deceived¹⁸ into believing in a myth concerning the purity and self-identity of those origins (Ransom, 1997, p. 5).

This notion of knowledges and practices as deployed immediately troubles our shared binary frameworks of meaning-making and value judgement (i.e., good/bad truths). In

¹⁸ The use of 'deception' and 'myth' suggests a truth claim, but the above quote is provisionally useful.

deploying power/knowledge, Foucault interrogated what he viewed as the conflict and struggle behind practices and institutions. We can understand individual selves and bodies as both produced and variously divided/coerced/silenced/repressed within the context of institutions like schools in relation to wider knowledge circuits. A genealogy of schooling can expose a number of dividing practices and assumptions inside and/or outside the school. These coalesce around and possibly further reinforce what is knowable as school, the self and the body. They include assumptions such as:

- The notion of teachability (learning style, developmental stage);
- The knowledge constituting the educated subject is scientific (worldly/secular);
- There is a generalisable procedure for becoming educated, through cognition and separate from the body: creating ‘learning styles’ and ‘learning dis/abilities’;
- The educated subject has the capacity to reflect objectively (as a means of self-control or technology of the self);
- The educated subject is individualised, and can be classified according to population referents (woman, intelligent, at risk, normal);
- The educated subject can/should take pleasure in becoming educated and should seek out self-discipline (Fendler, 1998).

Power produces and delimits the pathways of the self and the body in the institution through a myriad of channels and silently normativised surveillances. This concept of power does not mainly or solely rely a notion of sovereign, overt pronouncement upon punishment, life and death. Power can be understood as “exercised through, on the basis of, and in the very heterogeneity between a public right of sovereignty and a polymorphous mechanics of discipline” (Foucault, 2004, p. 38). Schooling might be broadly produced in the western European context as (1) the effect of the rationale of the state as its own end, whose object is the security and prosperity of the state itself and where the welfare of the citizens is identified with the achievement of these ends; (2) often taking these means from a Christian pastorate (Hunter, 1996, pp. 148 - 149).

Foucault elaborated a wider set of tools to understand the power relations behind the ‘modern’ episteme, the state, the apparently conscious self, and the body. These include governmentality and subjectification. As ‘glocal’ issues in the previous chapter suggested, school as a disciplinary institution must be considered in an often subtle and complex dynamic to the state, governance, and the practices of other places considered

divided and private, such as the home. Furthermore, power/knowledge suggests the substantive nature of practice in schools needs to be understood in epistemic, spatial-temporal terms. In the coming paragraphs, I consider the modern state as an effect of power/knowledge, and explore what relationship contemporary notions of race might have to the state and in turn, to schools and Selves/Others.

Justifying the emerging state/displacing racism and conflict

A genealogical project, which Foucault shares with Nietzsche and others, asserts that history itself is not a self-evident chronological tale. The following quote reflects part of Foucault's attempts to excavate changing constitutions of the social from the 16th and 17th century on, perhaps through to the present day.

The discourse of race struggle – which, when it first appeared and began to function in the seventeenth century, was essentially an instrument used in the struggles waged by decentred camps – will be recentred and will become the discourse of power itself (Foucault, 2004, p. 61).

In the above, Foucault is partially concerned with Enlightenment-based, modernising constitutions of social reality, norm, practice and self. He appears to use race as a wider term to describe a number of different knowledges that emerged around this time. These included biologico-social race 'truths' of European colonisation. They also include 19th century social war "which tends to erase every trace of social conflict in order to define itself as class struggle" (2004, p. 60). Race struggle, the 'first historico-political discourse on society', was based on a binary knowledge structure. Notions of subjectivity and experience were made intelligible, recognisable and understandable as essential truths and/or oppositions. New forms of regulation - such as the state and its institutions - emerged with and through an illusion of containment of social conflict within (what emerged as) states. The notion of containment itself was part of the justification, intelligibility and acceptability of a powerful, benevolent state¹⁹. Foucault's argument foregrounds how the concept of 'racism' itself requires a forgetting of conflict and an implicit grammar, or perpetual reference to 'one true race' in the recognisability and justification of the modern state/institutional episteme. The forgetting of struggle between various ethnic and class groups, the foregrounding of

¹⁹ Foucault is not suggesting that we analyse power as held *by* the state and its institutions. While such sovereign power and its capacity for *repressing* lives is certainly not to be dismissed, the task for social regulation analyses may be to prioritise how institutionality becomes legitimised and how local practices and identities are *produced* within unstable regimes of truth. Were states and institutions to be represented as transcendently powerful and legitimate, analyses would begin to forget the metaproceses of justification that sustain social regulation and dominance.

biological perspectives on others and the sealing of one, true, referent race was a constitutive grammar of the state's emergence.

The theme of the counterhistory of races was, finally, that the State was necessarily unjust. It is now inverted into the opposite: the State is no longer an instrument that one race uses against another: the State is, and must be, the protector of integrity, the superiority and the purity of race... I think that racism is born at the point when the theme of racial purity replaces that of race struggle... racism is, quite literally revolutionary discourse in an inverted form (Foucault, 2004, p. 81).

Foucault's suggestion that 'racial purity' or essentialised identity claims would become 'the discourse of power itself', has important implications when taken up sociologically. Racial purity, in this view, is a *raison d'état*, or a condition of the emergence of the modern liberal state and its majority and minority subjects. The claims of racialised minority groups against the state are thus inverted to *require* racial difference rather than deconstruct it. Rights were 'made available' through the emergent notion of state power, the modern protection of truth and a public notion of sovereignty. In multiple overlapping moves, knowledges of race conflict and the co-construction of race were erased and elided through governing truths. A grammar, or default position of lack, deficit and wound was constructed through processes of authenticity:

The person who is speaking, telling the truth, recounting the story, rediscovering memories... well, that person is inevitably on one side or another... the truth is, in other words, a truth that can only be deployed from its combat position, from the perspective of the sought-for victory and ultimately, so to speak, of the survival of the speaking subject himself. This discourse establishes a basic link between relations of force and relations of truth. This also means the identification of truth with peace or neutrality (Foucault, 2004, p. 52).

Racism is at once re/produced and depoliticised: an absent presence in the modern state's very formation and knowability. Foucault's thesis appears to be that oppositional forms of knowledge (i.e. truths), knowledges of a race-referent (possibly allegorical to whiteness) and the self's desire for state recognition may be relational in their emergence, forming the grounds for each other's articulation.

Governance and preserving raison d'état: the recognisable, viable state

How can this double production and depoliticisation of racism with and through the state be viewed as ongoing, particularly when substantive issues of race or class were not primary in Foucault's analysis? The manner in which power appears/becomes/is distributed via race is intertwined with and mutually implicated in the wider project of governance: bio-power. Foucault saw the emergence of sophisticated human sciences

and medical practices as co-extensive with the rise of industrial and agricultural revolutions in the 19th and 20th centuries. Post-revolution Europe saw an increasing faith in the ability to technologically conquer matter (land, life sciences) and thus make mass interventions in the areas of fertility, diet and death rates. Ransom (1997) names the necessity to control and govern the growing population as a form of bio-power, *raison d'état*, reason of state, or national interest:

It seeks to consolidate and extend those advances (against death) through a broadly understood science of policing. This biopolitics is in turn part of the specific means-end rationality associated with the maintenance of the state's population known as 'reason of state' (Ransom, 1997, p. 62, my brackets).

Logics of viability and their ongoing framing of certain racialised or classed groups as culturally, economically, socially and politically useful/productive may be an important tool in understanding the re/production of inequality within liberal states. The logic of governance is to dispose of the resources at hand so as to extract a maximum of energies, beyond which the state is unable to exploit the development of the individual. At the same time, the reason of the state is not always to promote health of populations – war being the ultimate limit of this expression. Furthermore, “not every section of the population needs to be brought up to a general level of health, education, longevity and so on, for the state's needs to be met” (Ransom, 1997, p. 64). Translating the English language into the notion of a commodity or resource, English language teaching, as will be explored in Chapters 3 and 7, can frame migrant learners within tacitly culturalist and overt market discourses of viability and utility. Low English language proficiency might be regarded as an ‘illness’ or a lack on behalf of a minority of the school's population which the state must address by intervening in different ways. This grammar at once creates and fails to interrupt racisms. We can begin to read the liberal state's implication in inequality, and its contemporarily contradictory drive for equality as engineered by *raison d'état*, or its own self-recognition and viability. These governing processes can be later understood as constructing and mediating the simultaneous production and depoliticisation of racism. In Ireland, the double production and mediation of racisms within state relations works through a ‘providing for’, managerial model of inclusion. This model is largely undercut by socio-economic, socio-cultural and socio-political priorities (EU membership, global economics, who can vote, who belongs, etc.)

Justifying the liberal state: 'managing' inclusion and reinvoking deficit
'Providing for' minorities and the marginalised is an inclusion model deployed by the contemporary Irish state that is morally entrenched to the point that popular and political discourses see it as unquestionably good. But it conflicts with the notion of an 'intercultural approach' which emphasises democratic partnership (O'Brien and O Fathaigh, 2006). It secures a top-down model of social and educational policy and supports a charitable form of inclusion where certain bodies are constantly deficiently framed. Using the following three points, I sketch how certain groups are liberally 'provided for', managed and yet excluded in ways that make the necessarily contradictory moves of state-viability appear coherent and inclusive.

1. Identity politics and recognition

McCarthy and Dimitriadis (2000) note how *resentment* (i.e. the deployment of moral-identity truths) has become an important part of contemporary liberal state governance.

As an expression of governmentality, resentment performs the ideological and discursive work of managing the complexities and challenges of diversity and multiplicity, and social, cultural and economic change generated by globalisation... (it) is deeply imbricated in the techniques and processes of self-management and self regulation of modern populations (2000, p. 172).

Equality and efficiency programmes translate in multiple and diverse ways within the state-body-politic dynamic (media, schools policy etc.). They all form an apparent coherence *as* justifiable, *as* policy etc. by their constitutive recognisability. As will be further explored in Chapter 3, the diversity 'industry' in Ireland can be understood as recognising identity claims but, by this provision model, depoliticising hierarchies of viability (Lentin and McVeigh, 2006). In considering the somewhat self-defeating limits of identity politics, McCarthy highlights how the public sphere works to justify and protect the system (and by extension, those who are privileged by it) in unexpected ways:

Increasingly, the underclass (sic) or working-class subject is contemporaneously being placed on the outside of the arena of the public sphere as the middle class subject-object of history moves into occupy and to appropriate the identity of the oppressed, the racial space of difference. The centre becomes the margin (McCarthy, 2000, p. 285 in Skeggs, 1997, p. 183).

The moralism of anti-racist arguments can be quite conveniently flipped against minority ethnic groups because it centres itself on the freedom of the innocent, the good and the true. Skeggs (1997, p. 183) states "in this political model of identity, framed by

recognition, shaped by liberalism... trauma stands as truth". Ulrich Beck refers to this problem in a related way as sub-politicisation, claiming "it is no longer interests that dominate the political horizon, but claims about the legitimacy of particular forms of knowledge" (Adam and van Loon, 2000, p. 4). The centre can endure easily by portraying itself as wounded; papers on 'white heat' in the UK (Gillborn and Kirton, 2000) and 'white worriers' in Australia (Bulbeck, 2004) may repeatedly suggest this problem. As Chapter 1 sketched, the ultimate utility of identity politics may have passed in liberal states: it is the de/racialised, intersecting meanings behind social formations and the self that require interrogation.

2. Distinctions between integration/assimilation and public/private life

Baez suggests a liberal discourse of autonomy

justifies the allocation of reward (when "winning" occurs through adherence of the rules) and blame (when "losing" or when winning occurs because of the violation of rules). It purports also to explain the private world (that governed by contract), which is seen as reflecting the uncoerced intentions of individuals (Baez, 2002, p. 69).

Drawing on the post-structural critique of identity politics, the notion of autonomy that lies behind meritocratic ideals is one that rarely exposes the conflict or power relationships invested in what is legitimised. Irish social policy currently preserves its integrity by suggesting models of 'integration' are more desirable than 'marginalisation-assimilation' models. Assimilation is rendered here as an inferior opposite. But Parekh disrupts the integration/assimilation dichotomy:

Integration shares the basic assimilationist premise that political unity requires and is impossible without cultural unity, and this differs only in limiting the latter to the public realm... The public/private distinction on which it rests is not culturally neutral... the boundary between the private and public realms is necessarily porous and few institutions and areas of life fit neatly into either category. Some, such as schools, belong to both and are subject to their conflicting demands... There is relentless pressure to bring the private realm into harmony with the values of the public realm, so that public values are internalised... It is not enough if immigrants integrate economically and politically but prefer to marry among themselves or lead culturally contained lives (Parekh, 2006, p. 187).

Parekh suggests that there is a power relationship invested in the pursuit of integration in liberal states. It is not possible to integrate to some degree publicly and practise difference privately, if integration is to be pursued in its pure form. It belies an ultimately assimilationist logic, as it is a discourse of viability borne out of the preservation of the state. One brief example of this may be the welcoming of EU-25

migrant workers to Ireland. The state and the EU is knowable as benevolent in its granting of working rights, and a depoliticisation of what it takes to succeed in Ireland takes place: migrants were first framed in terms of their economic utility. Workers could not question the benevolence of the liberal state, yet to succeed, they would have to espouse cultural unity and as a result, reinstall the state-secured superiority of the national majority (i.e., white-Irish). Difference in the public sphere was welcomed through a logic which prioritised the instrumental value of migrants, re/producing them as otherwise deficient. While rights to succeed were universalised through participation in the labour market, a quasi-feudal dynamic developed for many, as referenced in Chapter 3.

3. *The value of research and 'gaining knowledge' of exclusion*

Critiques of the production of race knowledges are many, but I wish to quote Goldberg in particular, who states “naming the racial Other, for all intents and purposes, is the Other’... information has two senses: detailed facts about racial nature; and the forming of racial character” (2000, p. 155). Ethnic monitoring might be complicit in the ongoing production of race knowledges, if institutional actors do not question the impulse to ‘provide for’ certain groups within the system through research knowledge. O’Sullivan (2005) states with respect to class inequality in Irish education that while the folk-moral construct of fairness drove efforts to abolish state funded school fees in the 1960s, two other factors were implicit: ‘distant others’ as the target of moral concern, and ‘sponsorship’ as the principal of intervention by society (2005, p. 249). The first record of educational underachievement after second level school fees were abolished in Ireland in the 1960s served to reinforce the Otherness of working class families and students:

Most publicly, it accorded a special position to those on the edge of society, ‘hard cases’, furthest removed from a normalised ‘us’. Structurally, it operated as an orientation to establish educational inequality as the exclusive experience of ‘distant others’, those so different from ‘us’ as to be almost unknowable (O’Sullivan, 2005, p, 251).

As the quote above suggests, this very unknowability, an artefact of the constructed distance between both groups, can be deployed against (lesser) Others. The ‘provision’ model of inequality research itself is as problematic as it is helpful. The production of knowledge about marginalised groups can be viewed as developed via governing logics which ultimately preserve the privilege of the Same while invoking the Other’s deficiency.

Yet, while liberal governance and *raison d'état*/state recognition and viability are useful in understanding inequality, a highly deterministic analysis is risked if we do not consider how this *raison* is just that: an ongoing project of maintenance. As a production, state viability practices are inherently unstable truth-regimes that are made recognisable and constituted *relationally*: with and through micro and extra-state practices. Regulatory effects and disciplinary power are enduring forms of power, but they are *possible* mechanisms, and are neither inevitable, nor transcendent. We might study how regimes of truth and knowledge around race and inclusion are provisional, and tested at their limits by deconstructing school-social, global-local relations.

The permeability of governance: maintaining and changing systems as effects of global-state-school exigency

There is a major health warning with the bio-power framing of governance, and transmission models of 'providing for'. du Gay (2007) suggests governmentality is quite a fashionable, if polyvalent sociological concept. In many ways, the Foucauldian reading of governance can be objectified and appropriated as a highly structuralist, and/or even Marxist concept. It can be very easily suggested that 'the state' and institutions are sealed entities which unilaterally pronounces upon and regulates the local actions of peoples. But, consistent with a view of knowledge as an effect of politics rather than a form of power, Gordon (1980) notes that bio-power should not be equated with Foucault's conception of the real effects: "the logic is not an inexorable globalisation of effects of power towards an ideal horizon of a perfectly subjected totality" (1980). The state cannot be simply equated with the possession of power. Local actions and subjectivities are less constrained than this depiction. As Chapter 1 noted, the contemporary state's borders are always already unsettled and permeable e.g. in the presence of minority groups, immigration, short-circuiting of space and time via new technologies, etc. (Bale, 2008).

The primary equation of the state *with* power often leads to revolutionary responses. Foucault criticises these, as he suggests the 'state', 'group' and 'individual' are derived from composite abstractions that might not be as descriptive of social practice as is often imagined. We might not replace understandings of modern societies as liberal-democratic, capitalist, or patriarchal with a 'disciplinary' understanding, or of modern states as 'police states':

Modern societies are as much bourgeois- or male-dominated as they are imbued with disciplinary mechanisms: not only can and do these labels overlap, but existing states of domination premised on class, race and

gender are, like the disciplinary mechanisms themselves, global products of the intertwining specific location relations of power (Deacon, 2002, p. 111).

While deterministic applications of governmentality can accommodate notions of both repressive and productive power, they can underestimate or neglect the resistances that occur at the point of every working of power. The re/produced link between categories such as race and institutions such as schools must be understood within wider regulatory logics of viability in given contexts. Foucault suggests in the *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (2002) that there is a complex interplay of rules that effects the appearance of objects. Importantly, this relational interplay also form the rules for its dissolution or invalidation. Despite post-structural use of terms like ‘impossible’ and ‘limitless’, order and limit *are intrinsic* to the constant, multivalent process of norm creation and object emergence within social relations. But this is understood here as a *constant ordering and making of effects* rather than a pre-given order.

There is no such thing as relatively independent spheres or circuits: production is immediately consumption and a recording process (*enregistrement*) without any sort of mediation and the recording process and consumption directly determine production, though they do so within the production process itself (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004, p. 4).

With this view of governance, ‘local’ centres like, e.g. the family, are not considered as simply mirroring an oppressive state, but in terms of an overall, heteromorphous strategy of power relations. These relations effect the reciprocal intelligibility and viability of the state and local institutions, and are constituted and interconnected through knowledge. What is knowable as, e.g. patriarchal family-structure endures in its reciprocity within numerous technologies of discipline. ‘The normal family’:

does not duplicate (patriarchal) society, just as society does not imitate the family. But the family organisation, precisely to the extent that it was heteromorphous with respect to other power mechanisms, was used to support the great “maneuvers” employed for the Malthusian control of the birthrate for the populationist incitements, for the medicalization of sex and the psychiatrization of its nongenital forms” (Foucault, 2005, p. 90).

In the *History of Sexuality Volume 1*, Foucault (1968) argues for an internal link between the development of certain kinds of knowledge of sexuality and increased political regulation of sexual conduct during the 18th and 19th century. Foucault also describes the historical conditions of possibility of ‘criminality’ and delinquency as including penal institutions and techniques of disciplinary power. Contemporary ‘multiculturalism’ and ‘curriculum’ can be read as two different *discourses*, which

perhaps exemplify how this logic of viability creates and sustains internal links between institutions (e.g. schools, families) social positions (e.g. ethnicity, race, femininity, ability) and state policy. In reading multiculturalism and curriculum as discourses, I suggest how the global, the state and the local might not mirror each other necessarily. They are in an undetermined, non-stable process of co-construction.

The heteromorphous workings of multiculturalism as a discourse

Multiculturalism, a policy used in Canada, the UK and the Netherlands, can be read as variously useful and damaging to the hegemonic coherence of the state at various times. In recent years, it has been used as a scapegoat for social conflict, effecting the preservation of the state's integrity and downplaying severe, racialised exclusion. Official social policies must not be seen as complicit in social conflict; this would undermine various political, economic and cultural interests. We can understand the emergence of 'community cohesion' within a circuit linking global-state knowledges around threat, immigration and cultural clash in the UK. Racist outcomes for excluded black and minority ethnic groups became less of a concern via the 'security' of majority nationalism (Gillborn, 2008). The concern mutated significantly to prioritise the 'threat' of extremist Islam and the 'segregationism' of Muslim communities who apparently refuse to even speak English. It could thus also suppress knowledge of the institutional and structural exclusion of second-generation British Muslim men and inflate their actions as part of global and national discourses of terrorism and security (Pilkington, 2008). It homogenised and implied British Muslims as ungrateful guests, whose culture was incompatible or 'clashing' with a depoliticised, deracialised (and thus re-racialised, white) Britishness. In this way, public policy might be positioned to require minoritised groups to be grateful for the monitoring of racist outcomes, and use this apparent ungratefulness to tighten surveillance and penalties. Similar trends have occurred elsewhere: Canada responded to the politicisation of marginalised minorities in the 1990s by lessening the emphasis on multiculturalism to favour a 'Heritage Canada' department. Other countries, such as Australia and the Netherlands, have in recent years moved away from multiculturalism in tandem with movements against immigration (Castles and Miller, 2003). Community cohesion, at school level, becomes positioned as unproblematic exercise, as it bases itself on the integrationist logic critiqued earlier in this chapter. Yet how is this exercise worked at school level? Does community cohesion policy form a necessary constituent of the school's viability, e.g. through funding? Do headteachers simply tick integration indicators and 'support' families through English language teaching? And do students' practices inside and outside school walls become

‘more socially cohesive and community oriented’ with this policy? Or are the workings of discourses other than ‘multiculturalism’ at play? Perhaps the next discourse might mesh to disperse, extend, or divert multiculturalism or, referring to the Irish context in Chapter 3, interculturalism.

The heteromorphous workings of curriculum policy as a discourse

Curriculum is long recognised in Ireland not as a product of knowledge and skills to be transmitted by a dominant expert, but as a process of negotiation (Trant, 2007). Irish national curriculum statements are created as symbolic objects through particular vested interests on governmental and agency planes (Sugrue, 2004) and translated/processed/practiced from within local school contexts. Gleeson (2004) suggests the prioritisation of economic and technical interests and the sectoral, depoliticised nature of Irish social partnership (where teacher unions, the DES, school management bodies, parental and industry representatives dictate curricular necessities and practices) are important factors in the manner in which curriculum is enacted and experienced. A seemingly innocuous statement like the Irish primary ‘menu’ curriculum (NCCA, 1999) is, in tandem with parental comparisons across schools, culturally homogenous teacher biographies (I learned *this* way and I will teach the same way; Sugrue, 1997) part of an important ‘ordering’ and mutual shaping of the state (and non-state) education system and to some degree, education transnationally. Irish school contexts can mutually reduce their curricular objectives, i.e., narrow their focus on certain ‘competitive’ subjects. A more overt mechanism of curricular reduction and student normalization, when dominant, can be the standardised test regime. Critiques of ‘potential’ have taken the wider argument that curriculum and pedagogy policies that view children as beginning at different starting points without examining how they are hierarchically produced “not only jettisons the conceptual tools to analyse inequality... but also naturalises such inequality” (Archer and Francis, 2007, p. 20).

What is important to take from the above is that local practice, state and global exigencies reciprocally translate and are co-constructed, rather than being *a priori*, or fixing each other permanently. The relationship of states to wider global or extra-state forces is one of mutual shaping. It can appear that Europeanisation contributes to an eroding of Irish sovereignty. But it is equally arguable that reduced dependency on the UK, and the impact that Ireland has had on the rest of Europe through the Lisbon referendum were not predictable before joining the EEC. At local level, a reified curriculum statement is taken up by schools and students in various ways and in various

contexts. Holloway and Valentine provide an example of the meeting of a UK/global drive for IT in schools and the gendered student practices they studied:

The way these boys make sense of and use computers – gaining social currency from their peers by searching for websites of traditionally masculine interest – is partly shaped by their own ‘local’ cultures, cultures which include academic underachievement... and an interest in talking about and sharing pictures of women. Equally, to conceive of this computing culture in purely local terms, as a social world created by these children, would be inappropriate.... Children’s presence in IT lessons reflects the British government’s response to global labour market changes (2000, p. 769).

There are multiple, innumerable (heteromorphous) constitutions and normalisations that shape students and teachers’ practices (gender roles, school-as-educative) and that, at once, these practices shape. Local empirical work on schooling is one way of revealing the limits of different forms of knowledge about students and their location in intersecting ‘knowns’ both inside and outside the school walls. Labels such as ‘special needs’ can be understood as emergent within the administrative necessities of distribution of resources and technologies, e.g. of child developmental psychology and cognitive development (Harwood, 2006; Walkerdine, 2004). Concepts of ‘childhood to adulthood’ can heteronormatively regulate young sexualities on a continuum of innocence to experience with and through the operations of school, but empirical work suggests these representations do not add up (Renold, 2005, Devine, 2003). The heteromorphous workings of produced and legitimated contexts and selves, which translates differently at different points in the constitutive relationship of state policy, the global and local (e.g. school) practice, is understood here as the translations and mutations of *global-state-school exigency*. The necessity of justification/iteration and the regular need for new justifications is where power can be intervened upon. The latent instability of this process is the very grounds for the possibility of pinpointing places for provisional change. I turn next to explore how, like the boys and their computers above, practices of the self and overt action for social justice might be further theorised in this complex dynamic.

The desire for recognition and the ordering of viability: unstable subjectivation

Power/knowledge, if consistently applied, must ultimately suggest that the ‘known’, objectified self does not stand outside of the assembled, impossibly vast production of all knowledges, whether tacit (embedded norms, structures) or apparently obvious and

overtly drawn upon. Rather s/he is enmeshed in their production and thus can only know him/herself in relation to this production²⁰.

It is clearly not the case that 'I' preside over the positions that have constituted me shuffling through them instrumentally... The 'I' who would select between them is always already constituted by them... these positions are not merely theoretical products, but fully embedded organisational principles of material practices and institutional arrangements, that matrix of power and discourse that produces me as a viable 'subject' (Butler, 1995, in O'Sullivan, 2005, p 70).

Contesting the notion of an apparently self-contained, autonomous identity, decentred subjectivity might regard the 'self' as fragmented, non-unitary and unstable because s/he both becomes recognisable only in context, and in turn can only then work within/with/against to shape that context. Politics largely drawing upon seemingly immutable sexed, raced, dis/abled bodies have been radically unsettled in light of these ideas. Working with and through sex-gender categories, Judith Butler suggests that the simple act of putting on lipstick is not the act of a knowing female self; rather this is an iterative mode of 'girling', through which the subject is made possible. There is no 'doer' behind the deed – the doer is "variably constructed in and through the deed" (Butler, 1990, p. 142). Thus 'being' a girl is something the gendered female may discursively gravitate towards in order to 'be' (recognisable as) a girl. Butler suggests the contours of the sexed body are produced in their knowing, not 'born'. Categories of 'male/female' are thus unstable discursive positions that serve to make notions of masculinity and femininity intelligible. Single bodies 'perform' or 'do' variously objectivised selves, where what is knowable as female, white, working class, etc. are constantly cited and inscribed. But these selves are not unitary; even when 'doing nothing', meanings are made from these bodies. Since these inscriptions are socio-historically sedimented, the performance of the 'real self' is not to be confused with the freedom of expression granted, e.g. to stage actors. Indeed, the very fact that the performance is recognised and acceptable is because it is situated within heavily historicised, context-bound knowledges of an acceptable, categorised self (student, Latvian girl, Nigerian boy, mother).

²⁰ To 'know' all of production (all 'knowledges') and to view every single object as a process of mutual constitution of the self and the object through chains and churns that produce seemingly known, unknown and forgotten (progression of man, industry, colonisation) might be terrifying; it might be psychotic, or schizophrenic, to use Deleuze and Guattari's (2004) terms.

Psychosocial aspects of selfhood

Henriques et al. (1984) asks “are we to assume... that the individual subject is simply the sum total of all positions in discourses since birth?” (1984, p. 204 in Mama, 1995, p. 125). Discursive approaches have been accused of offering no means of understanding how subjects live the “contradictions of positioning, the demands of imposed fictions or the exigencies of everyday life” (Walkerdine et al., 2001, pp. 106 – 107). Post-structural theory has been criticised for not taking enough account of psychological processes whereby “the recursive formation of selves within their life settings is not only mediated by complex material, discursive and relational influences but also by dynamic, intersubjective, unconscious processes” (Hollway, 2006, p. 466). Mama’s (1995) study takes a local and specific analysis of individuals within a community and school setting. She suggests that her black female participants never entirely jettison their former positions at an intrapsychic level, suggesting *performative inscription of the self* over notions of a coherently developing psychic life. In accounting for the apparently unitary selfhood and the predictability of one’s action, it may be useful to consider that:

Discursive movements... are accompanied by psychodynamics processes within the individual and vice versa: psychodynamic processes have discursive (social and historical) content... there is a constant resonance between psychodynamic processes and social experience in the construction and reproduction of the individual’s subjectivity (Mama, 1995, p. 133).

Rethinking recognition and inclusion of identities

The first critical task in this study may be to re-think desire for equality and identification with a particular category away from intrinsic attachments to certain bodies, selves and race categories. This provokes a need to examine how desires, identifications and wider practices of the self are not *a priori*, but constituted and constituting. Butler (2004) states the Hegelian tradition links desire with recognition, claiming that desire is always a desire for recognition. In this argument, it is only through recognition that any of us becomes constituted as viable, valued, high status, low status in (or non-selves, placed outside of) particular contexts. As Chapter 1 suggested, certain subcultural identities, class practices and racialised bodies can and do become identified and institutionalised as anti-school, problematic, high status or low status. This is partially through processes of streaming, tracking and in places, practices of overt prejudice and, for example, performances of hegemonic masculinity (Lynch and Lodge, 2002, Gillborn and Youdell, 2000, Mac an Ghail, 1994). Hall (below) highlights how racist discourses have previously positioned black people as envious of

the status of the white majority. This arguably pictures minorities as accepting/rejecting the dominant culture, and by extension, accepting (e.g. acting white) or rejecting (e.g. being black) education. A re-reading of this interpretation involves:

Slow recognition of the deep ambivalence of identification and desire. We think about identification usually as a simple process, structured around fixed 'selves' which we either are or are not. The play of identity and difference which constructs racism is powered not only by the positioning of blacks as the inferior species but also, and at the same time, by an inexpressible envy and desire; and this is something the recognition of which fundamentally displaces many of our hitherto stable political categories, since it implies an identification and otherness which is more complex than we had hitherto imagined (Hall, 1996, pp. 444 – 445).

What the subject may desire, or deem necessary to survive in terms of education in a new country is not linear or unproblematic, but contingent. The self is produced in context (e.g. state definition, school positioning), in order to make sense as a self and be identifiable. The issue of survival and viability appears central in maintaining or shaping this self. Known/recognised selves never have the same value attributed to them in every context: a self that is known or maintained in one context will be differently valued by other selves in another context. Similarly, not all contexts have the same value attributed to them. Discourses necessitate certain desires and selves become more 'desirable' than others, as certain desires may be thought of as a means to or as a currency for intelligibility and survival.

If the schemes of recognition that are available to us are those that "undo" the person by conferring recognition, or "undo" the person by withholding recognition, then recognition becomes a site of power by which the human is differentially produced. This means that to the extent that desire is implicated in social norms, it is bound up with the question of power and with the problem of who qualifies as the recognizably human and who does not (Butler, 2004, p. 2).

The above statement explains how power is implicated in the desire to become recognisable as a (certain type of) human. In other words, rather than being intrinsically, or at times biologically acceptable, individuals are constantly *made* acceptable, intelligible, and valuable or viable as certain types of selves and bodies, mostly assumed as conscious, rational actors. These selves mutually constitute and offer recognition to the contexts in which they practice.

There is then, a doubled issue around norms. Norms may act as aspirations that guide us, but they also act as those which make us intelligible, and which bind us, "creating a unity only through a strategy of exclusion" (Butler, 2004, p. 206). The following quote

may be useful to consider from the point of view of certain immigrants or individuals. They may be variously classed as 'different', 'non-national' and 'black' in everyday language, and in the language of the state, submit themselves and are submitted to markers such as 'immigrant', 'refugee', 'asylum seeker':

On the one hand, living without the norms of recognition, results in significant suffering and forms of disenfranchisement that confound the very distinctions among psychological, cultural and material consequences. On the other hand, the demand to be recognised, which is a very powerful political demand, can lead to a new and invidious form of social hierarchy, to a precipitous foreclosure of the personhood field, and to new ways of supporting and extending state power (Butler, 2004, p. 115).

The self is also subject to and subjects other selves: central to the formation of subjects are the mutual acts of recognition subjects accord each other via viable selfhood. Even when the subject disavows its dependence on that other that recognises it, in *that* act of recognition, it constitutes its existence through the terms which recognition take place. Certainly, ideas about a greater reflexivity, and less of an overt affiliation to social positions within western cultures and schools helps understand young 'post-feminist' identities in Ireland (O'Connor, 2008). Yet, there is a conceptual issue around the self and social justice that remains unresolved, when theses of individualisation and fragmentation imply

a self which is chronically uncertain about what to be and how to be, but the origin and the reality of the self from which these questions emanate is not in doubt.... by their own reasoning, these accounts implicitly draw a line beyond which the process of reflexivity is somehow non-applicable (Adams, 2003, p. 224).

It is the mutual recognition of viability *as vulnerability* that I will use as an important ethic for praxis in Chapter 9. This approach places a strong focus on the primary nature of individuals' relationality and shared desire for recognition.

To offer some clarification at this point, the self and the subject cannot be used interchangeably as terms:

- I use term 'self' to provisionally objectify a 'conscious' individual, separated from the context and intersubjectivity which s/he makes or is emergent through;
- 'Identity' perhaps refers to the self's relation to his/her constitution as a self through psychosocial processes;

- ‘The subject’, when used in decentred manner, refers here only to a self within a *dynamic of mutual shaping with context and other knowable selves*. A theory of subjectivation suggests the self is constantly negotiated and only emergent through overt and less obvious iterations and justifications which make these contexts and other selves given and knowable²¹.

As stated at the beginning of the chapter, the mutual process of recognition and viability suggests that neither does the self (e.g. student, teacher, school principal) ever fully make, shape or determine a context (e.g. state, school, classroom), and neither does a context ever fully shape the self. Selves and contexts might be maintained or shifted within and as part of creating global-state-school exigencies. Practices of policy-making, agenda setting and school participation can be thus thought of as improvisational, contingent and affected by the changes in other contexts and selves.

The dynamics of the subject are viewed here in terms of performative, constrained production, and are seen as being set in constant dilemmas. Despite the innumerable possibilities for the self, the pressing, governing need for recognisability and selfhood ensures the continuance of certain paths and ‘story-lines’, which involves being positioned but also “imaginatively positioning oneself as if one belongs in one category and not in the other” (Davies, 2004, p. 128). We must deal with this sealed story of ‘who might be’ as a productive condition of our knowability and viability that effects a story or ‘truth’. By extension, as a *certain* story, it also masks its constitutive and hierarchising effects: foreclosing ‘who we might not be’, or be allowed to be. In the same way that a marginalised self must be vigilant for his/her recuperation by liberal equality discourse, recognition must always consider how it is mutually shaped by and shapes viability. But whether ‘one’ is recognised or not, how to conceptualise overt political action in a seemingly endless ordering of viability?

Political action: turning around on the impossibly constituted self

The constrained self, one that is neither present prior to the scene/context, but mutually made and ordered in recognition, clearly poses problems for the idea of overt political action. Are our actions not always already undercut and undermined, if Butler states “there is no power, construed as a subject that acts, but only... a reiterated acting that *is* power in its instability” (1993, p. 225)? Butler’s reading of Althusser’s interpellation provides us with a clue about how to conceive of overt action when the subject is always produced in the shaping relations of self and context, i.e. where self-

²¹ The implications for doing research are teased out further in Chapter 4.

consciousness is not an *a priori* given, but the very desire that constitutes and is constituted by the subject. Butler suggests “if conscience is one form that the passionate attachment to existence takes, then the failure of interpellation is to be found precisely in the passionate attachment that allows it to work” (1997b, p. 129).

Critical thinking and action might involve a turning around on and enquiring about the passionate attachment to conscience and self-recognition that immediately orders the self in certain symbolic, material and other hierarchies. Overt political action must be a *strange* sort of act: there are few words in the English language to describe this notion of constrained action, an action constantly undercut by the interactions and mutual shaping of self and context (‘the one’ and ‘the law’ respectively, below).

The turning around is an act that is, as it were, conditioned both by the “voice” of the law and by the responsiveness of the one hailed by the law. The “turning around” is a strange sort of middle ground (taking place, perhaps, in a strange sort of “middle voice”), which is determined both by the law and the addressee, but by neither unilaterally nor exhaustively (Butler, 1997b, p. 107, original parentheses).

Importantly, in making a break in the virtual grid of intelligibility, the subject may not be considered as the originating, authentic source of resistance, but activated through, and acting within and against its terms. Marginal or silenced narratives can be conceptualised as fluid and contingent resistances to rigid hegemonic discourses, as opposed to potentials for ultimate liberation. Within circuits of meaning and object formation, the action to counter power inadvertently creates the conditions for the reaction to power. In other words, resistances are constantly open to recuperation. The possibilities for agency and resistance, as well as for new racisms to occur, is that standards of justification are just as revisable as they are practiced iteratively in circuits, rather than remaining static. The norms around which institutions organise/coalesce are not sovereign – they do not possess power. Neither are certain norms intrinsic to the institution. They are repeatedly inscribed and cited through practices, which they derive provisional intelligibility from. Thus, in this view, action or autonomy are regarded as constrained, i.e. individual and even private matters are effects of interrelated power/knowledges:

Any talk of autonomy in Foucault’s idiom has already presupposed the entire network of social relations. If we can call ourselves autonomous, it is because of social institutions and the ‘public’ sphere, not in spite of them (Wisnewski, 2000, p. 433).

The notion of resistance can be understood as not concerning “the inequities of today (stressing similarities) or creolisation and hybridisation (stressing difference), it might be one of ongoing rupture and recuperation” (Stoler, 1995, p. 200) in production. While the possibilities of an overtly political act by two students are considered in Chapter 9, deconstructive work produces several potential tools for interrupting racist effects. These are bulleted throughout Chapters 5 to 8. Practices of iteration and subversion of knowledge are read here as implicated in the very practices that engineer subjectivity. A student’s subjectivity is understood as tied up in the manner in which that individual has constituted him/herself; subjectivities are formed through multiple relations. Youdell (2006a) provides one example of a performative politics in the school context:

The ‘disabled’ student cannot simply jettison this performative and erase the discourse that gives it meaning, but s/he can resist it, act outside the terms of this discourse, call him/herself ‘crip’ and in doing so rest this ordinarily injurious performative out of its usual place in discourse as the abberant, abnormal, outside and instead insist that ‘crip’ might not be a source of shame, pity and exclusion (Youdell, 2006a, p. 49).

Thus, the individual can use the non-necessary emergence of the name, i.e. the justifications through which the injurious performative came about, to resignify him/herself. The terms ‘queer’ and ‘nigga’ have both been resignified or transposed in western ‘non-heterosexual’ and ‘non-white’ politics and popular cultures. This ‘re’signification is not ‘re’ as in repeated, but ‘re’ as in reversed or done again differently (Youdell, 2006a). In exposing these interrelations for the purposes of race, practices of deconstruction can be used instead of oppositional modes of resistance that may fail to fully address discursive embeddedness (Youdell, 2006a). Instead of focusing on ‘games of truth’, the dominant truth can be exposed as being inherently fractured and constitutive of its opposite. Butler (1999) suggests that what is ‘troubling’ for gender is its subversion: the Goth girl, the lipstick lesbian, the MTF transsexual. Her point is that the abject female and the acceptable female lie in constant relation to each other:

In these instances ‘genders can be rendered thoroughly and radically incredible’ [Butler, 1990, p. 141]. These new discursive positions are not set apart from a rigidly circumscribed heterosexual femininity, but are central to its constitution as they are produced, in effect, through the deployment of these norms (Nayak and Kehily, 2006, p. 461).

The dominant presence is always relationally defined in terms of the absent Other which it appears to transcend, i.e. in terms of what it is not. Black is not white, etc. Furthermore, the appearance of certain students as ‘anti’ or ‘pro’ school is entangled within webs of associations and chains of knowledge, e.g. mind-reason-masculine as

opposed to body-nature-feminine. Butler argues that the subject has constrained or discursive agency, in that s/he can resignify and also interpellate others.

Transposing the performative, relational interpretation of the sex-gendered self from Butler, and the notions of the *effects of governance* from Foucault, I turn to a working definition of racist effects and racialised bodies, contexts and selves. In concluding this chapter, the forthcoming section outlines the specific tools of this thesis, centred on a post-structural, intersectional conceptualisation of institutional racism.

Interrupting racist effects: tools for excavating the performance of race and the viability of school

Cause-effect, identity-outcome, oppressor-oppressed relationships

There are many truth-implications invested in concerns about the essentialised object of ethnic monitoring, and the structurally oppressed (minority) ethnicity subject of education. Ethnic monitoring practices rely very much on a rational discourse of ends (outcomes) and means (practices), using a liberatory/coercive form of power from which we can judge the legitimacy of the institution. It is arguable that a judgement of legitimate/illegitimate institutions in terms of how they treat humanity requires a static human nature (Ransom, 1997), i.e., it requires we read humanness as an object/social fact. Such practices can fail to examine the regulatory logic from which ‘humanity’ emerges. This logic may assume the boundaries of inclusion and exclusion, and remove them from situated practice. If understandings of historical effects are based in the field of conscious intentionality (i.e. we must monitor racist outcomes because this is good), we constantly reduce analysis to a neatly sewn ‘progression’ model of anti-racism, risking a foreclosed, depoliticised analysis of what it means to be included or excluded²². While policy on institutional racism serves a strategic purpose (Mac an Ghail, 1999), this purpose, like any form of justification, is open to manipulation. One of the key issues with the right/wrong application of racist outcomes is that it is contradicted by deterministic or structuralist language, which “assumes that human conduct is constrained by social structures, and, thus individuals are neither to be respected nor condemned” (Baez, 2002, p. 69).

In this study, the complex dynamics of inclusion/exclusion is regarded as not always purposeful and the historical effects of moral discourses are not guaranteed. Practices are taken up and performances ‘done’ in ways that can reconfigure what is knowable and acceptable. Therefore, we should not seek to map discourses to ‘what happens’ (the

²² I am referring to a ‘right/wrong’ binary in its decontextualised, universalised sense.

effects), or speak of error when discourses do not correspond to practices. Gordon states:

The empirical non-correspondence between the level of discourses and the level of historical effects can be analysed *in other terms* than the sociological interference of a hidden hand which orchestrates the unexpected, without lapsing into the interpretation of history as the realisation of some (articulate or unarticulate) project... the effects of the programme transcend the criterion of whether its intentions are fulfilled, this is largely because a programme is always something more than a formulation of intentions or wishes. Every programme also either articulates or presupposes a knowledge of the field of reality upon which it is to intervene and/or which it is calculated to bring into being (Gordon, 1980, p. 248).

Perhaps one of the most important reasons I support naming institutional racism is “it establishes the simple but crucial fact that a rule which is applied to everyone is not automatically fair or just” (Gillborn, 1990, p. 10). This naming supports a critique of a universalising liberalism and its potential for extreme forms of individualism and meritocracy. The constitution of racism as an individual psychological prejudice/error has long been critiqued for neglecting social structure: “this implies that social structures cannot be racist, only individuals can” (Rizvi, 1993, p. 7). But as Chapter 1 suggested, the risk involved in the invocation of outcomes and the production of race knowledges may be the foreclosure of selves defined by their wounds (Haywood and Mac an Ghail, 1997) and the implicit recentring of a certain racial (often white) norm. The forthcoming analysis problematises the reliance on ‘progression’ that institutional monitoring implies. It does not view ‘racist outcomes’ or ‘racialised selves’ as a web of practices derived *exactly* from, e.g. certain race discourses (e.g. model Asian students), or as a measurable object/end-point of practices taken from available meanings.

Defining racist effects

It is at this point that I wish to formally offer a definition of the concept of the racist effects of late modernity as an approach to both understanding and interrupting the mobility of institutional racism in liberal times.

It may be through the representation of race as a discrete, objectified, oppressor/oppressed social position and the notion of modernist chronological progress that race is obliquely reified and white privilege normalised in inclusive liberal regimes. We must consider how race may be co-effected and made meaningful in direct but also in oblique, unexpected and contradictory ways. A racist effects approach deconstructs the normalisation of discrete whiteness and reified deficiency using intersecting factors beyond a stable, unitary selfhood. These factors include the other social positions that multiply constitute the Self/Other in

hierarchised ways (e.g. class and gender) in given contexts. Racist effects may 'fold' or re-form across space and time, school-society and local-global relationships. Such a folding troubles notions of institutional progress and requires an unravelling of old and new relationships between race and school.

While the term 'racialisation' refers to largely the same process here, this form of critical theorising suggests politics can successfully proceed through deconstruction. The term 'effects' seeks to agree with others on the constant, often brutal and also the 'everyday' outcomes of inequality. But it moves from away from cause-effect identity politics and towards tracing the weaknesses of race in its articulation and co-construction with and through other maintained/shifting social vectors (e.g. contemporary liberal restructuring, class, gender, etc.) Tracing these weaknesses involves directly targeting the countless ways in which schools and selves are recognised and made viable.

Examining temporal and spatial folding of discourse

In this study, institutional developments such as mixed ability teaching and English language support are deconstructed to reveal how white-Irishness might be normalised and co-constructed with and through class and gender. School and race are read here as constantly linked in circuits of knowledge at policy and institutional practice levels, and neither are viewed as discrete entities. Knowledges of school and race can be understood as moving through multivalent and overlapping politics of meaning, e.g. disruption and subsequent recuperation, emptying and transposition of meaning, elision and subjugation of experience. In this sense, knowledge and practice is not intrinsically tied to a particular time or place.

- I use 'discourse' to represent a vector of innumerable, impossible production of knowledges or texts;
- 'Production', to offer further clarification, is an array of discourses too innumerable to fully describe: discourses are always reiterated or mutating, being translated through other discourses, are overt, covert (or even disqualified) in particular contexts, e.g. in the interrelationships of 'multiculturalism' and 'curriculum' described earlier in this chapter. The notion of production is quite resonant with Deleuze and Guattari's (2004) folding assemblage of 'desiring-production'. Production goes hand-in-hand with *legitimation*, in the same manner in which one's recognition and viability are contextually interweaved;
- If a knowledge-context is read as produced, then it is not transcendent, but spatially and temporally bound. In reading the contingency and possibility of a discourse to 'reoccur' or occur in a similar way in a different context (place and

time), I use the idea of the folds of production. Stoler (1995) refers to ‘the fold’ as “the recursive, recuperative power of discourse itself, in a way that highlights how new elements (new planes) in a prior discourse may surface and take on altered significance as they are repositioned in relation to a new discourse with which they mesh” (1995, p. 72).

The limits of assumptions about modern teleology are used as means of excavating the interaction of selves and contexts in these folds. As Chapter 5 analyses space and location, the school can be understood not simply as a vessel of concrete and steel that houses social processes, but a permeable site where ‘internal’ and ‘external’ bodies and selves are valued and revalued. I argue in Chapter 6 that interrupting modernist, ‘progressive’ framings of learning, knowledge and ability might disrupt the constant invocation of racialised-classed-gendered embodied deficit.

Racialisation as intersectional and post-structural

As Chapter 1 suggested, numerous debates arise about where/how to interrupt production and define the significance of the discrete analytic: ‘race’. The impossibly vast mutual constitution of all named ‘economies’ might not lead to paralysis or the abandonment of the project, but possibility. An analogy to subjectivation applies here: as much as we process and are processed, we interrupt (name external objects) and are interrupted (are named and are known). Thus *partial objects* are required in order to ‘work’. Crucially, when we use these objects, we must remain attentive to how they are processed: this requires a vigilant grammar that intrinsically turns on itself. In examining constantly enforced limits through and new forms of limits and divisions, we glimpse the effects of production both in its mutual iteration of objects and their resignification. In this glimpse at limits in formation processes, we see possibility for change, i.e. contingent social justice.

I understand the concept ‘racialisation’ as intersectional: to describe the processes as a magnet to other forms of exclusion; e.g. whiteness and class differentiations as impossibly objectified categories that are part of the dynamic. Race might not be analysed as a unitary object, but always turned upon as a socio-historically produced assemblage effected through mutually sustaining, shaping and changing practices which *coalesce to divide*, ‘processing’ and ‘producing’ these divisions which are to greater or lesser extents rendered, or perceived as objects. These divided and dividing objects and processes might include:

- *The produced self*

- The physical body and phenotype (skin, hair, stature)
- Ethno-cultural and subcultural styles and practices read as embodied (accent, dress)
- Hetero-sexed reproduction and kinship within and across skin-tones and skin-colours (miscegeny taboo, unrespectable whites, shadism)
- Other vectors of power variously described in Chapter 1: class, gender-sexuality, dis/ability ‘etc.’ (Butler, 1999).
- Symbolic processes of psychic comfort/anxiety, presence/lack, morality/immorality, recognition/misrecognition/non-recognition as well as white/black, virgin/whore, respectable/disgraceful orderings of fantasy and projection (Youdell, 2006a, Skeggs, 1997);
- These might be engineered by and engineer orderings, dependent on particular institutional and other contexts, such as *the produced school*:
 - Inclusion/exclusion from what is considered mainstream economic, political, social, cultural and/or institutional life, e.g. through ‘new IQism’, competitive individualism and culturalism in education (Mirza, 2006, Gillborn, 2002);
 - Teacher/student, adult/child orderings which legitimate a linear notion of ‘human progression’ (Devine, 2003).

As a constantly drawn and redrawn process of effects, race, when reduced and named on the body as skin colour or as cultural embodiment, can be understood as contextually performed as a relation to or drawing upon different objects, e.g., some of the bulleted points used above. The importance of context and the non-necessary but enduring nature of race is crucial to foreground, and is revealed in the shifting meanings of ‘white’, ‘black’ etc. referred to Chapter 1. These tools are developed with a view to four key themes²³ on racialisation, borrowing from and augmenting Alexander and Knowles (2005):

- how race is made by external ascription and internal identity claims;
- how race is inscribed and performed in mundane interactions;

²³ These themes are read through the next chapter on Irish macro-level education policy, but they are particularly applied to ethnographic data in Chapters 5 – 8.

- how this inscription and performance is only possible *through matter*: in this case, institutional spaces, practices of the physical body and the symbolizations of the psyche;
- as Chapter 1 suggested, how the ‘matter’ of selves and contexts (institutional practices and raced bodies and selves) are emergent
 - not only through maintained/changing spatial divisions of the institutional and wider society, but also;
 - through the temporal: a logic of progression which equally contributes to context emergence: the learner, the educative school, ‘being more inclusive’, and so on.

In the next section, final clarification is offered around how viability and school respectability is discursively co-constructed, particularly through race and class.

Situated intersectionality: the mutations of good/bad meritocratic selfhood

Ball (2003) argues that class is inductive and grounded, located in space and time, where categories might be made more malleable to the specific practices of competition, distinction and social advantage. Working on this basis, I offer a reading of the dynamics of class beyond a middle class/working class binary. I often borrow the category designation ‘respectable’ from Skeggs (1997) in conjunction with (often working and middle) class categorisations.

Multiple fears around ‘white exclusion’ in UK schools and more recently in the Irish labour market (RTÉ Prime Time, May, 2009) might not emphasise the cultural turn in the politics of class. This is a discourse which reproduces whiteness in an indirect rather than simply direct way:

- There appears to be an overt identity politics at work which recentres whiteness over the ‘they’re taking our jobs’ discourse. But by drawing on the identity politics of the non-white in response, or as the only response, racial hierarchy might be *reproduced* and undercut the overt argument made.
- Certainly a race reading might intuitively draw on theories of whiteness, where non-whites are often variously silently constituted as lesser (Bhattacharya et al., 2002). But the evocation of panic around the white working-class can be understood as not a simple affiliation with conditions of white brothers and sisters, but a wider symbolic differentiation process through which class is remade in the media (Skeggs, 2004), a process implicated in the reinforcing of

race. Modernisation processes in multicultural Britain reduces 'fit' of one's culture to national and global markets, a subtly deracialised discourse which allows 'culture' and competitive individualist responsibility to take centre stage and elide any notion of racism.

There is major purchase in understanding the liberal public space as implicitly requiring an elite cultural unity (Parekh, 2006), one which can include the 'respectable' racial Other to the degree that they confirm its legitimacy as inclusive:

- Contemporary knowledges of white-working class 'scum' and 'lack' of racialised minority integration can emerge through social presumptions of a fixed entrepreneurial self;
- These represent cultural formations (of race and class) as a choice and failure as lack. These logics do not talk about cultural hierarchy, but represent them as spaces: "every culture in its place" (Skeggs, 2004, p. 89).

'Respectability' and 'recognition' might be further considered as at once a tacit maintaining of good/bad race-class-gender matrices. Analysing a related piece, Skeggs suggests "this is why we need to know how and where and for whom discourse is being produced, exchanged and used as well as the conditions that put it into effect" (2004, p. 61). Both white (Irish) and non-white identities might be understood as subjectivated through tacit discourses underpinned by national viability: e.g. managerialist interculturalism and 'diversity management' (Lentin and McVeigh, 2006). I do not read race as coming about through the fragmentation of working class groups. But neither do I entirely displace class in its mutual constitution of race *as surfacing and overt or submerged and covert as an 'issue' at different points*. The same can be said of other hierarchies. I predominantly use the traditional triad of race-class-gender, but I do not suggest a downplaying of other provisional structures. Rather, I read one's viability as positioned in and positioning multiply constituted vectors (race, class, gender, ability, sexuality etc.) in the mutations of good/bad, meritocratic selfhood.

In suggesting the implication of gender, class and other social categories in the survival, masking and articulation of racist effects for these learners, an intersectional approach is adopted. I suggest a doubled move in the research design: both using the intelligibility and materiality of the category or institution (school, race, class) and troubling it for the manner in which it might close down, dehistoricise and depoliticise. Apparently stable institutions like school, and potentially enduring effects like race through 'new migrants' are placed *sous rature*, after Derrida, or under erasure, using these

knowledges as if their meaning were clear. Drawing upon Youdell's (2006a) citational chains, I deliberately draw upon binary representations of students in order to deconstruct them and expose their limits, e.g. white-Irish-working class, black-Dublin-Nigerian, etc. In this deconstruction, I regard particular 'intersecting categories' as mutually constitutive. It is important to note that I use the terms 'new migrant and/or minority ethnic' in the data analysis to underline the temporality of these young people's situations. Many students featured in this study are first generation migrants, some of whom consider themselves minority ethnic Irish. Others were not sure if they are returning to/moving to another country, while many offered no comment on their identities. But many certainly had a distinct sense of Dublin, and particularly Termonfort, as 'their place'. In introducing each data fragment, I specifically refer to chains of student categories as they would be officially knowable. Ethno-nationalised categories are used to describe migrant students, while also referring to Asianness, blackness and whiteness (Filipino, black-Nigerian, white-Lithuanian etc.). Class is particularly identified for indigenous Irish and some eastern European students, where appropriate to and possible in the particular analysis.

I turn next to read justifications and politics of knowledge around race in Irish policy and emancipatory research. Instead of abandoning schools as institutions, I attempt to work within and destabilise the terms of schools and tacit/overt race knowledges. My priority is to treat all truths/knowledges, including those which position school anti-racism policy as an unproblematic good, as potentially dangerous.

Chapter 3

'Let's not make the mistakes of other countries'

The ambiguity of white-Irishness and the viability of good/bad migrants

Well they are doing it (requiring baptismal certificates for school admission) in some areas... I don't think it is divisive and I think particularly where there are Catholic schools it's reasonable that Catholic children who want a Catholic education should be able to do so. *Then Councillor Leo Varadkar (now TD) on his claim that local (Irish Catholic) parents should have first claim on local schools: 'Morning Ireland', RTE Radio 1, 27th April, 2007.*

It may be a skin colour issue, but it's not necessarily a race issue. *Former Minister for Education and Science Mary Hanafin, speaking to RTE on coverage of the recent emergence of primary schools in Ireland where all students were of black African origin, September 2007.*

Certain subtle practices by *individual* schools can have the effect of discouraging particular groups from applying for places. *Former Minister for Education and Science Batt O'Keeffe, denying that the exclusion of SEN and immigrant students from traditionally academic schools was a system-wide problem (Flynn and Faller, Irish Times, 4th December 2008, my italics).*

Lentin and McVeigh's (2006) *After Optimism?* has detailed ways in which racism aggressively re-percolated through social, economic and legislative restructuring in 21st century Ireland. The work describes a sense of optimism engendered through the emergence of an anti-racist industry which could rationally 'deal with' racism in the late 1990s. One particular national campaign that emerged was optimistically entitled *Know Racism*. This campaign epitomised an individual psychological approach to racism at state policy level. The anxious development of an immigration and asylum bill and the 2004 racialisation of Irish citizenship made sense in this highly individualised 'knowing' of racism.

Education policy could be described as being slower off the mark in terms of its later anti-racist sentiment. But there were similar optimisms articulated about this version of anti-racism in education in 2000. The following excerpt from the *White Paper on Adult Education* employs curious anti-racist rhetoric:

There are now over 100 different nationalities in Irish primary schools. Clearly, Ireland is rapidly evolving as a multi-racial society. Recognising the importance of this issue for the future direction of Irish society, aiming to maximise the gains of multiculturalism and *pre-empting the rise of racism in Ireland*, inter-culturalism will be the third underpinning principle of Government policy on Adult Education (DES, 2000, p. 51, my italics).

The italicised words, drawing on prevailing ontological and political knowledges, perform strong constitutive work. They forget, filter out or disavow the exclusion of Irish Travellers in Irish society as a form of structured racism. They also present racism as a new issue, one that predominantly faces individualised ‘newcomers’. The quote also refers to the ‘gains’ of multiculturalism in the context of lifelong learning policy, a managerial discourse that has been explored elsewhere for its potential to reiterate inequalities (Macrae et al., 1997). This sense of optimism was also evident in speeches that suggested ‘we’ had the opportunity to avoid making the mistakes of other countries in a newly emergent Ireland²⁴. In fact, the former Minister of State with responsibility for integration policy stated that the definitive purpose of his office was to learn from other countries (such as Britain and the Netherlands) where mistakes had been made (Today FM, March 1st, 2009).

Such public optimism, while intuitively admirable, conceals multiple logics which reiterate racist hierarchy locally, nationally and globally. In this chapter, I explore the mobilised truths and justifications that have congealed, creating an ambiguous-national-white-Irish/homogenised-newcomer-Other dichotomy. Local politics developing around migration have seen, in relation to politicians’ statements at the beginning of the chapter:

- Traditional or mainstream religious heritage being invoked in places in order to preserve a right to school enrolment, an issue already highlighted (McCutcheon, 2007). While the ground has meagrely shifted away from monotheist school enrolment policy in some ways, cultural Catholicism was re/racialised at the point of school access in the above debate. Media reports and some research evidence suggest Educate Together²⁵, disadvantaged and vocational schools are ‘more likely’ candidates for black and minority ethnic students (DES, 2007, Sharrock, 2007).
- A turning of the meaning of ‘blackness’ back on reporters, indirectly implying them to be the ‘real’ racists. Minister Hanafin’s remark removed racial meaning from black skin (i.e. deracialised blackness), creating a peculiarly public logic of colour blindness.

²⁴ Such as the IBEC Anti-racist Workplace Week 2005.

²⁵ Educate Together are the only multid denominational school provider in Ireland, operating currently at primary level only.

- The non-recognition of racism (and the exclusion of students with special educational needs) as being structured due to, or in reciprocal relationship with, a fiercely marketised, meritocratically exclusive school-societal dynamic.

The potential emergence of the majority national white-Irish as privileged within the Irish nation-state in recent years seems difficult to reconcile with centuries of positioning on the wrong side of good/bad binaries. White-Irishness, as it is discussed here, is troubling and ambiguous. It jars as a form of privileged whiteness, perhaps because it is shrouded in confusion, and is not as readily acceptable as Anglo (British, American) whiteness might be. This ambiguity needs to be raised, as

- Leaving white-Irishness untapped may easily lead to an overemphasis on minority 'recognition' - ironically, at the expense of exploring the normative recentring of the national majority (and by extension, the monolithic homogenisation of white-Irish individuals as actively oppressive);
- Exploring the ambiguity and co-construction of white-Irishness through religion, nation, diaspora, gender and class encourages us to think about the performativity of race and the processual dynamics of racist effects in liberal Ireland and elsewhere.

Mac an Ghail (2002) encourages us to think beyond black/white US-based experiences of race. He advocates looking to Europe, and to Ireland's relationship with Irish diaspora, to develop a more locally specific understanding of racialisation and indeed, to contest the boundaries of Irishness for all. I hope to note the commonality that white-Irishness shares with the whiteness literature in various points in the data chapters (5 – 8): its ability to remain an ambiguous, normative reference point. This may often be effected through homogenised constructions of a newcomer Other. A recent optimism around inclusion might conceal the management of minorities and hierarchical construction of good/bad migrant utility in an unexamined EU 'nation'. However, white-Irishness is not defined here as a wounded, deficient, pure or homogenous category that has 'flipped' within a bounded state to dominate the inferior newcomer Other. I certainly do not dismiss the quite brutal experiences of countless Irish people during late and post-colonial migration. But these are considered *racist effects*: this understanding of white-Irishness uses an intersectional, post-structural analysis that draws on class, nation, diaspora, gender and sectarianism/religion. It speaks to an analysis of effects which neither represents white-Irishness as today's unilateral oppressor in bounded Ireland, nor entirely as the victim of its own post-Catholic,

European liberal equality regime. Ultimately, white-Irishness may retain its ambiguity, but can be traced with and through intersectional, contextual vectors of viability alluded to in Chapter 2.

There are three aspects to the chapter:

1. In highlighting the potential oversimplification of multiple issues around 'Irishness' as a (nationalised) marker of ethnicity and 'whiteness', I draw on some pre-1996 immigration analyses, including the emergence of the early Irish state. These articulate white-Irishness as neither discretely oppressor/oppressed, but constituted with and through class, race, gender, nationalising and colonising discourses.
2. I move to explore the mercantile paradigm, liberal equality measures and the state policy 'mission' of economic freedom as social freedom since the 1960s.
3. These factors are then read through education policies concerned with 'interculturalism' and 'managing diversity'.

It is worth noting that the permeability and ambiguity of these processes, (e.g. the EU relationship, internal differences etc.) suggests points of intervention. Secondly, any determinist notion of policy effects here is envisaged as disrupted in later chapters.

Pre-1996: Viability and white-Irishness beyond oppressor/oppressed

It is not difficult to locate accounts that suggest 'Irishness' and privileged whiteness have not been historically synonymous. English colonisers historically simianised the Irish. The word *Gael*, often synonymous with Irish and Scottish peoples²⁶, was coined from the old English *Guidel* and Welsh *Gwydell*, meaning 'wild', 'raider' or 'bandit'. As Chapter 1 already hinted,

In the 1800s, white domination in the USA was introduced to a new problem: the Irish...On American soil, the Irish were regarded as 'black niggers' who were initially perceived as being closer to blacks than whites on the chain of being. Similar epithets and descriptions were leveled against Irish people as those used against blacks. They were called 'a race of savages' with a low 'level of intelligence,' 'lacking self control,' and sexually animalistic [Takaki, 1993, p. 149]. Negroes referred to them as 'a Negro turned inside out' [Takaki, 1993, p. 153] (Leonardo, 2002, p. 41).

Lentin (2001) argues the painful experience of Irish emigration is a wound that has not been tended, returning to haunt the Irish through the experience of a new immigrant

²⁶ The Irish language is *Gaeilge*, and Gaelic Games is the collective name for highly valued national sports which still have a major impact on organising 'post-Catholic', gendered local communities (Gaelic football, hurling and camogie in particular).

Other. Yet, as I will argue through some examples before mass migration to Ireland after 1996 below, this wounded positioning leads us to ignore the complexity of colonisation and decolonisation, and the possibility that multiple privileges and normative assumptions has been enjoyed through certain strands of white-Irishness historically. Some of vectors that co-construct Irishness (masculinity, Catholicism, etc.) are explored below, indicating how whiteness and Irishness interweave and are mediated by other social positions in different places and at different times.

Late colonial migration: shifting racial texts

The immigratory experiences of the Irish over the past 150 years have been anecdotally held up in present-day Ireland as reasons why ‘we’ as a nation should welcome immigrants. However, Leonardo (2002) uses these experiences in his portrayal of the adaptability of a politics of whiteness and its ability to stratify both whites and non-whites: “Irish people (in the US) eventually became white, whereas blacks and Indians remain non-white” (2002, p. 42). But again, this positioning may be relative both to ‘pure’ (middle class) white Anglo-Saxon Protestants, and against black and native American peoples at different times. It is interesting how Catholicism later trumped the less necessary subtexts of race and Irishness both in the US and in Ireland. By 1962, what worried critics of President Kennedy was not his Irish heritage, but his ‘Papist’ allegiances (Jacobson, 1998). Mac an Ghaill (2002) cautions that Ireland’s interest in adopting black/white models of anti-racism is not unrelated to the political construction of its ‘special relationship’ to Boston (over Berlin). Despite the constructed need to invest in the EU’s Lisbon agenda in 2009, there remains an incredibly strong diasporic relationship based on ‘heroic masculinities’ (Mac and Ghaill, 2002). This was evident in the recent Global Irish Economic Forum, symbolically held in the Phoenix Park, where the government paraded the expertise of hugely successful Irish-American business leaders as a way out of economic crisis.

It is notable that Ireland’s relationship with ‘Africa’ has been strongly premised on charity and missionary work. Long before the organisations Concern and Trócaire were founded, the ‘pennies for black babies’ collection box was a common feature of churches even into the latter half of the 20th century. It is argued that images of poverty, disease and war in Africa have led to the “unintentional indoctrination of a nation with a set of negative stereotypes and generalizations” about the peoples that inhabit the African continent (Mutwarasibo and Smith, 2000, p. 1). In this broader sense, the state boundaries of (white) Irishness have often been constructed in privileged opposition to the religiously colonised (black) Other.

The emergence of the Irish state: a key moment in making 'race' into 'nation'

The engineering and emergence of the Irish state in the 1920s had its own exigencies, which elevated Gaelic nationalism and subjugated various political movements and minorities, e.g. feminism, labour and Protestant communities. The independent state's viability required, whether temporarily or more permanently, the rearticulation of certain knowledges and the subjugation of others in the development of the requisite, modern, rights-based constitutional framework. The makers of the constitution were faced with the problem of delineating 'a legal subject who is simultaneously *empty* (in that the subject is a bearer of universal rights and duties) and yet must also be defined in terms of a subjectivity which is embodied with specifically national characteristics' (Collins and Hanafin, 2001, p. 56). This impossible condition of the constitutional subject required recourse to an 'ideal' constitutional identity. The 1937 *Bunreacht na hÉireann* (Constitution of Ireland), through its patriarchal emphasis on Gaelic Romanticism, Roman Catholicism and Western Liberalism captures the ideal Irish 20th century citizen as the staunchly Roman Catholic, *Fíor-Ghael*²⁷ (white, man). It idealised the family unit and an agrarian lifestyle:

Its romantic image of an economy based on rural smallholdings, cocooned from the conflict of the modern world, now appears almost kitsch, and the constitutionally mandated role of woman as domestic child-rearer bears little relation to the aspirations and self-image of most modern women (Collins and Hanafin, 2001, p. 54).

The convergence of various movements such as suffrage and labour before independence

was superseded almost entirely by the superordination of a narrow version of the nationalist project, by the establishment of a conservative national state, to the detriment of both the feminist and the labour movements... They fall out of visibility or out of representation, which does not mean that they have been successfully truncated or arrested (Lloyd, 2001, p. 15).

Any Same/Other interplay of race, ethnicity, nationality and/or citizenship is missing from the 1937 script. The lines are implicitly drawn around Irishness as a sovereign Gaelic, ethno-religious category. Gaelic-nationalist, modernising rhetoric of the early Irish state suppressed or shifted multiple, disparate and hybrid pre- and postcolonial projects, suffrage movements, land league movements and even labour movements (Lloyd, 2001, Wills, 2001). 'Race' had already long entered Irish nationalism - *as constituted against the British Empire* - not, through the signifier of skin, but the reinvention of Phoenician Irish history, an originating *nation and language*. Branding

²⁷ Meaning 'true Gael'

and constituting a colonised people over hundreds of years, racialising discourse was overtly deployed to “help explain the persistence of continuity in the midst of change” as well as allowing “nationalists to cite the effects of conquest to explain away some of the less desirable aspects of Irish life, attributing them to the slave’s propensity to mimic his master’s vices” (Gibbons, 2001, pp. 490 – 491). This expulsion of conflict to the limits of the nation-state is evident in Ryan’s (2001) analysis. She disrupts the idea that British colonialism was the cause of young single women emigrating after independence. In moves that deflected blame away from state authorities:

The Irish press and the Catholic hierarchy in particular propagated an image of these vulnerable young women as lost and alone in the big, bad cities of England. ... the 'emigrant girl' embodied an Irishness marked by religion, culture and landscape. Through her transgression of physical, cultural and religious spaces, she encountered loneliness, danger and the risk of denationalisation (Ryan, 2001, p. 271)

Young Irish women, according to the press and church, were not acting their domesticated place as ‘the ‘lifeblood’ of Ireland’. Their emigration “posed a serious threat to the continuity of “the race and the nation” (Ryan, 2001, p. 271). Indeed, female bodies crossing state borders undermined the notion of the male policing and defence of the symbolic and geographical limits of national (white) Irishness. Women, through state knowledges, were emergent and knowable as only viable as instrumental to the Gaelic (nation, Catholicism, family) project of the state. Several widely accepted discourses in 20th century Ireland constructed Travellers as ‘tinkers’ who were “much closer to the forces of nature and anarchy than to social progress” (McLaughlin, 1999, p. 138), resulting in a largely social Darwinist conceptualisation of Traveller ‘issues’. Travellers were, and still are largely framed through modernist notions of societal progress as sedentarily based. Individual property rights became a constitutive part of the post-landlord Irish state and indeed wider European racism, privileging the nationalising, majority sedentary ethnic group (over Travellers in official Irishness). In other words, Travellers were (and are) largely of no use to the state, a threat to sedentary ethno-nationhood and subject to eugenicist policies (Lentin and McVeigh, 2006). In these ways, the emergent notion of *state-nationhood* managed to conceal a flux of internal-external state dynamics, silently constituting race and constructing (white) Irishness as the privileged (non-Traveller, sedentary, gendered) category of national membership before 1996.

Positioning: Masculinity and Irishness

Diaspora analyses of Irishness ‘closer to home’ (i.e., Britain) have understandably questioned white/black dichotomies of race. Diasporic and colonising legacies have complex effects on the (social) colour of the Irish, not only with, but also through other axes of difference (e.g. gender):

Empirical work with the post-war generation of Irish men... makes clear the need to move beyond any simple conceptions of the play of difference to engage with extra-discursive referents, including socio-economic, political and cultural forces (Popoviciu, Haywood and Mac an Ghail, 2006, p. 172).

Popoviciu et al. (2006) suggest that contradictory, subject positions were made available to mid to late 20th century Irish immigrant men, who were “simultaneously discursively positioned as white Europeans and members of an inferior race” in Britain. At the same time, subordinated masculinity positions were appropriated *within* Ireland in a different way. The following is taken from Roddy Doyle’s comedy-novel *The Commitments*, which became an internationally acclaimed film. Set in late-80s northside (largely working class) Dublin, it charts the rise and fall of a white-Irish band making black soul music in Dublin clubs. The band’s manager, motivating the group, liberally draws upon a ‘black Irish’ discourse. This emerges in a way that casually made sense at the time, but might be seen as shocking in popular and political discourses in Ireland today:

‘Who buys the most records? The workin' class. Your music should be abou' where you come from an' the sort o' people yeh come from. Say it once, say it loud, ‘I'm black an' I'm proud’.

They looked at him... They were stunned by what came next.

‘The Irish are the niggers of Europe, lads’.

They nearly gasped: it was so true.

‘-An’ Dubliners are the niggers of Ireland.... An’ the northside Dubliners are the niggers o’ Dublin’. (Doyle 1989, p. 9; italics added).

This text strongly draws on themes of unemployed post (or non) industrial masculinity within Ireland, and suggests, as does work on the Irish in Britain, that themes of class, migrant labour, nation and culture are important in understanding racialisation both in Ireland and Britain (Mac an Ghail, 2002, 1999). Recent work on ‘extra-state’ identifications of Irishness can work to expand or interrupt any discrete notion of bounded-state, territorialised, static national identity. It can incorporate the imagined and ‘hybridised’ aspects of ethnicity, as well as other positionings ‘mediating’ or co-

constructing hierarchies of European whiteness (Popoviciu et al., 2006, Mac an Ghail and Haywood, 2003).

Keeping themes of ambiguity and mobility around white-Irishness in mind, I now turn to contemporary Ireland after mass immigration. Post-1996 optimism around immigration does not suggest the exigencies of the nation-state reach an endpoint or ‘become more inclusive’. Any notion of political, ethnic or religious colonisation/decolonisation is always and already “interrupted in the occlusion of the multiple modes of resistance that emerged and continue to emerge on the interfaces of domination and insurgence” (Lloyd, 2001, p. 16). Originating state viability projects do not disappear, they shift and merge, and perhaps thus they shift the goalposts of inclusive practice. Sugrue and Gleeson (2004) refer to Corcoran and Peillon’s suggestion that contemporary Irish society has skipped a ‘developmental’ stage: “from a pre-industrial order (it) has ‘managed to establish itself as a post-industrial enclave within global capitalism’ (2002, p. 1)”. Through meritocratically underpinned equality discourses, safely ‘recognised and resourced’ identities can be constantly recuperated to further exclusion through market logics and managerialist approaches to diversity. But in these shifting EU-state power relations, Irish institutional practices and social policy are not simply emptied of their local legacy²⁸. The originating national Gaelic-Catholic (hetero-gendered) project has its legacy, for example, in the dominance of denominational schooling, which intersects strongly with social class. In the following section, I move to explore how racist effects currently work through an interweaving of the liberal, the theocentric and mercantile in Irish society and schooling. It is through the deconstruction of Irish/Newcomer in global-state-school dynamics that the silent centring of majority nationhood (and ambiguous white-Irishness) might be located and troubled.

Post 1996: The tacit framing of viable bodies in Ireland Inc.

Liberal inclusion and the re-racialisation of (Traveller, female) viability

Feminist, Traveller and many other movements have made gains via liberal equality recognition: there is apparent ‘respect’ for safely shored up categories such as ‘woman’ and ‘Traveller’ in contemporary Irish equality legislation. Recognised status is now afforded in equality legislation in terms of gender discrimination, family status and

²⁸ Even in highly secular societies, the historical legacy of e.g. given religions, continues to shape worldviews and define cultural zones across liberal states. One commentator described the difference between Estonian and Russians: ‘we are all atheists, but I am a Lutheran atheist, and they are Orthodox atheists’ (Norris and Inglehart [2004], in Modood and Kastoryano, 2006, p. 170).

Traveller marginalisation amongst other categories. ‘Traveller’ is recognised as a separate category to ‘race’ that is protected in equality legislation. This again uses a white/black notion of race, defending Traveller marginalisation from accusations of racism and separating culturalism from skin colour racism.

Notwithstanding the Traveller-race critique, there is a deeper contradiction around equality legislation, where one’s viability implicitly underpins recognition. There is ample evidence that contemporarily recognised categorisations further police female-femininity with and through race, and perform common sense racialisations via logics of ‘the use’ of women. Overt contemporary use has been made of Irish and migrant women’s bodies to effect the securing of ‘pure’ white-Irishness, or inhibit its disruption. The 2004 citizenship referendum changed the grounds for citizenship from *jus soli* (being born in Ireland) to *jus sanguinis* (having at least one Irish citizen as a parent; Ní Chatháin, 2006). Widely accepted discourses and practices violently excluded migrant women as (heterosexual) reproductive vessels – verbally through debate, physically through attack and spatially through hospital location (Moriarty, 2005; Lentin, 2004). ‘Non-national’ women were represented by the government as

intentionally mothering the next generation of Irish citizens... positioning sexually active Irish and ‘non-national’ women alike as a danger to themselves, to men, and to ‘the nation’, and as subverting the certitudes of traditional constructions of Irishness (Lentin, 2004, p. 308).

The 2006 census synonymised Irishness naturally with whiteness – there is no need to state ‘White Irish’. Physiological markers and ethnicity were thus tied to nationality and citizenship (King-O’Riain, 2007). Interestingly, as whites, the Irish in America did the opposite: making race (*jus sanguinis*), as opposed to native territory (*jus soli*), the centre of the debate: “as immigrants, they could only gain the right to stake their claim to privileges and jobs based on the basis of their proximity to whiteness” (Ó Catháin, 2006). Travellers were and are very much constructed as obstructive to Irish institutions, citizenship and industry. McLaughlin (1999) characterises prophylactic ‘Fortress Ireland’ as having an exceptionally open economy since the 1960s and a relatively closed society. This has resulted in the cleansing of the Irish landscape: eugenicist practices shifted into structural geographies of exclusion for Travellers as the country became industrialised from the 1970s onward. For example, European Community structural funds, crucial to Ireland’s late 20th century boom, buried the once-travelled countryside under many infrastructural projects. The process of privileging sedentary white-Irishness and defending wider EU borders through citizenry

was simultaneously associated with an individualising neo-liberal labour agenda during the 1996 – 2008 period.

Econo-individualism, useful migrants and Europe

Before the onset of the recession in 2008, the cultural, political and economic forces behind the Celtic Tiger (often known as Ireland Inc.) fostered an exogenous growth dynamic that was highly unsustainable, saw a significant increase in income gaps, and essentially developed a ‘competition state’. The government’s role shifted:

from state intervention to develop and maintain a range of basic or strategic economic activities (nationalised industries, a robust welfare state) to one of flexible response to competitive conditions in rapidly evolving international markets. In political terms, it also marks a shift away from maximising welfare to the promotion of enterprise, innovation and profitability (Kirby, 2004, p. 323).

The equation of economic progress and individual responsibility with human progression has drawn on multiple factors. These include EU internal border restructuring, US investment and constitutional republicanism. These mutually reinforcing links may, in educational terms, facilitate assumptions instead of interrogations of “the relationship between governance and inclusion and exclusion” (O’Brien and Ó Fathaigh, 2007, p. 600). Econo-individualism permeates policy on ‘disadvantage’ and schooling in Ireland, and may have key effects in class inequality terms. By dictating what inclusion should be, it depoliticises its wider neo-liberal logic of diverting attention away from hierarchies of viability. Evidence of a prioritisation of economy and employability is harshly evident in *Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools* (DEIS), the most recent education strategy targeting socioeconomic ‘disadvantage’. Its basic principles are drawn from the Lisbon Agenda: the knowledge economy, the public-private European educational space (Robertson, 2007), national social partnership agreements and National Action Plans against poverty and social exclusion. A number of these policies unproblematically align human capital and social democratic theory as their justification. These alignments may again equate social progression with economic progression through logics of higher education, better jobs and increased living standards.

DEIS relies heavily on depoliticised, cognitive-psychological approaches to literacy. There are cursory acknowledgements of socio-cultural practice and the damage of cultural deficit approaches, e.g. through family literacy initiatives. Space does not permit an in-depth analysis of DEIS. But it is not difficult to suggest its philosophy is

stronger in the production of new knowledges of the excluded through tighter technologies of surveillance than it is in addressing socio-political aspects of inequality:

A standardised system will be put in place for identifying schools at both primary and second-level for the purposes of qualifying for resources, both human and financial, according to the degree of disadvantage experienced. This standardised system will replace all of the existing arrangements for targeting schools for participation in initiatives to address disadvantage. It will involve the collection and analysis of data on levels of disadvantage in individual schools to inform the allocation of supports to schools and school clusters/communities for a three-year planning cycle (DES, 2005, p. 28).

Such rigorous testing is not required in other 'advantaged' schools, and there are echoes of US-based 'No Child Left Untested' critiques in the above. As is later suggested, the lack of recognition of migrant communities in DEIS (or class) policy elides intersecting racial meanings, potentially furthering racist effects. For now, this logic of knowing the (working class, lesser) Other and assessing 'their' utility is important to recognise as firmly embedded in state education policy.

Contemporary Irish racialisation has been processed through a climate of economic, migratory, nation-building and 'Fortress Europe' discourses, often through complementarity. With this dynamic, "sameness or oneness take precedence, and 'other than the same' is seen as part of the same, complementing the lack in the same, but clearly less than the same" (Gilligan, 2007, p. 40). Migrants to Ireland have been characterised as having notably high levels of educational attainment (Barret et al., 2005). Barret and Bergin (2007) suggest that what attracted highly-skilled²⁹ migrants to Ireland is its income disparity: high skills should transfer to high income for new migrants. However, they also produce labour market statistics suggesting migrants' skilled labour to be 'underutilised'. It is not difficult to imagine what this implies for migrants with less economic utility. The welcoming of the Other was largely done not as partners or equals, but as bodies with instrumental value over intrinsic value. Labour market trends suggest Ireland during 'boom' times was not a land of opportunity, but a place of near feudal servitude for exploited migrant workers (Gonzalez-Perez et al., 2005). Some immigrants have experienced 'downward mobility' as they were/are forced to take jobs below their skills level as their qualifications can go unrecognised in Ireland. The labour market Other were further racialised through classed European logics of skills and qualification:

²⁹ The notion of 'highly skilled migrant' itself may be a potential indicator of selective EU and Irish migration policy.

- The gross mistreatment of Turkish construction employees is one of a number of well-publicised exploitations of migrant manual labour in Ireland (European Intercultural Workplace Project, 2007).
- In the 2006 census, statistics on nationality stated that while 10% of the 93,000 EU 15-25 accession state³⁰ workers were unemployed, this figure stood at 23% for the 67,000 ‘others’ (CSO, 2007).

Contemporary school-society translations: good/bad migrants?

While the terms ‘minority’ and ‘newcomer’ are being used more commonly in education in Ireland, it is noteworthy that the previous Minister of Education, Mary Hanafin, consistently described such students and families as ‘non-nationals’ until she was redeployed to another ministry in the 2008 cabinet reshuffle. To some, the proliferation of ambiguous terms around migration might indicate the ‘newness’ of the issue and the well-intentioned attempts of a liberal regime to be inclusive. I regard the filling of a discursive gap as suggesting an equal confusion around ‘us’, the national framers, with ‘our’ subsequent centring as the superior national majority. In the simplistic reduction of hundreds of thousands of people to terms such as ‘newcomer’, the Other is semi-inclusively named, yet deracialised, while the namer is unexamined. Those on either side of this binary are then open to both being cast/casting themselves as oppressor or victim in practice.

Drawing on the critique of the inclusive liberal state in Chapter 2, I attempt to describe three important ways that governance of recognition and viability maintains and justifies an ambiguous white-Irishness as normative in education. These are the optimistic strategies of language support, anti-racist-pop terminology and equality of access to schooling. Their meritocratic ‘choice’ underpinnings suggest good/bad constructions of migrants are highly possible locally.

Language support: constructing achievement on meritocratic terms

No special provision in the education system was made for comparatively small number of Vietnamese refugees who arrived in Ireland in 1979 (McGovern 1995). Absence of cultural and language support in Ireland for refugee Vietnamese children has had detrimental consequences in terms of societal marginalisation, early school leaving and lack of English proficiency (Stapleton and Fanning, 2002, McGovern 1995). The

³⁰ The EU 15-25 accession states are the ten states which joined the EU in 2004, bringing its total membership to 25 states. These are Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia. Two further states, Romania and Bulgaria, became EU members as of 2007.

second major group to come to Ireland in recent years was Bosnian refugees, for whom a reception centre was established in 1992. The only reference made to education of minority groups in the *Green Paper on Education*³¹ was to the Travelling community (Department of Education, 1992).

It was only in the wake of the 1996 shift from net emigration to immigration that school support for migrant pupils gained momentum. There has been perhaps one major response on the part of government to the rupturing of the social and educational sphere in Ireland by immigration. This involved crudely measuring the presence of those who had low English proficiency and setting out pedagogy as such. The Department of Education and Science expanded its outsourced language support enterprise (Integrate Ireland Language and Training), spending millions of euro on new language teacher salaries and very little on professional development. It pledged virtually nothing to critical anti-racist practice/praxis in schools. The Irish NGO Alliance has criticised the government's deficit model of language support, which, they argue, "indirectly discriminates against Black and minority ethnic learners" (2004, p. 56)³². Some years earlier, McGovern (1995) suggested an approach based solely on language in Ireland was doomed to failure.

The approach to inclusion through language support can be analysed as system and privilege-preserving in two ways. Irish education policy has not developed the same technologies of performativity that pervade the US and UK, but it has similarly developed administrative/labelling procedures for inclusion 'capacity'. These may have developed primarily after a 1990s shift to include SEN students in mainstream Irish schools. A sophisticated array of legal-medical and psychological discourses around children with special educational needs has developed as in other countries, largely on the basis of lobbying and litigation (Ware, 2001). More broadly, the government's integration policy (Office of the Minister of State for Integration [OMI], 2008) makes the education system an important feature in the depoliticised flux of racist effects. By solely offering language support, policy closes down any call to explore racialisation in school achievement. Any future, possibly marginalised communities can be further incited to 'learn English' as part of their 'responsibility' to integrate, as with community cohesion policies in Britain (Pilkington, 2008).

³¹ The title of which - *Education for a Changing World* - is also not without its irony.

³² 'Indirect discrimination' was a term previously used to describe institutional racism in the UK (Richardson, 2003).

In making these points, I do not argue against teaching English, but wish to trouble the wider assumptions which implicitly preserve and defend the normative conditions of the state-school system. Authentic school and race knowledges and meanings were potentially secured and mutually constituted through discourses of language 'input' and 'choosing to integrate and participate'. Through a policy focus that tinkered with and somewhat 'fixed' minority populations and deracialised bodies, any future achievement issues can only emerge in deficit, meritocratic terms.³³ The trajectory of language support policy in Ireland can readily be considered as an aspect of governance, which always privileges elements of the population regarded as more viable. I would suggest two major interrelated concerns with this policy.

- Framing immigrant students largely as subjects of language support fails to interrogate links between race and viability in schooling and in wider policy. This positioning suggests a (deracialised) meritocracy is achievable under current conditions, and can be achieved and used with different ethnic groups once the English language is embedded in minority ethnic communities. This monolingual policy (outside of Irish) also facilitates the wholesale disavowal of the community languages of multiethnic-Irish communities. Highly successful pilot projects, which offer counter-discourses through translation and interpretation services in certain Dublin schools went underfunded and unrecognised, even before the onset of recession (McDaid, 2009).
- A universal conceptualisation of (standard) English in schooling, which is for all intents and purposes unlinked in policy to all other aspects of the Irish school curriculum, neglects the heterogeneity of English language practices available to and taken up by students of various ethnic heritages and 'hybridities' in various school-community contexts. Ethnic and linguistic diversity becomes a declassified, de-ethnicised phenomenon. Migrant language practices, particularly when not 'official school' English practices, become necessarily disavowed in formal schooling. A universal English language policy further frustrates the small traces of contextualised language practice that is recognised in Irish education policy.

³³ As the economy contracted, the language support teacher in-service and materials service - who operated on a shoe-string budget - was disbanded. After the 2008 government budget, support was slashed to a maximum of 2 teachers per school, ignoring the necessity for up to 6 or 7 teachers, often in 'disadvantaged' areas. It was entirely predictable that that most language support was wrenched from schools in October 2008 in the wake of vast recessionary budget cuts. This instrumentalist approach - which vastly prioritises system goals and individual competition over student welfare and identity, suggests anti-racism in schools currently overtly operates at best at the level of packaged platitude, one that has only traces of meaning for its intended populations.

This has already been shown to have implications for inclusion and achievement in Ireland in terms of class (Cregan, 2007).

While PISA 2006 results will suggest that language support is important and ‘it works’, these reports are based on ‘first generation migrant’ and ‘native student’ comparisons, and fail to take into account the immigration (and social class) filtering policies of the states surveyed (McDaid, 2009). I return next to the notion of ‘anti-racism’ in the Irish education policy.

Optimistic anti-racist pop-terminology

Gleeson (2004) critiques a rhetoric/reality dichotomy around the emptiness of certain curricular statements in school practice. He suggests (2004, p. 105) that a dichotomy arises from an embedded practice involving “loose adoption of curriculum discourse”. There is a ritual in Ireland of formally changing language but failing to politicise the informal interests that cause barriers for curricular enactment, e.g. moving to more student-centred practice, or changing from hyper-competitive assessment formats³⁴. Overt approaches to ethnicity and racism in education and social policy in Ireland could be described as simultaneously overtly optimistic and tacitly scaremongering, citing a desire to move to sophisticated rhetoric and ‘not make mistakes’. They largely indicate a process of transposition. The complex social and economic circumstances that gave rise to the concepts of institutional racism and ghettoisation in other countries have largely been taken and repackaged with the effect of safeguarding the state against claims that the education system might be complicit in racist achievement outcomes. I would suggest three system-preserving features of Irish education policy and discourse in this regard:

1. *Pop-institutional racism*: Troyna (1987) distinguishes between multiculturalist and anti-racist policy quite explicitly. Irish *intercultural* education guidelines claimed to have learned from both traditions. But while it recognises institutional racism as an issue for the *school*, there is an utter lack of connection between social exclusion policy in education (DES, 2005, National Council for Curriculum and Assessment [NCCA] 2005) and the national education policy of

³⁴ It must be noted that this is in set in a wider context of a proliferation of western education policy statements and legislation which legitimise the intensification of school work and may fragment the appearance of resistances. For example, Gu and Day (2007) report that in the UK, two successive Labour governments produced eight separate Education Acts and hundreds of separate initiatives. Ireland may have more overt resistance to this intensification through literally avoiding some aspects of the UK education system (Looney, 2006), but also through the resistance of very strong teacher unions such as the ASTI and INTO. However, there has been a proliferation of legislation such as the Education Act in 1998, the Education Welfare Act in 2000 and the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act (2004; Coolahan, 2004).

interculturalism. In this regard, the Home-School-Community Liaison scheme policy fails to recognise the need to specifically address the wider issues facing minority ethnic and racialised communities in working class areas, and chooses to focus on adult English classes (e.g. HSCL Co-ordinators, 2006). This makes the articulation of interculturalism and anti-institutional racism severely spurious and immediately open to the critiques of multicultural education raised decades earlier in Britain³⁵. By locating institutional racism entirely within the walls of the school, education policy fails to recognise its emergence with and through structural racism, the conditions of the family, etc. It can thus reduce institutional racism to conscious teacher ethno-centrism and curriculum bias, and serve to promote anti-racist attitude training as the way forward to ensure equal outcomes in education. School achievement outcomes are rarely mentioned in intercultural education policy (NCCA, 2005), or are reduced to a language issue in education resourcing and policy. Furthermore, anti-racist professional development has not been resourced in the Irish education system. This argument is compounded by the recent finding that new migrant students are more likely to settle in 'disadvantaged' schools (Smyth et al., 2009).

2. *Pop-ghettoisation*: The term 'ghettoisation' has abounded in the wake of any indicator of problems with social cohesion in the wake of new migrations to Ireland, despite the conflict and marginalisation that inevitably pervades modern liberal states. Despite its complex origins, 'ghetto' is now inflated by the majority to the status of describing Same/Other division, from the playground to the residential estate. The term has operated as a signifier of majority fears and a collapsed repository of anxieties at macro, meso and micro levels. Former Minister of State with responsibility for Integration Policy Conor Lehian warns against ghettoisation in *Migration Nation* (OMI, 2008). Ghettoisation, in the context of a fragile economy based on the construction industry and local and regional tourism can be understood as a productive and repressive signifier. It is evidenced in fears around the dispersal of asylum seekers to local centres (White, 2007) and Ireland's first 'all black' schools, discussed in the next subsection. The term resurfaced at the time of writing in moves by the Minister of State for Housing to lease 40,000 empty 'boomtime' units as social housing.

³⁵ Furthermore, with this interpretation, social exclusion policy in Ireland itself is embedded in human capital theory, making welfare an instrumental objective to economic conditions.

The state, in response, can be portrayed as progressive in its attempts to integrate social housing with private developments. However, the close sharing of gentrified and working-class spaces has been critiqued in Britain as evidence of social progress based on spatial integration/segregation. ‘Mixing communities’ can work on the assumption that working class and/or poorer communities lack social capital (thus live in a culture of poverty) and require the modelling of such behaviours from middle classes. Indeed, such policies can exacerbate problems by “providing services and support without creating wealth-generating opportunities that can get residents out of poverty” (Lynn Smith and Lupton, 2008, p. 101). This move can also conflate the notion of ‘mix’ with ‘mixing’, and risks normalising structural inequalities, partially by representing certain bodies as the problem and the market as the solution (Lupton and Tunstall, 2008).

3. *Pop-integration*: This transposing, packaging dynamic is perhaps more overtly evident in *Migration Nation’s* (2008) borrowing of the Bishop of Brooklyn’s eight social integration ‘indicators’. As well as defining speaking English and military service as possible indicators of social integration for minority ethnic communities, inter-marriage is used. This leaves one to wonder how integrated one-parent, co-habiting parent and same-sex parent families and their school-age children could be regarded, regardless of race and/or ethnicity.

These pop-transposed policy terms are, perhaps in a ‘Baudrillardian’ sense, signifiers that have partially abandoned or been inflated from their originating contexts. They have exchange value or currency, in liberal European state governance and public policy. They subtly inscribe and ring-fence the power-relations of national-(white)-Irish/non-national-newcomer-Other, and indicate a culture of anxiety around perceived differences. They constantly speak of ‘challenges and opportunities’, all the while implicitly equating those challenges with the Other. This culture of anxiety - which effects a classic elision of structural racism through inclusionary niceties – may have the subtle effect of equating ‘difference’ with lack and potential ‘failure’ with imagined difference.

New types of schools: a minimalist version of equality and access

The local force of highly unregulated, ambiguous school choice politics referenced in Chapter 1 are important to keep in mind when considering attempts at ‘accommodating difference’. Community schools – one of which is the site of this ethnographic work -

emerged in the wake of the introduction of free secondary education and transport to schools in 1967. This move appeared as a vastly more inclusive option, as it accommodated both vocational and academic subjects. But it also urgently increased the need for a more unified, rationalised post-primary education system and for more schools to cater for a huge jump in school enrolment from 1967. Randles (1975) narrates how free education at second level was not state benevolence as such, but state exigency. It was prompted by the desire to use the Irish education system as a key resource for economic modernisation, as outlined in the 1965 document *Investment in Education* (O'Sullivan, 2005). Widening access was also prompted by political pressures and a desire to be 'on a par' with western Europe in various ways. Community schools were based on an amalgamated structure of existing secondary (academic, religious-owned and state funded) schools and (technical, state-owned and funded) vocational schools, based in central population locations, and catering for between 400-800 students³⁶. The community school concept itself was made justifiable and deemed necessary using urban rhetoric of a broad curriculum and equality of educational opportunity. But it marginalised important local specifics, such as the agrarian drain that may have resulted from the move to close small rural schools and create bigger, centralised schools. Importantly, many community schools in Ireland drew and continue to draw on a Christian or Catholic ethos. This stems from a move to placate the religious hierarchy that dominated the second level system (Randles, 1975).

The recent provision of wider school choice at primary level, which accommodates different faith and secular traditions has been felicitous for the Irish state. It relies largely on the development of Educate Together schools, as an alternative provider to the majority national (Catholic managed) primary schools³⁷. Ireland's first 'all-black' or partially black primary schools made national and international headlines in October 2007 (e.g. Sharrock, 2007). These schools were 'spill-over' sites, set up in emergency circumstances to meet the vastly expanding need for school places with a rush of houses built in the area. The schools were set up under the patronage of Educate Together. The DES put the largely black student population down to the inability of their department to keep pace with rapidly expanded housing developments. Media reports hinted that already established schools were excluding these students on the legally acceptable basis of religious ethos, but possibly also on the basis of racism. While suggestions of

³⁶ The Boards of Management of such schools consist of representatives of secondary school managers, the local Vocational Education Committee and an independent Chairperson. Community Schools are fully resourced by the exchequer.

³⁷ Educate Together were petitioning the government to enter secondary education at the time of writing.

institutional selectivity are present in the media, what is interesting is that little critique was made of the social and residential positioning of the communities in the first place. At the end of 2009, it remains to be seen what will come out of unprecedented negotiations to ‘hand over’ some Catholic primary schools to the state.

The emergence of community schools and Educate Together make the dangers associated with making access to school and new school structures the vanguard of social justice relatively clear. When the structural inequalities that are “endemic to hierarchies of knowledge, tracks, jobs, etc. are not the subject of investigation, the work can and does have a deeply conservatising effect on public policy” (Lynch and Lodge, 2002, p. 8). New school structures can inadvertently provide new channels of exclusion and affirm social Darwinist ideas because they reduce the focus on wider social hierarchies (e.g. race, class, etc). The provision of these structures can unexpectedly safeguard education policy from accusations of ethno-religious or class exclusion³⁸.

Finally, the growth of a sector like Educate Together, important in terms of faith and non-faith diversity, might not challenge the contradictory practices of the *de jure* state-church relationship in the large number of more middle class, religious secondary schools. There are various aspects of late modern religious schooling that have been reconciled by suggesting schools make *local decisions*, effectively ‘fudging’ the state’s implicit involvement. The Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) curriculum has quite low levels of implementation, partially due to the fudging of school’s responsibilities: schools can choose what aspects to implement according to their ethos (Mayock et al., 2007). An important recent example of this fudge was the Gorey community school hijab ‘controversy’: the Department of Education passed over requests for guidance on the wearing of a hijab by one student to the Office of the Minister of State for Integration (OMI). Shekinah Egan, the student who wore the hijab has subsequently complained that the OMI consulted only school principals and the male leaders of the two Dublin mosques in their decision to leave school policy on wearing the hijab; neglecting to recognise Muslim females who view the hijab as a matter of personal choice (RTÉ Radio, January 2009). The OMI decided to ban the wearing of burkas in schools, with little obvious public debate.

³⁸ Furthermore, the building of schools for separate spiritual purposes, e.g. in the case of Dublin Muslim schools - can be portrayed as anti-integrationist on the part of minorities, as in the case of ‘the green jihadis’ and ‘extremist Irish Muslims’ portrayed in the Irish media (NCCRI, undated).

Turning to ethnography: complicating determinism with practice

Official discourse in Ireland has “intentionally or otherwise” denied culturally diverse realities in contemporary Ireland (Deegan, 2004, p. 228). The 20th century articulation of Irishness has been widely explored for its subjugating monoculturalism in education and elsewhere (e.g. Hickman, 2007, Coolahan, 1981). But while ‘breaking free’ of the homogenising constitutions of the Irish church and state can be a seductive emancipatory objective, the recognition and institutionalisation of differences rarely challenges the use of official discourses of inclusion to effect further exclusion through the state’s own logic of viability.

The ability to create and exploit knowledge is an essential feature of an advanced economy and, therefore, Ireland has placed research and development and their commercialisation at the heart of its economic development effort. *Minister for Education Batt O’Keeffe, launching the 5th Phase of Programme for Research in Third Level Ireland (PRTLII) Funding, 8th January 2009* (www.education.ie)

The exploitation of knowledge is a defining logic of troubled Irish government’s 2009 ‘smart economy’ policy, and is captured in the words of the Minister for Education and Science above. I have attempted to suggest in this chapter that the exploitation and deployment of knowledge hegemonically extends to the implicit framing of the racialised Other as lesser in policy. The social, cultural, economic and political (i.e. structural) positions of minority ethnic and particularly new migrant families have been elided to a large degree, perhaps through processes underpinned by logics where one’s recognition is positioned via one’s viability: econo-individualism and weakly-felt access policies underpinned by meritocratic logics.

Something of a determinist turn has been taken in the above. Yet the brief discussion of white-Irishness across space and time speaks to a project of researching how selves are made viable in multiple ways, rather than in terms of pure Nationals/Newcomer categories. As stated in the introduction, Zavos (2008) and Bryan (2008) argue that mainstream multiculturalism and interculturalism can be harnessed to reproduce the national (white) ethnic majority as normative in ‘recent migrant’ countries like Greece and Ireland. This re/production of dominance is associated with a lack of contextualisation and a depoliticisation of the complexity of who ‘migrants’ are, and where and where they are ‘received’. While examples of overt racism were encountered in the research and presented in places in Chapters 5 to 8, I also consider how privileged, normative white-Irishness in education may be further *effected* through a

process which fails to deconstruct the integrated nature of race, class, gender, religion and nationhood, via internal-external, school-social, global-local processes.

It is the very project of viability and the need to shift justifications according to various exigencies that provides grounds for a constrained agency of the racialised subject, for a constant deconstruction of justifiable school and authentic race, and an acknowledgement of shared viability as vulnerability. However, the endurance of race, class and gender among other categories as features of educational inequality suggests resistances are always vulnerable to recuperation. In the forthcoming chapter, I move to consider how local research might potentially explore the limits of governing logics of viability, which tacitly effect an ambiguous white-Irishness as its normative core. Importantly, Chapter 4 is intrinsically invested in examining its own limits, as it not outside of cultural politics of knowledge and global-state-research exigencies.

Chapter 4

Justifying ethnography

Producing and reproducing Dromray Community School

Ethnography might be revisioned

beyond the structuring regulations of the true and the false, the objective and the subjective, and the valid and the invalid... it means approaching ethnographic writing as an effect of contest of discourses, even if the ethnographer has the power to suggest what is at stake when identities are at stake (Britzman, 2000, p. 37).

Traditional debates around ethnography have centred on important issues such as objectivity and subjectivity, qualitative and quantitative methods, researcher and researched, deception and informed consent etc. The dualisms that these debates propagate often fail to challenge the idea that there must be a 'good' way of performing research and producing knowledge. Through the preceding chapters, the concern was developed that racist outcomes must be troubled for their effects as they are 'discovered'. Research often might not escape the logics of governance that can produce sealed identity claims, claims that risk furthering depoliticisations of state and school. Answering 'why' questions about 'research design' can create and expose immediate tensions. The 'why' question can readily assume an object (e.g. race, school) and re/produce this object according to questions that are deemed legitimate. These legitimatised questions are often genuinely motivated. Examples included O'Sullivan's (2005) discussion of class differences in secondary school achievement, and Goldberg's (2000) critique of naming the racial other *as* othering.

I offer this chapter as a re/ethnography and a re/design. This means I acknowledge that the production of an objectified thesis disregards its differential interpretation. There is a concern here with both traditional forms of rigour and post-structural troupings of evidence. Instead of solely providing an account of 'what happened and why' with respect to researching race and school, I weave through a troubling of assumptions about input (generating data from 'selected' or 'given' situations) and output (the uses of data). The 'why this design?' question may be one of closed-down research-justification, silencing broader logics of governance and technologies of the self:

- What ethical binaries of inclusion/exclusion do they reinstate?
- What new knowledges does the researcher create in his/her account of research design and implementation?

It is suggested with these questions that there are huge tensions in being involved in, participating in, making and remaking the “real world out there” (Gillborn, 1995, p. 52).

An unfinished text around racist effects is produced in this thesis as a project of possibility. This unfinished text is based on the premise that knowing, or foreclosing the boundaries and concerns of inclusion/exclusion in advance may allow ‘equality’ to proceed undemocratically (O’Brien and Ó Fathaigh, 2007, Laclau and Butler, 1997). As a complex, intrinsically incomplete text, the research aims to work “against itself in disavowing prescription, tidy tales and successor regimes of truth” (Lather, 2001, p. 478). I attempt to use the tools of production, discourse and subjectivation to destabilise any notion of writing an authoritative text. There is, of course, the argument that:

Many of these perspectives (post-structuralism, feminism, postcolonialism) indeed give rise to analyses that render ethnography itself, at least in any conventional mode, highly problematic, if not all-but-impossible (Coffey, Holbrook and Atkinson, 1996).

The development of what Van Loon terms a “strategic space” for research methods that are neither objectivist nor subjectivist becomes necessary in this terrain (Van Loon, 2001, p. 276). Before beginning, I acknowledge that I am setting myself up for methodological ‘failure’ in order to find a point of departure for this research. By confronting the idea that none of us are exterior to multiple discourses, impossibility and possibility may constantly interchange. This constant failure might enable new positionings and new spaces to strategise in ethnographic work. In this chapter, notions of choice and research justification are certainly recited, because I attempted to practice from them as a knowing researcher-subject. But I also attempt to trouble them and expose their implication in governing logics. This troubling narrates chance, opportunism, reifications and mistakes I think I made. All the while, this process ‘reveals’ itself, often in the first person, as if knowledge production is always and already meaningful, finite and emanating from a knowing self.

Ethnography as a set of situated tools for an unfinished text

It is important first to conceptualise ‘ethnographic’ practices in terms of the research discourses they draw on and potentially reconfigure³⁹. The term ‘ethnography’ is “used in different ways on different occasions to mark off work of one kind from that of another” (Hammersley, 2006, p. 3). The term was loosely borrowed from social

³⁹ Denzin (1997) summarises the moments of inquiry succeeding the early Chicago School (all of which operate in the present), as: the traditional (1900–1950), the modernist (1950–1970), blurred genres (1970–1986), the crisis of representation (1986–1990) postmodern, or experimental (1990–1995), post-experimental (1995–2000), and the future (2000 on), the seventh moment.

anthropology and anthropological linguistics, alluding to situated, empirical description of peoples and 'races'. Other terms that infer a similar approach include fieldwork, qualitative sociology, participant observation and thick description (Blommaert, 2006, Rock, 2001). Chicago School ethnographies, often seen as foundational, usually involved multiple methods for triangulation purposes. The quantitative technique of mapping, and qualitative life-history methods, observations, diaries, interviews and case analyses were often used. Researchers often lived in the settings studied, having some autobiographical experience of the setting. In recent years, the safe bet has been to describe ethnography as:

a form of social and educational research that emphasises the importance of studying at first hand what people do and say in particular contexts. This usually involves fairly lengthy contact, through participant observation in relevant settings, and/or through relatively open-ended interviews designed to understand people's perspectives⁴⁰, perhaps complemented by the study of various sorts of document - official, publicly available, or personal (Hammersley, 2006, p. 4).

Even at this, Atkinson et al. (2001) assert there is no simple one-to-one relationship between method/strategy and philosophical stances; there are 'family resemblances' between theoretical and methodological preferences. While often currently synonymised with qualitative methods, Hammersley (2006) acknowledges that in schools for example, quantitative methods have been used, e.g. *Beachside Comprehensive* (Ball, 1981). *Young Female and Black* (Mirza, 1992) also used quantitative surveys. Ethnographic work is thus highly adaptable, having transcended its roots in sociology and anthropology and borrowing freely from other theories and traditional disciplines (LeCompte, 2002).

Perspectives on ethnography have changed, broadened and been contested over time. Why do I draw on and attempt to make meanings from this impossible form? Perhaps it is because ethnography offers a promise of possibility based on theorising local practice through the discursive. It can draw on context as sedimented, action as performative and writing as impossible fabrication. The ethnographic context:

rests on shared knowledge and taken for granted assumptions that are unique to the moment. The unsaid, the assumed, and the silences in any discourse provide the flesh and bone – the backdrop against which meaning is established... discourse is always both specular and productive. It is not a mirrored reflection of what is seen or heard, but an emergent,

⁴⁰ The issue of participants' perspectives is picked up upon later in this chapter.

unpredictable occurrence – a specular⁴¹ *production* (Denzin, 1997, pp. 37 – 38).

As Denzin suggests, writing culture is writing theory and vice versa. Ethnographic writing is implicated in the very process it appears to stand outside of and construct theories around. In epistemological terms, it allows the notion of ‘generating’ as opposed to ‘knowing’, and after deconstruction: “the creation of products and assemblages, in an iterative process of representation and reflection through which we come to know in research” (Somerville, 2007, p. 235). In this study, ethnography offers the potential to iteratively draw on the world offered, trouble it, remake it, but yet still be troubled by this remaking. From a historical perspective, ethnographic work has been drawn upon in a diverse manner to decentre the dominance of Eurocentric, white and heterosexist perspectives. It is perhaps the possibility of researching and writing a somewhat open text, through apparently self-present identities, that makes ethnography ontologically and practically useful to reading the limitless configurations and instabilities of racist effects. The ways in which ethnographic data may be politically positioned and understood is addressed next, before attempting to ‘reveal’ the practices of this study.

Critical research: truth, fact/value?

Chapters 1 and 2 have located the study in the field of social justice and critical theorisation. Simon and Dippo (1986) suggest that for ethnographic work to warrant the label ‘critical’, it must:

- (1) employ an organising problematic that defines one’s data and analytical procedures in a way consistent with its project;
- (2) be situated in part, within a public sphere that allows it to become the starting point for the critique and transformation of the conditions of oppressive and inequitable moral and social regulation;
- (3) address the limits of its own claims by a consideration of how, as a form of social practice, it too is constituted and regulated through historical relations of power and existing material conditions (1986, p. 197).

Critical approaches often take a more radically political stance, and can be sceptical of purely micro-political perspectives. The movement beyond individualistic notions of racism as (just) personal prejudice has been an important facet of educational research in the UK (Archer and Francis, 2007; Mirza, 1992; Gillborn, 1990; Mac an Ghail, 1988). If we take the interrogation of historically and ideologically sedimented,

⁴¹ ‘Specular’ here means to have the reflective properties of a mirror.

common sense practices as an important goal of the research, then the relationship between macro and micropolitics becomes a key analytical focus. Gillborn (1994) suggests ethnography has an important role in exposing this relationship. The implications of 'reform' in the last fifteen years have been left largely untouched by ethnographic Irish school research. Ethnography may make a useful contribution to understanding macro-micro interactions in terms of race and schooling in Ireland, given some of the international and Irish experiences described in Chapter 1.

However, Lofland (1991) argues that interactionist ethnography is wedded to a kind of political anarchism:

On what basis are we to distinguish between ethnographic insight and political prejudice? Furthermore, what distinctive role can ethnography play in political advocacy? Is it anything more than an effective rhetorical device? (Lofland, 1991, p. 15 in Hammersley, 1992).

The goal of being critical has often been sidelined by the imposition of traditional epistemological frameworks on postmodern research projects. The marginalisation of critical and/or postmodern work can rely on claims of lack of methodological rigour.⁴² It commonly ignores critical ethnography's potential for interrogating the legitimisation of policy and practice. Foster et al. (1996) for example, are almost as sceptical of critical/politically entrenched approaches to research as they are of positivist approaches. They particularly invoke a fact/value binary, claiming that scientific research offers no prospect of providing a value consensus, and it should not attempt to do so. They also take issue with 'strict constructionism', which they criticise in two ways. They suggest it involves a selective scepticism⁴³ and/or a self-destructive scepticism, where belief is suspended. Foster et al. (1996) reject these approaches out of hand. Yet these rejections entirely delimit the field of social constructionist and 'possibilitarian' research by shutting down the production of knowledge and the field of practice. If we take language as bringing social systems (including discourses about research) into life, and shaping ontologies, the notion of what constitutes 'good research' can only ever be considered partisan. Arguments that policy making should be left to policy makers denies the possibility that practitioners enact and students experience policy differently. In short, these arguments might fail to recognise the

⁴² Derrida's words are of note here: "the method for reducing the frivolous is method itself. In order not to be the least frivolous, method suffices" (Derrida, 1980, p. 123 in MacLure, 2003, p. 113).

⁴³ Their point about selectivity is an important one, and has already been addressed in the previous section.

multivalent manner in which research knowledge might be taken up in policy and practice.

My position is that critical approaches to research can potentially be more about extensive and rigorous conceptual and empirical work than they may be given credit for. Post-structural understandings of knowledge trouble the act of knowledge 'selection' in particular. The dismissal of constructionist approaches as selective ignores how speakable acts can be premised on underpinning discourses, and can be analytically unearthed by the very power-laden rules of selectivity that elect them and neutralise them at the level of practice. Notions of quantifiable 'credibility' and 'bias', might offer little apart from the shutting down of discursive approaches. Indeed, Gillborn (1998) describes the 'politics-bias-deception' vs. 'science-facts-trustworthiness' binary as implicated in hegemonic conditions.

A commitment to decentring all authority claims is perhaps one way of writing beyond this debate. We are less concerned with the old struggles of establishing authority as a way of research, and more attuned to the "archaeology of construction, the sedimentary grounds of ethnographic authority" (Britzman, 2000, p. 29). The research is not ontologically based on selecting claim and counter-claim, meaning the apparently stable act of communication of research knowledge requires constant politicisation.

Troubling the priority of research correspondence

Denzin (1997) adopts a position that isolates accounts of discursively created social interaction and the meanings we attribute to these accounts:

The truth of a text must always be aligned with the verisimilitude it establishes, but this verisimilitude will always be deferred... Truth is political, verisimilitude is textual (Denzin, 1997, pp. 11 - 12).

There are multiple tensions for the ethnographer if s/he is concerned with bothering the reader and the writer's confidence in singular truths, in what is taken as authoritative, and, as Chapter 8 deconstructs, the school audio-visual. Everyday school practices are more considered as knowable in the given context, rather than objectively/subjectively knowable. The essay *Signature Event Context* (Derrida, 1988) suggests that communication can only ever be viewed in a constant process of deferral. The *correspondence* priority of much research may be underpinned by a "metaphysics of presence". This focus "assumes that difference, be it that of the research subjects or the unfolding event, can be subordinated to the presence of writing" (Van Loon, 2001, p. 280). But to suggest that communication is an impossible aspiration does not mean we

should abandon research. Van Loon suggests this is tantamount to prioritising urgency over reflection. A performance-written ethnography frees the work from the gazing eye of the ethnographer, unsettling the writer's place and "freeing the text and the writer to become interactional productions" (Denzin, 1999, p. 130). Denzin's assertion here is that while a text may appear as 'true', it may actually lack closeness to the 'reality' it purports to represent (i.e. verisimilitude), and vice versa. He suggests we can produce messy texts that have some degree of verisimilitude, i.e., allow the reader to imagine or feel their way into what is being described by the author. Little more can be sought than bringing 'felt' news from one world to another. A deconstructive verisimilitude can be practised; one that focuses on how each version impinges on and shapes what is studied. The task is not simple representation of a social phenomenon. One does not seek to describe the nuances of the context and tease out just what 'is' happening within it. Rather, as Youdell (2006b) describes:

I am seeking to construct compelling representations of moments inside school in order to untangle the discursive frames that guide meaning and render subjects within it. My research is unavoidably implicated in the very subjectivating processes about which it speaks. Yet, these data are recognizable. They do not contain, expose or reflect any universal truth, but these petite narratives do resonate (2006b, p. 513).

Ethnography, here, is messy. But rather than focusing on producing multiple realities, it excavates the discourses which produce these 'real practices' and 'real positions', all the time acknowledging the work as 'felt', as partial and as 'resonating', rather than proving.

Whose voice? Researcher and researched as discursively produced

Post-structural theory necessarily bothers the confidence that has been placed in purely critical or oppositional theories, related methodologies and the ethnographic method. But it revitalises these by attempting to transcend claims to truth and opposing worldviews: "I try to hold tightly to the ethic of not producing these subjects as persons of blame or as heroes of resistance. Instead my concern (is) one of questioning how the categories of blame and resistance are discursively produced and lived" (Britzman, 2000, p. 32). Ethnographic research has often promised to deliver voices that have been shut out of normative educational research. Yet "these necessary commitments need not preclude an approach to representation that situates *narrative efforts*, as opposed to *narrators themselves*, as a site of crisis" (Kennedy and Davis, 1993, in Britzman, 2000, p. 35, my italics). This study does not assert that subjugated, experiential knowledge, or *any* knowledge is without merit: it takes a nuanced approach to how 'experience' is

framed, and subjects produced, through discourse. Research into the subjective experiences of children, youths and racialised/gendered/academicised subjects remains crucial, but can it be textualised (Holt, 2004, Renold, 2002). In critiquing the ways in which children are diagnosed with behaviour disorders, Harwood (2006) states “it is pertinent to note that in accessing the young people that I am not attempting to ‘give them voice’. I am attempting to write stories of their subjugation and disqualification, to craft accounts of subjugated disqualified knowledges” (2006, p. 16). In a similar way, this study focuses on potential discourses that may inscribe stories and subjects, as opposed to prioritising the subjects or stories themselves.

Reflexivity is often regarded as ‘not an option’ for ethnographers (Foster et al., 1996, pp. 2-3).

Researchers should also be aware of the manner in which their work is party to the social world...they should exercise greater control over their research – it should be made more self-conscious and self-directing in its interaction. (Foster et al., 1996, p. 3).

Yet while critical research suggests neutrality may be a myth (Blair, 1998), researchers are not freed from their responsibilities. Critical reflexivity is offered as a means of acknowledging that our orientation towards others is part of our view of the situation. Therefore continuous reflection on one’s practice is necessary, as is an orientation towards the participant’s role (Tripp, 1998, in Klaas, 2006). The enquiry can be reframed to investigate how one perspective is naturalised and that of the ‘other’ systematically silenced, destabilising the authority of a singular perspective, and looking to the structural and historical relations that produced the illusion of that authority, with a view to social change (Kenway and McLeod, 2004).

Yet how should researchers proceed, if they themselves are understood as produced by (unstable) social structures? Youdell (2006b) asserts, we are not seeking to offer a collection of ‘real’ or ‘actual’ discourses, but are wholly constrained by our own discursive repertoires and capacity to build and name these: “I am, then, absolutely entangled in the data I generate and the representations I produce” (2006b, p. 513). While acknowledging one’s own position may be useful, the researcher cannot possibly name all of his/her desires, motivations and positionings, as they are mobile and indefinite. Furthermore, as St. Pierre (2003) suggests, there is a sense in which reflexivity can be abused to evoke a sense of authenticity. Acknowledgement of one’s own position should not lend the study any great claim to ‘authority’, nor does it necessarily privilege the voice of the minority through revelation of one’s apparent

biases. What is required is not endless talk about our positions, but *vigilance* to these positions and how they are knowable as effects of power.

Critical, post-structural ethnography: moving towards the practice

A certain freedom comes with the destabilisation of the researcher-author. We are freed from the hold of 'science writing', and the assumption that constructing a thesis is validated as knowing (Richardson, 2003, pp. 508 – 509). Instead of focusing on closeness to subjects and authoritative accounts, we can look to how our accounts may promote change through the creation of new spaces and new meanings in our theorisation of practice:

When we become close to an event, to persons within a situation, it does not mean that our interpretations are more correct or relevant. It does, however, construct a location through which local and responsive change is most possible (Ropers-Huilman, 1999, p. 26).

In this sense, excavations of local practice, offered in an incomplete text, allow the possibility for categories of exclusion to be opened rather than closed down. However, attention must be directed towards how our accounts of research practice are taken up:

We must be ever cognizant that the meanings of our actions will be varied and have differing effects. Our witnessing will always be partial, yet constantly and actively (re)constructed and renewed (Ropers-Huilman, 1999, p. 25).

Ethical considerations circumscribe research that is intrinsically concerned with troubling the data it produces. Given the study's concerns around the foreclosure of the Other and matters of in/equality, I attempt to use a grammar that troubles the production of future structures which may invoke hierarchy. I explore how governing logics of viability justify local school practices that may re/cite and re/constitute race. But this is only possible with and through other knowledge relationships that are constituted by viability and logics of categorisation. These include adult/child, male/female, middle class/working class, home/school binaries. This incomplete, circuitous web-of-knowledge perspective necessitates vigilance to the discursively produced, shifting, co-constructed relationships that characterise the research and 'what happens'. The rest of the chapter focuses on the study's practice with this vigilance in mind.

Practising ethnography: an incomplete process of subjectivation

Hammersley and Atkinson (1983) state ethnography is replete with the unexpected, and cannot be designed in the pre-fieldwork phase. More importantly, the processes of selection and planning that constitute and are constituted by typical ethnographic

research are considered less as choices, and more as aspects of research discourse. Rather than selecting schools to approach on the basis of *a priori* racial or other categorisations, I deliberately viewed, e.g. whiteness as an ongoing interactional achievement and not the property of any individual. “In other words, people don’t have race in the conventional sense but are actively raced as they are drawn into the complex processes of economic, cultural and political racialisation” (Best, 2003, p. 897). Without this conceptual vigilance, the researcher may be reliant on the, e.g. white woman s/he encounters to perform a style of ‘whiteness’, or to perform aspects of ‘womanhood’ in a pre-determined manner (Nayak, 2006).

The process of approaching the Termonfort region and Dromray Community School came about through convenience, unstructured contingencies, provisional knowledges and personal and professional experience, including:

- The location of my workplace and the congealing density of new migrants communities, both narrowing the scope to the greater Dublin area;
- A tacit curiosity to examine the transition from primary to post-primary: how do various migrant families emerge and practise in schools at this time?
- A chance phone-call that triggered certain events to unfold. A girl’s primary school principal, whom I knew in a professional capacity, put her Termonfort⁴⁴ school forward as an option for research. This happened during an incidental conversation I had with her about the study in March 2007.

Perhaps out of a conceptually contradictory need for security and predictability (and the necessity to work around my job), the study was provisionally sketched to take place in multiple community locations over the course of the 2007/2008 Irish school year. The planned sites were a girls’ national (primary) school, the sibling boys’ school, the feeder mixed-sex community school (Dromray)⁴⁵, students’ homes and community youth organisations. The girls’ primary school was my first point of access, and it led me to the community school. However, attempts to contact the sibling-boys’ national school principal and get this school involved were frustrating and ultimately failed.

After spending two days in the community and girls’ schools in April 2007 (post-‘gaining entry’), I felt I was able to sketch some limited accounts of potential subjectivations. I thus decided to stay in these schools. Emergent ‘funneling’

⁴⁴ As stated in the abstract, Termonfort is a fictitious name given to denote the particular region of greater (or county) Dublin that the school is located in.

⁴⁵ Dromray is a pseudonym used to preserve the anonymity of the school.

necessarily chastened my multi-site ambitions as 2007/2008 school year unfolded. Within two months of spending one day per week in the community and girls' schools, embedding myself in routine school practices and relationships became unmanageable. I decided to stay only with the community school from November 2007 on. As the year progressed, I further realised that the 'outside school' ambition was another study, or part of a larger study that would draw on more than my available resources. In this emerging text, I variously could have been:

- Drawn towards what was congealing: new migrant populations in the socio-economically heterogenous, rapidly changing Termonfort;
- Drawn towards more acute revelations of power/knowledge: potentially familiar negotiations of adult/child and learning/leisure discourses in the 'high stakes' post-primary setting;
- Rejecting an impulse to tabulate the achievement data of various students as a way of proving educational inequality, as I was concerned this would offer reified identity categories;
- Drawn towards a regular, 'good' school. The data generated in Dromray might trouble good/bad versions of schooling. I was concerned that researching a 'bad' school (e.g. neighbouring Haroldstown, described later) might oversimplify racism as sensational in this new migrant context.

The above points suggest multiple processes of researcher-researched subjectivation infused an emerging path that I give the appearance of acting with and through. I may have positioned myself within and been positioned through certain exigencies and discourses of school research. I turn to these positions more specifically next.

Ethnography: context and self/other, researcher/researched shifts

The process of 'gaining entry' to the school sites suggested positionings were already taking place in multiple ways, as "gatekeepers, sponsors and the like... will operate in terms of expectations about the ethnographer's identity and intentions" (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983, p. 75). It was agreed with the principals of the girls' national and mixed-sex community schools that I would speak to both school staffs. My first 'shot' at this came in mid-April. I gave a 5-minute presentation to the approximately 80 community school staff on the day after their Easter break. At the end of my short oral presentation, the principal was keen to stress to the staff that the study should be 'mutually beneficial', indicating my acceptance for the 2007/2008 school year. The

principal and I tentatively discussed that I might provide some professional development work with teachers on the research; this is discussed later in the chapter. Indeed, on my initial meeting with the community school principal some weeks before this, I was constructed as a quasi-expert researcher who was there to help the school deal with the challenges of including ‘non-nationals’⁴⁶. In the primary school, I was regarded as (and presented myself as) a fellow primary school teacher on secondment to a research post. The (much smaller) staff appeared very relaxed as I spoke to them. The primary principal later told me that the staff unanimously agreed I could work in their school⁴⁷.

Hammersley and Atkinson (1983) state many hosts have highly inaccurate expectations of the research enterprise, and two closely related models of the researcher tend to predominate: those of ‘expert’ and ‘critic’. If the ethnographer is viewed as expert, s/he may be expected to ‘sort out’ the organisation. As critic, one may find it more difficult to broach certain spaces and topics, as certain participants may wish to steer the research in a certain direction. While exploitation of certain skills or knowledge is useful in terms of field relations, Holt (2004) signals a potential problem therein. The words below resonated with me at various times:

I had to fulfil promises that had been made, and perform in ways that were consistent with the aspects of my identity that had been strategically drawn upon in gaining access to the institutional spaces of the school. This was particularly pertinent, as I had drawn upon my position as a qualified teacher in order to gain access into the schools (2004, p. 20).

Rather than framing the staff and students’ initial expectations as inaccurate as Hammersley and Atkinson (1983) do above, I would suggest that ethnography might cause multiple researcher/researched knowledge shifts. Certain positionings, acceptances and intelligibilities were always subject to time and other contingencies. For example, the time of year I gained initial consent – April 2007 – may have rendered my request slightly insignificant to school staffs (in terms of the September 2007 start date).

⁴⁶ Had I the foresight to ask permission to tape this initial discussion, I would now have an account of how the principal overtly categorised certain groups of minority ethnicity students as sneaky, hardworking, loud... with some exceptions. This conversation gave me my first taste of some uncomfortable moments in ‘conversational’ interviews at the beginning where the participant sought agreement from the ‘expert’, searching for non-verbal cues and the occasional affirming utterance I might produce.

⁴⁷ After roughly two months, I decided in consultation with the primary school principal that I would stay only in the community school. I suggested that I might come back at a later stage to discuss the issues I encountered in the primary school research (with 5th and 6th class girls and their teachers).

In April 2007 and up until approximately October 2008, the study was framed around examining race, ethnicity and success in a changed Termonfort context, as the consent forms for students and staff in the appendices might demonstrate. My responses to early questions from teachers focused on race, ethnicity and school success or achievement. I also mentioned a desire to understand ways in which other social categories, like gender or social class (often euphemistically translated as ‘student background’), impacted on this dynamic. These forms were used both to attempt to inform staff and students about the study, but also to help them to identify me: an often-unknown person on the school grounds.

- In constructing hindsight, while grappling with post-structural literature, I was still interested in ‘finding evidence of institutional racism’ as a priority in the initial stages. This meant purposefully interviewing minority ethnic students about their experiences and interviewing teachers to discover evidence of one professional culture. It also meant examining the distribution of scores. A more modernist framing of racist outcomes in the research shifted towards ‘racist effects’ as the data and literature coalesced for me, roughly from December 2007 on.
- A focus on racist outcomes - despite the sociological interpretation used and assurances of anonymity - made me feel uneasy. This was because of the small and interconnected nature of education and ‘knowledge’ in Ireland. I did not wish to simply reproduce Dromray on various sides of good/bad binaries, which in my view, might foreclose opportunities in Ireland to see how race and school may be interwoven across time, space and global-Ireland-school planes. This point does not suggest an assumption that the work will be widely engaged with as it is disseminated in Ireland (for multiple reasons, not least of which being the prioritisation of ‘more relevant’ research).

As my ethnographic focus changed, my view of my role changed, causing dilemmas of communication to the students and staff. I was always frustrated with my accounts and my varying interpretations of the research when questioned by the minority who asked or read consent information. As the year progressed, participants’ curiosities became far less acute. As relationships developed, ‘who Karl is’ seemed to shift: teachers often asked me how the research was going, seemingly out of concern for my PhD than for ‘what I was doing in their classroom’. Practitioners sometimes identified with me as a former (primary) teacher, and I often called on this former self to connect with them;

ethnographic school research is extremely rare and my long-term presence (and purpose) was quite unique. Some (all white-Irish) students appeared to test me with racist/foreigner jokes as they got to know me. Others approached me occasionally for a casual chat, while others maintained their distance, perhaps indicating they did not wish to be a part of my work. Many students, regardless of background, repeatedly asked to be interviewed once the word spread that students could get out of class for interview.

Deborah Youdell's words on categorisations of learners may be useful here in terms of the ways in interrelated positions (student, teacher, researcher) are uniquely choreographed, yet often enduring, in different contexts:

Single subjects can be constituted in differing, and apparently irreconcilable ways... constitutions by others and self can be effected simultaneously and can endure in different moments and contexts... these constitutions are reliant on the discourses framing contexts and not simply the intent of an actor (Youdell, 2006a, p. 85).

Students were largely told that I was interested in their experiences of school, achievement and what was 'normal' in a more multiethnic setting. Students I spoke to frequently seemed to see me as vaguely interesting, possibly because of my apparent embodiment of a unique combination of categories in a school (adult, quasi-friend). Despite my *intent* and desire to be open and transparent when saying 'what I was doing' with participants, this transparency was always and already exceeded: co-constructed and reliant on the discourses used in various situations.

Who are we dealing with? Emerging through infinite texts

MacLure (2003) discusses the framing devices used in some ethnographies. Some frames provide guidebook visuals of communities from the outside, constructing the participants at arm's length, insulating the 'site' from the "ambiguities of interpretation" (2003, p. 91). The notion of 'site' must be troubled both theoretically and materially. Community members, for example are produced within and through an impossible range of sites and statuses, e.g. 'open and legal' to 'hidden and illegal', 'real-world' to 'cyberspace' (LeCompte, 2002). The discourse of community life will always be greater than the sum of its parts (Crow, 2000). In the following paragraphs, I offer a limited sketch of governing discourses around Dromray Community school and its wider location, Termonfort. This provisional account uses statistical readings and interview co-constructions with a key gatekeeper, the principal.

The school's context: patches and pockets

Dromray Community School served over 1,000 students in 2007/2008. An interview excerpt with the principal (below) suggests an authoritative account is possible, even with the massive change that has occurred around the school. Note how what is crudely meaningful as the 'educational capital' of the students attending the school has changed. Yet the school's 'quality' reputation endures, and Dromray is still rendered desirable in certain traditional and new communities. Note also how this excerpt, which we co-construct as meaningful, potentially closes down power/knowledge complexities through invocation of several binaries: home/school, middle class/working class, indigenous/migrant.

Generating data in this interview:

P: Principal [50s, white-Irish, female]
KK: Interviewer [28 year-old, white-Irish, male]

P: Well when I started to live here (over two decades) ago, it was a nicely settled area and em, this school was built in (the early seventies). The children coming here would come from a grand settled background. Parents would have great ambitions for their children. Usually the mother would be - stay at home and the dad would be out working. They would be very involved in their children's education. We still have a lot of children of that nature here. Em, but the area has aged. The demographics changed. So the area that a lot of children would have come to here from no longer have school-going children, or the values of the property would have got so high that they're now being bought over by people who would have a fair amount of disposable income. Some of them would use that disposable income to (send their children to) fee-paying schools. So, eh, we are now taking our children from a broader catchment area. That catchment area would be more working-class, to some degree, there would still be children whose parents would send them here because they think it is the best education for their children. And they would be professional couples as well... Then there would be more children who would come from single parent families as well and homes that would be em, in the more socially deprived areas - but still not a huge percentage of that. In fact, what we would have is children whose parents want them to come here because they don't want them to go to their catchment schools. So they would be ambitious for their children, and would be prepared to drive them here and, you know, so they would be ambitious parents.

KK: Mmm. So the school itself would be consistently seen in the wider (Termonfort) area as maybe a cut above?

P: Yeah. Ah yeah. It would be. Em, then there are the overseas children coming in now. Which at this stage would be 12 to 15 per cent. Now,

they wouldn't necessarily be deprived at all. A lot of them would be over here working⁴⁸.

The electoral district around Dromray school is designated 'marginally below average', and thus somewhat unviable, in its Irish relative deprivation/affluence score.⁴⁹ Dromray's neighbouring district, Haroldstown, is much bigger, and is known as marginally more affluent. Quite a number of students come to the school from this socioeconomically mixed neighbouring district, providing continued, if not always 'desirable' subjects to the school.

Dromray and the *de facto* school market

The school is, in classic, objective/subjective case study rhetoric, a 'compelling case': a school with a great local and regional reputation and a slowly shifting, 'patchy' student profile. Chapter 1 introduced Ireland's informal, or *de facto* school market. It was suggested that local specifics derived from the Irish constitution ('unlimited' parental choice and religious rights) might translate with global/westernised discourses of individualist clientalism. Priority is not formally or overtly given to any religious background in Dromray, as a community school. The school has an enrolment policy based on its catchment area and six categories of priority which clearly overlap:

1. Students who live in the catchment area;
2. Students who have siblings currently in the school;
3. Students whose parent(s) attended the school;
4. Students coming from one of the 'feeder' primary schools (which constitutes a large proportion of the student population);
5. Students who did not get a place in their local secondary school (which is mostly students from a much more affluent suburb who did not get the their more desired community school: 80% of Leaving Certificate students went on to third level from this more desired school in 2008, according to the *Irish Times*);

⁴⁸ The principal's remarks are continued for analysis purposes from this point in Chapter 5. Another short excerpt from this interview is used in Chapter 6.

⁴⁹ Socio-economic and other statistical indicators are being referenced here from local community agency reports. I cannot cite the name of these reports without jeopardising the anonymity of the school. However, these reports' calculations are based upon the micro-calculations from the latest (2006) State Census.

6. Students who live in newly developed areas that do not have their own school yet: this has been an issue in Ireland that is most acute in Termonfort, given the extreme rise in population and failure of public services to keep pace.

The mix of social class categories that the principal cites suggests the school's viability and knowability *as desirable* in the politics of school choice. This categorical mix can in some ways be understood as an effect of wider rapid change and an aging middle class population, rather than deliberate 'inclusionary' or 'outreach' practices on the part of the school. In other words, the school is not just involved in choosing, it is also chosen in accommodation-migrant-class-school dynamics:

- A small number of white-Irish and minority ethnic students from more disadvantaged neighbouring areas (such as Tara, who features in Chapter 6), get into the school through strategic placement in feeder primary schools;
- The enrolment checklist might have excluded many 'newcomers' on the basis of being a local in a less transient set of neighbourhoods. But a number of minority ethnic students were directly placed in the school's catchment area with the building of high density apartments and duplex houses beside and around the school. Jonathan, who features in Chapter 9, is a 15 year-old black-Nigerian male who lives with his mother and infant brother. His mother initially rented a house in the area and he enrolled in Dromray. While the family had to move to a poorer area, Jonathan still is bussed to the school;
- The school has made further moves to making the overt gate-keeping of viability less stringent: a third achievement tier (C Band) was cut around 2002. A condition that SEN students would only be enrolled 'subject to resources' was dropped not long before the ethnography began, on the basis of DES guidance.

It is useful to reiterate here that the local is a powerful force in Irish schooling, due to unregulated enrolment policies and informal transfer of student information (Looney, 2006). Local forces equally regulate and are regulated by global-state shifts, such as migration and pre-recession credit availability for less affluent families. As the coming chapters suggest, however, student categorisations of *viability* may remain untroubled by these shifts. The continued association of the school with discourses of partial affluence might partially have been secured as an effect of the school's historical desirability and banding tradition based on admission exams in Irish, English and Mathematics, which immediately hierarchise the students according to unequal

educational biographies. The school may remain viable and attractive to more affluent families through its historically generous sporting facilities, wide subject choice and trips abroad. Lynch and Moran (2006) regard these hierarchising dynamics as common in Irish schools.

The school's constitution as quasi-desirable might be further contextualised by exploring Same/Other school knowledge relationships. One possibly undesirable Other to Dromray might be the neighbouring school, located on a 'rough patch' of neighbouring Haroldstown (another pseudonym). Haroldstown Community School serves a historically disadvantaged population: 40% of its much smaller number of Leaving Certificate students went on to 3rd level in 2008, according to the *Irish Times*. I had some casual discussions with teachers and students about Haroldstown during the year. Haroldstown has a similar enrolment capacity to Dromray, and is a 5-10 minute walk away. But it is half subscribed and has trouble attracting younger staff. Black African students comprise half of Haroldstown's student population. The school is known in Dromray as beset by discipline problems. Dromray, by contrast, is located in a vaguely similar neighbourhood, but boasts/practises a distinctly more 'pro-school, upwardly mobile, middle class' culture. 60% of its Leaving students leaving the school went on to third level in 2008, ranking Dromray third out of six schools in Termonfort. The two 'leading' schools are in much more affluent areas of Termonfort, sending over 80% of students to third level.

This sketch of the school and the region is instantly problematic in that it suggests a final account of 'the site' is possible. It draws on and reifies modern technologies of biopower and viability which sustain hierarchical categorisations, deferring to white-Irishness by working on their basis (e.g. population and 3rd level entry statistics). But I position this account as quasi-official knowledge. This account supports the intelligibility of the state through a depoliticisation and a suppression of conflict in order to be official (Foucault, 2004). The process of troubling this knowledge and excavating its premises through exploring its limits in practice is a key part of the research performance. In this sense, this sketch of the school and its regional location are more interesting in their intelligibility as coherent and 'possible' (over the impossibility I suggest). I would rather re/design the school and its location in the forthcoming chapters as emerging through an infinite, incomplete text.

Being in the school, performing 'research'

Hammersley and Atkinson (1983) suggest that while pragmatic concerns are by no means absent in hypothesis-testing research, they are likely to play “a very important role in research concerned with theory development” (1983, p. 41). They assert that “in producing descriptions we always rely on theoretical criteria of selection and inference” (1983, p. 43). As the year gained momentum, research became a process that prioritised conceptual vigilance and suspected categorisations. Selections and choices became increasingly regarded as constituted in and by discourse. My practices initially drew on ‘starting somewhere’ and on building relationships so that I could get some conceptual work underway:

- I found ‘getting to know’ teachers and students in two schools slow and difficult early on, and I kept a diary to record my blurred understandings of my practices. The co-ordinator of language support teaching in Dromray was ‘assigned’ to me by the principal⁵⁰. I was allowed to observe some of her Junior Certificate mainstream B Band English classes, as according to her, these had the greatest ‘mix’ of migrant and indigenous (often working class) students. The A/B banding and ‘mixed ability’ system is deconstructed in Chapter 6.
- An unstructured process of building relationships began: I sat with teachers who were friendly with this teacher in the staffroom during lunchtime.
- I sat beside students in 3rd year B Band classes, and got to know them as we walked between classes. I introduced myself to students on the yard, and over time, I got to know more minority ethnic students from older and younger year groups, as they were quite likely to ‘group’ or socialise across year groups outside of the classroom. While I spent some time with first year students at the beginning of the year and some 5th year students towards the end, these mostly 15 year-old students were in a quasi-high stakes state exam year, and glimpses of compliance and resistance that I had read about in other school ethnographies seemed all the more acute in this mid-school year-group. I spent most of my time across the B Band classes. B Band classes made up five of the eight classes in each year, and the majority of minority ethnic 3rd year students were in these classes.

⁵⁰ Perhaps indicating the synonymy of ‘language support’ and ‘non-nationals’ in this school context, which is troubled in Chapter 7.

- I ‘formally’ interviewed a total of twenty-eight school staff almost always during school, over the year. This number is comprised mostly of teachers whose classes I was observing/observed. It also includes guidance counsellors, an SEN co-ordinator, two deputy principals, the principal and various members of the pastoral care team. Twenty-six were interviewed individually, while two staff consented to be interviewed together, and did not permit audio recording. All were interviewed once, and usually one or two staff members were interviewed per week. A further sixteen teachers were observed (usually not more than twice). The analysis of staff interviews focused on the instability of discourses that work to include/exclude, and hierarchise⁵¹.
- I interviewed fifty-eight students, usually in friendship groups of two or three, but never more than four. The majority was unsurprisingly white-Irish, given that minority ethnic students comprise about fifteen percent of the student population. These were mostly 3rd year students, but also included a handful from almost every other year. Certain students discussed later - particularly Feyi and Ruthie – regularly requested to be interviewed but did not provide signed consent from their parent(s)/guardian(s). Analysis of student practices tended to focus on the manner in which unstable discourses are subverted or reiterated.

While in the school, I rejected no potential knowledge generation process, as I was conceptually concerned with how knowledge on students and schooling is emergent, practised and resisted with and through social positionings. ‘Key emergent insights’ scribble-logs were kept on Word files and in notebooks to enable me to track the conceptual progress of the research (Pole and Morrison, 2003). While I primarily used adaptive qualitative strategies as a means of building relationships as well as generating data on ‘live’ practices of subjectivation, I also collected other enmeshed, quantitative information on students’ achievement and neighbourhoods from intranet records. I do not equate school achievement records or students’ home neighbourhoods as simply indicative of an a priori racial or classed in/equality. But equally, I would not dismiss what was constituted as ‘counting’ in the school and in state policy. Towards the end of the year, I recorded some grades of the group that I had gravitated towards: Junior Certificate (3rd year) students.

⁵¹ As a former school teacher, I would have particularly liked to work on ways in which teachers themselves are incited to resist racialising discourses beyond liberal inclusion. Such an analysis was not achieved in this work, unfortunately.

Troubling data around institution and identity: writing through the data

The messiness of ethnography allowed me to trouble the signifier ‘data’, a term overloaded with incitements to ‘evidence’. Rather than suggest a departure from textual forms of data such as transcripts and fieldnotes, I also regard non-textual and non-traditional forms of data and analysis as legitimate. While many would concur that it is important to critique the “linear narrative of methodology” (St. Pierre, 1997, p. 180), *transgressive data* is also worth considering:

I put the signifier *data sous rature*. In doing so, I identified at least three non-traditional kinds of data - emotional data, dream data, and sensual data - and named another, response data, which I believe has been folded into our research projects all along under other signifiers such as member checks and peer debriefing. I am sure there are still other unidentified, unnamed data working in my study (St. Pierre, 1997, p 179).

As Chapter 2 stated, the Derridean idea of putting data *sous rature* (meaning under erasure), refers to a perspective that we are only reading data as if its meaning were clear. While I did not simply transpose St. Pierre’s categorisations of data to the fieldwork, the idea of erasure opened the possibility that limitless forms of data were relevant to the study as it progressed. It made my practice a constant process of theorisation of the emergence and ‘importance’ of certain data and moments over others. The usual rules of selection of data/people/situations did not apply. Rather than building evidence, I tested categorisations of learners and excavated the web of assumptions and justifications behind variously enduring institutional practices.

The things to look at are styles, figures of speech, setting, narrative devices, historical and social circumstances, not the correctness of representation nor its fidelity to some great original (Said, 1978, p. 21).

Fieldnotes were useful for ethnographic writing as they can be conceived of as written texts with their own styles, devices, and modes of selectivity (Emerson, Fretz and Shaw, 2001). Fieldnotes have a loose, shifting quality of being “working, preliminary transitory, rather than fixed or final texts” (Emerson et al., 2001, p. 355). They formed part of the ‘data’ and ‘data analysis’, highlighting some events, accounts and interactions as significant over others and questioning this significance. Often my fieldnotes contained more conceptual questions than they contained descriptions. These are not mutually exclusive, as Hammersley (1992) states, “descriptions cannot be theories, but all descriptions are theoretical in the sense that they rely on concepts and theories” (1992, p. 13). Chance occurrences and unstructured contingencies characterised my time in the school, largely as my priority was to test and reshape the

theoretical framework and my understanding of it. Students invited me to class sometimes, and I followed students that I got to know to others. When a particular lesson or teacher's practices seemed to give some spark some conceptual insight, I wanted to go back for more. I became braver at approaching teachers 'on the spot' to sit in on their class, somewhat breaking with the teacher-teacher etiquette I was accustomed to as a practitioner.

Emerson et al. (2001) describe certain strategies that are used to represent and deconstruct action and dialogue. These include *writing an episode* (which may relate to previous episodes) and *fieldnote tales*, which recount developing actions and depict fully realised participants. Episodes and tales were carefully used, and deconstructed beyond the potential to create deterministic, frozen 'portraits' which prioritise speech and observable action over the unspeakable and the not-done. A small number of *episodes* from teacher interviews were deconstructed to demonstrate discursive subjectivation: teacher and researcher subjects are not considered as formed prior to the scene, but positioning and being positioned in their performance. This episodic deconstruction was done instead of the common practice of a creating a 'findings' narrative based on multiple teacher interviews.

I wondered in these notes and scenes about the limits of certain practices: why are certain modes of embodiment not seen as legitimate? How are certain practices considered official, appropriate school practices through disciplinary discourses, and how are others known and employed as subcultural and resistant? How might learner hierarchies be re/produced in these official/unofficial practices and knowledges? How and where might race be constructed in seen and unseen dynamics? In fieldnotes and interview analysis, I experimented with categorisation through the consideration of certain students as un/viable, and institutional practices as further citing and reifying these categorisations. I drew particularly on Youdell's (2006a) extensive elaboration of the process. Below is an initial account, elaborated from shorthand, of how I first came to know Rainey, and how she might be knowable in the institution. Rainey is a pseudonym, and all names offered are changed from students' and teachers' actual names. I hint below at how Rainey might be constituted in webs of categorisations with and through enduring institutional practices. While the notes were scribbled, I later draw on conventions similar to a theatrical script to evoke a *text*. While it is impossible to give a holistic account of practices or categories, 'thick', or rich description is still a principle that is held on to (Nayak, 2003). Despite the impossibility of entirely

capturing school processes (Youdell, 2006a), I attempt evocative reconstructions in order to excavate the *potential* constitution of subjects. While I have referred to resonance earlier in this chapter, I do not subject the reconstructions to the minutiae of right/wrong representations. I am concerned that such a binary closes down the basic principle of understanding power/knowledge as granting mobility to these constitutions, itself a reframing of research ethics.

Fieldnotes, November 2007

A-band Junior Certificate English class in a prefab at the back of the school. First period in the morning.

*The class settle down and the teacher asks who has forgotten their copy of the famous Irish play *The Field*, by John B. Keane. *The Field* is important also because it is an option for the Junior Certificate syllabus and exam. Despite the optional nature of the Junior Cycle curriculum, schools nationally tend to narrow their focus to a limited number of texts like *The Field*.*

I sit behind Rainey, a white-Irish girl, at the back of the class. I know her mates call her Rainey but teachers variously call her Raonaid and Rainey - she is friends with Nicola, Ruthie and Tara in the B Band. She wears make-up that might be seen as heavy or 'overdone' (when compared with more understated, 'respectable-girl' makeup, or no makeup at all). A guy that she calls 'Raff' all the time (the teacher calls him Sean Rafferty) comes over to share her book, as he has forgotten his. Rainey shouts to him that he has to get a table to sit beside her. Raff walks over and sits beside her without getting a table. They get close as he looks into her book. Rainey giggles and says out loud in quasi-working class Dublin accent:

RAINEY: (Giggling, in a working class accent) Me and Raff are gonna get married!

This appears directed at everyone, but particularly the three (white-Irish) 'lads' sitting at the back of the room (to my right). The teacher ignores her. Raff puts on her mustard gloves, while she wears the matching mustard scarf, which she never takes off. She takes off her flat black shoes and places her right foot on his chair (he sits at a 90 degree angle to her right, facing her as she faces the teacher). She rests her foot beside his hip, touching the side of his body near his crotch. They sit in the back left-hand corner of the room away from the teacher, and this intimacy cannot be seen as various students are asked to read the play.

Questions that I might ask focus on how Rainey is constituted in various fields of meaning and practice. I wonder how certain categories (e.g. white, female) are reiterated through what is constituted as viable, official school knowledges and unofficial, possibly resistant, often subcultural knowledges. The idea of re/production of race, class etc. through school refers to a process of subjectivation: Rainey, for example,

may be constituted in gendered, intersecting discourses of adult/child and learning/leisure: she often interrupts the serious academic business of Junior Certificate English, e.g., as she makes ‘childish’ jokes about getting married. Yet Rainey does not passively accept this positioning. She cites and inscribes it as part of her constitutive recognisability as ‘often’ irresponsible, pleasure seeking and troublesome *in an A Band class*. Her actions are useful to read here, as she does school and resists school simultaneously. She pays (some) attention to the drama being read, suggesting she cares, while flouting official expectations of appropriate hetero-feminine behaviour. She flirtatiously directs jokes towards some of the cooler, somewhat ambivalent ‘lads’ who are friends with Raff, perhaps inscribing her sexual and academic irresponsibility and lack of viability in mutually re/productive normalisations of gender and school. These include discourses of proper and improper, respectable and irresponsible femininity.

How are race and ethnicity constituted in this scene? While no knowable, overt racialising constitutions are made, later chapters suggest the largely white-Irish, official A-Band 3rd year classes as already racialised through institutional processes which associate race with viability. In these cases, I sometimes draw on intersecting data fragments to read racialisation with and through school. These are not used as accumulating proof, but as related, potential *episodes* of knowledge citation. They are the ‘transgressive’, lesser known data that St. Pierre refers to above.

Rainey may be intelligible as ungrateful for her place (as a more working-class) student in the A-Band in some other official classroom episodes: this constitution might inadvertently expose (white, middle class) privilege. Rainey later tells me in interviews how she was called ‘orange’ and ‘white trash’ by Feyi, a black-Belgian Congolese girl. Rather than seeing this as accumulating evidence of Rainey ‘being’ trashy through her make-up and overtly, quasi-sexualised behaviour, I regard it as a repeated citation of classed and racialised discourses, which recite her lack of official school respectability, and endanger her subcultural intelligibility (as desirable, rebellious girl). By telling me about Feyi’s insult (read further in Chapter 8), I read Rainey as citing these discourses to refute them. I also read her as employing this insult to portray ‘anti-white’ and ‘anti-black’ racism as equally wounding. Finally, I look back on my original reading of Rainey in the class and wonder further how *being recognised and made respectable/viable* in various official and unofficial practices in the school activate and incite Rainey to act.

In exploring tales of mostly 3rd year (15 year-old) students, I argue that what can/not be heard and seen in the school's spectacle might be part of the productive constraint of subjectivity: one that variously celebrated/mundane/deviant students are recognised through and inscribe, but also, through these terms, they mobilise with the possibility of contesting and reworking. These tales are not used as cumulative 'evidence' of inequality or to further unitary identity politics: rather fragments of data such as interviews and observations, themselves impossible as stories, are unpicked for performative possibility.

Official/unofficial, school/subcultural?

There are distinctions to be made with certain terminology that I use as conceptual 'pegs' to hang the re/production of race, class and gender and the choreography of their intersections. I use the term 'official school practice' to denote public practices that are largely constituted and as acceptable and cite the (disciplinary) 'work' or norms of the school, whether they are on the part of teachers, students or other members of the school community. The term 'unofficial' practice can refer to a more private, lesser-known practice, and is largely subcultural in that it is not known in the mainstream.

Certainly not all subcultural practices are considered anti-school or non-viable. Indeed, as the review suggested in Chapter 1, students can both overtly or silently accommodate and resist the normalising effects of official school business (Mac an Ghaill, 1988). There is a range of minority ethnic subcultural practices that go unrecognised by the school that can become marginalised and not useful to pedagogy (official school business). These include the use of what some highly official-school-oriented black-Nigerian girls tell me is 'pidgin' English (used privately, and not in class). Others take on racial meaning when they become knowable as anti-school, such as Christian's hip-hop styles, in Chapter 8. Rainey can be understood as having constrained agency and respectable and viable in different contexts. She practises in an official A Band field: this field constantly, silently cites middle class norms around femininity, sexuality and docility as a requirement of pedagogy and progression. Rainey challenges official respectability in the above, enjoying a certain gendered subcultural status. Certain subcultural 'fields' are constructed at the limits of these official school fields, which affirm and re/produces opposition to school. As Chapter 8 suggests, these fields are not possible or knowable without each other: schools, through the presumed business of discipline and associative intersecting viability normalisations (e.g. white, docile), might repeatedly require certain students to fill these spaces of abjection.

Asking questions: co-constructing the world, practising through power

Best (2003) describes her experience of a black-student pausing to explain how certain slang works to her as white-researcher. Her account reads the researcher as positioned unproblematically as an 'outsider'; she also examines how different articulations of whiteness can interweave between the white-researcher and white-participant. 'Getting close to' experience was always troubled in this work. The choice of certain students or teachers to interview or observe over others was conceptually framed. Relationships with interviewees are complicated by recognition of culture and (self) as fragmented, fluid and in process. It would be an impossibility and a complete essentialism to suggest I could entirely train myself around 'how to' talk to young people for example, as youth cultures are multifaceted and heterogenous (but often constructed in opposition to or as deficient to adult practices). Researcher-researched relationships are:

not only constituted in difference, but... punctuated by connection. Indeed, it is possible to question whether researching with people with whom we assume a commonality of experience could conceal the inevitable disruption and dislocation between subjectivities variously positioned within a variety of axes of difference (Holt, 2004, p. 19).

While I sometimes asked students to describe themselves and their peer groups, these descriptions do not escape subjectivation as practices of meaning making. Categorisations of identity were viewed as co-produced in various interview and other encounters, rather than preceding them. I attempted to ask questions in a way that was intelligible to the meaning-making practices that were available in the school. This meant invoking categories, and doing things that sometimes troubled me. I sometimes risked pathologisation and invocations of achievement hierarchy. I have been criticised in seminars which offered preliminary readings of the ideas. A teacher interview in Chapter 7, for example, was critiqued in terms of 'leading questions' as I attempted to provoke and experiment with the often 'unspeakable' around race and achievement. My priority was always the 'meaningful' situated interaction with students and teachers. I could later deconstruct them beyond intentional exclusion, as this diary extract suggests:

At times I will take the risk of citing these names in and give them further performative force. At times these names will be taken as meaningful, or will require clarification, or will be rejected etc. in the field of performative constitutions. Thus I am not suggesting that I will always wait for the participant to draw on names, nor am I suggesting I will always provoke the names myself. What I will do is remember how the discursive/constrained agency of the de-centred speaking subject needs to be considered in the speech act, and adopt a form of reflexivity which does not revert to a default position of a pre-figured subject. *PhD Diary extract*

entitled Intruding on the performative: what the hell do I say? 24th
November 2007.

Re/ethnography: for how long?

Hammersley (2006) asserts the shortness of much contemporary fieldwork can encourage a rather ahistorical perspective, ignoring the wider history of the institution and the biographies of those studied. Ethnographers are often advised to avoid assuming that what they observe is typical of what happens there given, for example, the cyclical nature of institutions. Thus ethnography is traditionally seen as requiring ‘a lot’ of time to be spent with participants, given the idea that ethnographic interview analysis aims to take the contradictory interpretations subjects offer, ‘account’ for the notion that experience and memory are governed by social interests and prevailing discourses, and include how interpretations shift (Richardson, 2003). I spent usually two, but sometimes one day a week in the school for the 2007/2008 year, again based on several certain contingencies and demands over necessarily ‘in-depth’ concerns. These contingencies included freedom from my full-time job, days when particular classes were available, etc. Fieldwork days were also chosen on the basis that I would have time to type up and further analyse fieldnotes and transcribe interviews in the evening. I tacitly felt that my conceptual work might have been largely saturated by February. I stayed possibly because of modernist fears that I did not ‘have enough’ to analyse. But ultimately, I found the February-May period useful in terms of beginning the ultimate process of conceptual and substantive selection: what story was I going to tell, and why?

Constructing thematic chapters through exploration

No aspect of thesis as it is presented here was constructed in a linear manner, despite the ordering of Chapters 1 – 9. Formal writing around the data and reconstruction of the draft chapters began after multiple readings of fieldnotes, listening to interviews and reading transcripts (after a two month break). There was no coding in the purposeful sense: no building of an argument or proof based on evidence. Rather, the writing was a continuation of the analysis during the research, and it was quite experimental at the outset. Data and the concepts outlined in Chapters 1 and 2 mutually shaped each other in their construction. I initially took Youdell’s (2006a) deconstruction of impossible categorisations of students as my starting point, as this work is perhaps the closest and most useful guiding framework for the study. I experimented with a spreadsheet of abbreviated mundane and unusual moments that I had constructed from the data. I wondered why they might be mundane, unusual or in-between, and what legitimisation/de-legitimation processes rendered them normal or unusual moments.

Despite the large amount of data that was generated, school relations and talk was usually highly deracialised and/or ‘colour mute’ (Pollock, 2004) both amongst staff and students. This meant that opportunities for qualitatively analysing overtly racialising processes were not frequent. They usually depended on tacit designations of *viability*, often using acceptably articulated categories of nation, gender, ‘background’ and/or class in interviews and fieldnotes. As stated earlier, and again later, potentially racialising processes and citations are understood as part of wider effects and subjectivations, often beyond any overt, individual intention to discriminate. Furthermore, the focus is on the discourses that suggest *potential* for racist effects, and not on evidence of racist outcomes in Dromray specifically.

Unconnected readings of data were fused from experimentation. I juxtaposed data fragments that may bear some or sometimes little substantive or thematic relationship to each other. Multiple drafts of chapters were constructed and reconstructed almost simultaneously. I attempted to apply the following questions as working tools:

- If institutions require an economy of truths for their justification-intelligibility, how might the wider justification-intelligibility of the institution construct racist discourses and vice versa?
- How might policy on anti-racism or liberal interculturalism interrupt exclusions and inadvertently create new ones?
- What knowledges are silenced fixed-presumed in categorisations of school success/failure?

First, a ‘tool-building’ data chapter was written, examining the formation of official school and unofficial subcultural knowledges with and through race, class and gender-sexuality. Again, entangled in the web of discourses I produced, I mapped how constitutions of race and school were linked across previously unrelated data episodes, as I re-read the data (e.g. Rainey in the above A Band English class and her relationship with Feyi, who is featured in Chapter 8). I used this tool-building chapter as the first data chapter for upgrade from MPhil to PhD in March 2009.

As writing continued into April 2009, the tools of global-state exigency, recognition and viability emerged in my thinking and further reading. They provided a wider backdrop to these unconnected pieces. I decided over time that in order to offer some provisional coherence to an unstructured web of knowledges, themes from the interconnected fragments that had simultaneous local, national and potentially transnational importance

would be used to re-form the analysis into four chapters. The themes explored the key question of the simultaneous re/production and depoliticisation of race with and through school logics of viability. The themes were co-constructed in separate chapters to provide a thematic coherence to the array of data fragments. As they are merely artificial themes, they suggest that racist effects can be excavated and interrupted in limitless and always incomplete ways. Since the various forms of data generation are not used in the traditional mixed method ‘triangulation’ sense (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2003), no data fragment is regarded as more important or authoritative than any other. In this particular work, the mutual constitution of race and school, and the effecting of normative white-Irishness were explored and interrupted through:

- Embedded spatial divisions and imaginings of ‘place’, body and ‘self’ (Chapter 5);
- The failure of new ‘mixed ability’ arrangements to challenge viability hierarchy (and modernist notions of linear progression; Chapter 6);
- Overt justifications of how ‘newcomer’ education should work: English language support (Chapter 7) and
- School-based economies of perception and race: knowing/not knowing certain students in the school audio-visual (Chapter 8).

Word count and mental saturation prevailed, and I limited myself to two to three data fragments per chapter. I included and excluded data fragments based on my ability to evoke the ‘spectacle’ surrounding the bulleted themes above.

Ethics

Three codes of ethics were consulted, followed and troubled during this process. These were namely the research code of ethics of the British Educational Research Association, British Sociological Association and those of my workplace at the time, St. Patrick’s College/Dublin City University. Key priorities common to these guidelines include: conflict of interests, integrity, beneficence, non-maleficence, informed consent, confidentiality and storing of records, openness, and research misconduct.

Informed consent and protection

Access and consent have already been briefly discussed. Ethnographers can do much to protect participants, such as anonymising recordings, deleting names from fieldnotes and transcripts, filing and locking data away etc. (all of which were done). I have not revealed and will not reveal the location of the school or its name. But ethnographers

can rarely give guarantees of complete anonymity. Perhaps the lack of published ethnographic studies in the Irish context (notwithstanding the comparatively small amount of published school research in general) is a reflection of the small network of people working in education in Ireland. Given the size of the population and the homogenously styled (white, middle class) teaching force with close-knit experiences (e.g. family connections, sporting connections etc.; Leavy, 2005) the degrees of separation between those working in the education community are often quite low. Thus, the risks of participant exposure can be higher. Furthermore, in a substantive territory where academic and educational expertise is not developed such as race, the potential for hurt and misunderstanding is acute. Ethnographies can be sensationalised in mass media, particularly when a concept such as racism, which has multiple theories behind it, is conceived of only as overt, intentional discrimination.

The ethics and politics of ethnography are not clearly separable. Questions about how we should treat each other are not separate from questions about whose values should prevail in society (Murphy and Dingwall, 2001). Ethnographers *can* harm participants somewhat directly, by arousing feelings of guilt, embarrassment or anxiety, for example. Harm is also open to interpretation: if it causes someone to critique their practices, has this been helpful or harmful? Ethnography can expose the adaptive behaviours that actors use to accommodate to structural and institutional pressures, which offers tools for those 'with power' to manipulate those 'without' (Murphy and Dingwall, 2001). However successful ethnographers may be in protecting the anonymity of those they research, participants can be identifiable to themselves and may be able to identify other participants.

Identifying oneself as using a critical approach then, is not the key to freeing participants: it merely helps one choose one door over another. If we consider 'truth' as discursively produced, our ethical obligations are not dropped, rather they infuse the very research questions and processes narrated above. Ropers-Huilman (1999) uses the notion of researcher as 'witness' at complex intersections of knowledge. She suggests there is a great amount of power in witnessing the discourses that shape people's lives, placing certain obligations upon researchers. While we may assume that our telling is useful, our adding to and describing discourse is but a snapshot, one that may limit participants and define structures. As witnesses to discourses, we must be open to change: witnessing "reconstructs our beings and our roles in relation to others over and

over again” (Ropers-Huilman, 1999, p. 26). As witnesses, we have certain obligations to:

- recognise our engagement in active and partial meaning-making;
- recognise that our research actions will change others, and understand that we too must be open to change;
- position ourselves in our work, when we act as witnesses, by telling others about our experiences and perspectives, while also listening to the interpretations of other participants;
- explore multiple meanings of equity and care, while acting to promote our situational understandings of those concepts.

With this in mind, as mentioned above and located in the appendices, information was always available and consent forms were always presented to and considered by all participants. No student was interviewed without signed parental consent, and questions were always invited on the nature of the study. As stated previously, I was always troubled by my attempts to define the study’s aims, as the theoretical process and practice reciprocally led ‘what happened’.

Irwin (2006) warns us to be aware of how we ‘do structure’, e.g. when we wonder if intimacy is better than objectivity, or whether disclosure is better than silence: “instead, we should locate how our behaviors, research roles, or discursive choices enact structures and the effect this enactment has on the people who we research” (2006, p. 155). She suggests there is a lack of attention paid to the larger structures which encourage the patterning of certain social practices over time, which may further certain inequalities. She argues ethics guidelines present a

static image of ethics as a behavioral formula in which certain choices (i.e. having casual sex with informants, making research goals a priority over relationships, and producing traditional academic discourse) are viewed as always and everywhere problematic. By failing to view all of our research behaviors as engaging in structure, these ethical warnings fail to see inequality and exploitation as dynamic forces that can occur regardless of whether we follow the ethical formulas and codes. More than this, they mislead us regarding the way that inequality, harm, and exploitation function in the lived research experience and, in so doing, distract us with a litany of minor concerns (Irwin, 2006, p. 155).

Holt (2004, p. 16) states that despite attempts at a conscious critical performance in her research with children, on occasions she ‘slipped’, “not as Butler (1999) argues into performing an adult identity inappropriately, but into reproducing dominant discourses

of adulthood and childhood”. Thus, acknowledging structural barriers is not enough; one should be vigilant about whether one is enacting structure in the field. Anoop Nayak encourages ethnographers of race not to deracialise, but to “re-write race out of its attendant categories using an imaginative post-race vocabulary” (2006, p. 424), one where the very grammar of ethnographic race writing is questioned. Rather than suggesting, for example, that ‘black-on-black’ researching has less exploitative tendencies (which confines us to the realm of voice and authority), and writing the ‘obvious’, (e.g. the researcher-researched multiply misrecognising one another), the writing stresses the impossibility of race, how we are not pre-figured racial subjects, but ‘do’ race and are ‘done’ by those we research, and how this is an “illusion of performance, action and utterance, where repetition makes it appear as-if-real” (p. 416).

Power relationships and participants’ welfare

Researcher/researched relationships might move beyond simple hierarchies. This may necessitate an acknowledgement that the power that produces research participants does not necessarily cast them in an ‘oppressed’ role (Thapar-Björkert and Henry, 2004). Research participants may at times be more than capable of steering the agenda the way they wish. Some arguments have been made suggesting that power differentials do not necessarily lead to exploitation:

Exploitation only occurs when ethnographers use their superior power to achieve their objectives at real cost to those they are studying. Research should be judged in terms of its effects, particularly on the collectivity, rather than in relation to (oppositional) issues of power and control (Murphy and Dingwall, 2001, p. 343; my parentheses).

One option may be to design the study as a piece of collaborative action research. However, action research, when done in terms of the privileging of the experience of the participant, does not escape production of structure(s). The quasi-formal terminology of action research in terms of ‘experience’ and ‘research outcomes’ is a form of technical discourse not far from the ‘studies show...research proves’ cause-effect relationship (MacLure, 2003, p. 102).

There is a problem with the search for innocence (in terms of privileging voice): It never delivers the unimpeded view of/from the inside that it promises. And it often ends up repeating the knowledge crimes that it sets out to avoid (MacLure, 2003, p. 104, my brackets).

Yet field relationships are complex, and relationships with some (e.g. one of the school principals) may be closer with others. The development of friendships, whether or not others suggest ‘contaminates’ data, and whether or not the participant is harmed,

increases the opportunities for exploitation and manipulation. Butler's use of the concept of 'becoming' provides a useful understanding of the researcher, as it points to the notion of 'becoming Other': the undoing of subjectivity and the relationality of discursive existence. Rather than viewing future mundane moments as predictable, or our relationships with others as givens, the space between the self and other are recognised as the space where transformations mutually occur. This reflexivity moves beyond the stance of how others make sense. It shifts towards considering how reflexivity is understood as occurring through the construction of the other (Britzman, 2000). Researcher subjectivities needs to be recognised as formed and practised in relation to all others. As Somerville (2007) states, in *Giving an Account of Oneself*, Judith Butler:

establishes the essential relationality through which we come into existence as the basis of our continuing emergence as selves: 'My account of myself is partial, haunted by that for which I can devise no definitive story. I cannot explain exactly why I have emerged in this way.' This liminal becoming-other is seen as the relational basis for an ontology of the self that acknowledges the significance of the Other in the constitution of selves, and in the emergence of new knowledges (Butler, 2005, in Somerville, 2007, p234).

A flexible, non-prescriptive approach to ethics is important in light of this Self-Other 'becoming' approach. This should not be equated with a loose approach to moral or ethical standards. It acknowledges that ethical principles are context specific, and that they are dependent on the contingencies of given situations. At a profound level, the researcher is deeply implicated in the account of the Other s/he weaves, and in the practices s/he adopts as part of that weaving. A lack of attention to this premise of relationality risks constructing the researcher as above the process, sedimenting the 'authority' they wish to deconstruct and increasing the risk of exploitation. Despite a concern to deconstruct adult/child power relations, adults have a responsibility to protect young children who may be vulnerable (Holt, 2004). Observations in the classroom and disclosures of bullying etc. need to be considered in terms of their scale, in terms of the children's coping mechanisms, in terms of children's likelihood to disclose to other responsible adults and of course, in terms of the confidentiality agreement between the researcher and participant. Given the sustained amounts of time that was spent in schools, and the opportunities to develop relationships with students and their families, I adhered to the *Children First Guidelines* (Department of Health and Children, 1999). While they cite and inscribe adult/child binaries, my research had to adhere to them, and indeed, I was forced to disclose two student reports of self-harm on

separate occasions in the primary and post-primary schools. In liaising with the school principals, these reports appeared more based on peer group speculation than actual practices of self-harm.

Reciprocity and reporting to participants

It was decided as part of the 'deal' that I would provide school staffs with the option of continuous professional development sessions in and around the areas of race and ethnicity as they pertain to education and to their school context in particular. I offered two sessions in Dromray, and also had a formal meeting with the principal and two deputy principals. These offered questions around possible institutionally racist practices rather than presenting data. My aim was not to move participants' understanding *beyond* their subjective experiences and modernist thinking; not to teach better, but to teach differently, to *facilitate becoming* (Lenz Taguchi, 2005). Lenz Taguchi asserts we need 'the other' in learning, in becoming master and submitting oneself to certain discourses:

I need the Other to be able to be in a learning process in life, as in educational practice. I need the Other to respond to me or to what I am doing, and say I am understood in what I am doing and saying differently. This is a desire of welcoming the Other: to be in a process of becoming; to be desiring the unknown and the different; to be able to be and do different (ly). From within those modernist conceptions of the world that are still mine, that work me, and that I am worked by, I refuse to reduce such an ethics of welcoming difference and the need of the Other to yet another dominant discourse (Lenz Taguchi, 2005, p. 253).

In other words, teacher/learner discourses are themselves subjectivating binaries which are always contested and shifting. 'Being educated' can be conceptualised away from simple notions of symbolic violence or imposition of will, to an important acknowledgement from the outset that 'I as educator' cannot be positioned outside or above the actions of those I 'communicate' with. There are two implications for the research:

- the notion of 'staff member' itself needs to be read analytically as implicated in processes of subjectivation, rather than reverting to less mobile good/bad models of 'staff practice';
- the notion of 'learner' is far less about the linear accumulation of knowledge than it is about the interaction of self, Other, knowledge and context.

Local practice: prologue to Chapters 5 and 6

This research might be considered as implicated in and produced through complex processes of subjectivation and governance. Post-structural readings of ethnographic practices suggest massive constraint on the part of the ‘researcher, ‘practitioner’ and ‘student’. Yet by probing local school practices, identities and their associated class, race and gender hierarchies, we can find spaces to strategise and to create new meanings around the process of research and the re/production of inequality. In the forthcoming chapters, I sketch how the tools of governance and subjectivation might be read through key ‘knowable’ aspects of Dromray. Chapters 5 and 6 examine embedded spatial and temporal assumptions surrounding contexts and selves in the school. This work looks at how Dromray’s foundational architecture is maintained but also redrawn in Termonfort’s new migrant context. It attempts to outline how certain selves are recognised and made viable as global-state-school exigencies have shifted through race, but also through class in particular.

- In Chapter 5, I use psychosocial and spatial tools to explore how power works to maintain traditional boundaries around Dromray School and home, but also to manage the anxiety associated with the mixing of ambiguous social class groups in Termonfort. What becomes notable is how race is tacitly worked as a normalised, immutable *bodily* boundary in these dynamics. Race is protected and made a certainty through emotion and imaginings of place and the body. These imaginings offer certain white-Irish students and the school positions over the good/bad migrant *and* (white-Irish) working class home. Theo and Franklin might disrupt this immutable body psycho-spatially, through memories of school in the Philippines and in accounts of intra-Filipino youth difference in Ireland.
- In Chapter 6, I move to consider how the school might maintain viability as educative, progressive and inclusive through the recent logic of ‘including’ learners in mixed ability classrooms. I deconstruct the implicitly racialised good/bad migrant reinforcements of ability hierarchy in Dromray’s mixed ability teaching. Finally, I attempt to read how good/bad working class discourses might be co-constructed with and through race. Tara and Rachel are read as white-Irish working class girls who are recognised as outside of school viability in old and new ways as the ground shifts towards an ‘intercultural’ new migrant setting.

Chapter 5

Negotiating viability: the in/coherent boundaries and bodies making Dromray

Respectable/Scumbag, Neutral/Conflictual, Indigenous/Migrant places and selves

How might Ms. Morris - who referred to Dromray as “a school living on its reputation” in the introduction – be incited to speak such words? How do shifting, often ‘undesirable’ class and race conditions around the school buildings themselves interweave to produce its positioning in a *de facto* market? The dividing lines in symbolic spaces like the *Irish Times* league tables (sink/swim schools) and institutional spaces (staff room/yard) might be mutually won, claimed and contested. This contestation happens with and through raced, classed and gendered processes of production, rather than being innocuously self-present. The data analysis begins by discursively analysing the current hierarchical divisions of school, other places and students’ bodies. This is useful for two reasons:

- Constantly produced and slowly changing divisions of space and by space are central to understanding practices of the self, in the context of school ‘marketability’ and viability alluded to by Ms. Morris. This ‘race, place, body and self’ analysis is a useful starting point for moving to other chapters. It speaks to selves and their local production as not static, but actively bound and variously rebound in their interactions with selves and other contexts (e.g. family home, or country of origin).
- It provides a starting point in this study for understanding Dromray’s potential justifications in the face of ‘new’ and ‘old’ multiply constituted, hierarchised difference. The presence of certain bodies within certain spaces and their im/mobility across these spaces can reveal the maintenance but also the instability of chains of white/black, male/female, adult/child and other binaries.

Viability in global-local, school-social imaginings of psychic space, physical places and bodies

Space is a quickly growing theme in the sociology of education. Reay (2007) quotes Shields (1991), who regards social spatialisation as an often-overlooked aspect of hegemony. Spatial divisions and distinctions may provide “part of the necessary social co-ordination of perceptions to ground hegemonic systems of ideology and practice”

(2007, p. 1193). As Singh et al. (2007) suggest, 'space' is continuously produced through socio-spatial *relations*. The spatial 'turn' in sociology is relevant to racist effects through schooling in multiple ways. Post-colonial-Irish, migratory-ethno-racial and neo-liberal-choice configurations become important themes to consider alongside the disciplinary architecture that produce the school as a recognisable site of education (Gulson and Symes, 2007). Dynamics of identity formation such as "mobility, transculturalisms and diasporization are notions that underscore these continuous processes of spatial production" (2007, p. 197 - 198). Perhaps one of the most important uses of spatial theory here is its analysis of the production of certain *territories or places* as essentially ethno-racial. For example, the transcendently Irish-nation-bedrock is the product of the "bonds of consanguinity, soil and language" (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 48 in Singh et al., 2007, p. 202). The motherland is constantly produced and knowable through the in-between nature of diasporic identity formation, 'mastery' of postcolonial farmland, contemporary Irish export capitalism and defended and justified through sovereignty and EU approved migratory and labour policy (Lentin and McVeigh, 2006).

There has been hugely productive work on the racialised production and 'defense' of local, regional and national landscapes that goes beyond homogenised white-working-class resistances. Specifically regional practices of ethnicity and local forms of racism have been interpreted as produced with and through embodiments both of class and gender-sexuality. Anoop Nayak's work details stylised investments in overtly racist, white skinhead masculinity in deindustrialised Birmingham as a constantly achieved performance of authentic Englishness. His empirical work in Birmingham and Newcastle outlines the eventual futility of accounts which place youth subcultures in simple race-opposition, given, for example, the borrowing of styles and contingent alliances of resistance (Nayak, 2003; 1999). Perhaps more broadly, his work suggests that oppositional accounts of identity deny the temporal-spatial contingency of selfhood. Conflict and change characterise younger (and older) people's impossible-yet-necessary fights to secure authentic selfhood via particular bodies in particular locations. Racist thought and deed may be understood as a locally specific practice of the 'authentic', embodied self (without forgetting national and global discourses). Claims of racist wounds at the site of school need to be understood - as I later argue in Chapter 9 - in terms of how they are *intelligible, won and used* in the conflicting choreographies that 'make' the site, selves and bodies possible.

Within school walls, spatialisation processes are iteratively racialised and classed. The hierarchical mind/body split of schooling can be racialised and gendered in the oppositional organisation of school spaces, staffs' and students' bodies, provoking questions around 'who is valued, where and why?' The basketball court, the classroom or principal's office? For example, St. Louis suggests:

Classic stereotypes of Black physicality and the absence of Black athletes and administrators from roles as key functionaries... serve an educative function in the reinforcement of hegemonic racial ideas and stratification (St Louis, 2005, p. 122).

Respectability, racialisation, place and the self

At school and family level, psychological practices of the self, of emotion and of success are important to consider through a notion of viability. Psychic work is not considered here as the clever/silly strategising of self-knowing subject, who mournfully retreats from a *physical external place* into a separated internal space (Butler, 1997b). Rather, the subject positions students occupy are constituted through the interaction of the desire for recognition and the assessment of viability in the order of things, reiterating the interrelations of psychic, bodily inscriptions and other organisational structures. One's recognition is negotiated and viability is contested through legitimate and illegitimate places like certain neighbourhoods, command of resources, values and rhetorics of 'choice'. 'School' and 'home' are important as they are at once sites of production and sites that are produced. Family and student *respectability* is a hard-won and constantly contested form of cultural capital that can be spatially distributed through encodings of good neighbourhoods and school sites (Gulson, 2007). Respectability is located in accounts of class strategies and the education market (Ball, 2003), intrasubjective conflict, gender and social mobility (Walkerdine et al., 2001), white flight, 'urban' schools and 'ghettoisation' (Leonardo, 2007) and, within the school walls, already noted racialised dynamics of polarisation and differentiation (Gillborn, 1990). 'Going home', 'spiritual homes' and having 'two homes' may take on more complex psychological meanings as symbolic locations in the case of migrant, diasporic and mixed race students (Ali, 2003, Mac an Ghail and Haywood, 2003).

The question of 'who is valued, where and why?' may expose the cultural politics of viability behind the sedimented separation of communities and students with and through race, class, gender and other vectors of power. As Chapter 2 suggested, there are limits to the discourse of empowerment. But in knowing and constantly seeking out these limits, we find new spaces of resistance. It is a case of 'knowing one's place', but

also wondering at the boundary where that place is emergent and known. In this chapter, co-constructions of

- ‘Respectable/scumbag’ cultural differentiations of class (and race);
- ‘School/home’, neutral/conflictual good/bad migrant divisions, and
- ‘Philippines/Ireland’ indigenous/migrant memories and experiences

are examined. Tracing these co-constructions offers ways of destabilising potentially congealing relationships between race and school.

Class anxiety, race certainty: Avoiding ‘scumbag’ when mixing in Termonfort

The following fragment of interview data was generated with Beth and Adrienne, two 15-year old, white-Irish Junior Certificate girls. They are sometimes as vocal as their other B Band classmates, but they are also recognisable as somewhat different. Their tone often inflected upward at the end of sentences. Their accents were relatively distinctive in the school, in that they could be categorised - depending on the categoriser - as posh Dublin and/or transatlantic teen girl. Adrienne also had occasional traces of a French-speaking accent: her father is French and has returned to France after he and Adrienne’s mother separated.

During the interview, the girls referred to various peer groups such as rockers, scumbags, weirdos and swots. When asked if they categorised themselves, Beth suggested a lot of people call them hippies, which they both seemed to embrace and be happy with⁵². What could be classed as mundane, almost idle chat is interpreted here as vital for an analysis of subjectivation, as it might be emergent through the mutually constitutive forces of subcultural styles, race, class and gender. These categorisations have important differentiating and material effects, when understood through the politics of the self and place. The girls are subject to and act from:

- Psychic, symbolic spaces (e.g. Adrienne’s disidentification with the area she lives in).
- Physical places: mixing in official school spaces (with black and white scumbags, other hippies like themselves, older high-status girls, but not Filipinos).

⁵² Both of the girls augment their uniform by wearing lots of bangles, subtle make-up (i.e. not fake tan) with heavy eyeshadow: they might be yuppie-hippies? They don’t get however, how some people see them as being between a hippie and a rocker.

The girls' fashion, dress and background immediately suggest that the two-tier A/B Band cannot be synonymised with middle/working-class binaries. These girls appear at least culturally affluent, but they are not 'ideal achievers'. Their constitutive work (below) is, I suggest, partially possible via the incoherence of 'patchy' class inequality in Termonfort and Dublin:

- When Beth suggests a former primary school-friend from St. Fiachra's Park is now 'faking' being a scumbag in Dromray, local incoherence around class is articulated. The 'affectation' of scumbag is contradictorily rendered almost bourgeois and pretentious: socialising with the (forbidden?) working class Other (the 'real' scumbags from certain areas around Dromray).

But the manner in which it appears that class is the main issue is, I suggest, a marker of the silent constitutive effects of variously middle class versions of white-Irishness. As anxiously and contradictorily as class is articulated, the ease with which Other-newcomer-race is invoked and assumed (produced through and productive of class fragmentation and anxiety) can be lost. The dynamic may be engineered with and through race: an assembly of designating forces (skin colour, posture, how loud one is, school attainment) that appear as entirely working and mutating with the anxiety around class. By also examining the production of race through bodies and spaces below, we might untangle it from class and school, ultimately getting to Irish/Newcomer viability in social/peer and subcultural contexts.

Generating data in this interview:

ADRIENNE: [15-year-old, white-French-Irish, middle class, female, student]

BETH: [15-year-old, white-Irish, middle class, female, student]

KK: [28 year-old, white-Irish, middle class, male, researcher]

BETH: A scumbag is like, they walk round like this (swaggers and bobs in the seat) and all, like, they have a really common accent, like I know Termonfort is kinda common, but it's not, like as bad as a lot of places like em, but I think half of them put on the accents. Just to make them sound tougher. Like I know scumbags and weirdos from town and everything and they have proper common accents and that's just like where they grew up and everything. But people around here like, they put it on and then people just take after them and everything like. I know a few girls that are like, they went to my primary school 'cause a lot of people in our year went to my primary school (St. Fiachra's) and em, there's a girl and she, in primary school, she was really girly and like, real sweet and everything and real nice. But since she came into secondary school and she had a really posh accent like, she was from St.

Fiachra's Park, when she came into secondary school, and she started meeting people from like Ravensfield (beside Brookfield) and like St. Enda's and everything like that, she suddenly just developed a big scumbag accent and starting doing that stupid walk (both laugh).

KK: You (Adrienne) live in Brookfield don't you?

ADRIENNE: Yeah, I don't know anyone in my road and I won't go out with them

KK: Why -

ADRIENNE: Cause (inaudible as Beth speaks over her) | BETH: Cause she's afraid of them!

KK: What does your mum say?

ADRIENNE: She doesn't say anything, she doesn't really bother about it because she's not there until like, she'd be there in the morning and she comes back at 6 o'clock and goes back out so it's just like, she doesn't really live there? My sister has friends around the road so it's grand. And I just go to Cherry Meadow.

KK: You mentioned the Filipino kids?

ADRIENNE: There's nothing like, they all just hang out in the same bunch and they all -

KK: What I'm interested in is you didn't mention other people (i.e. other minority ethnic and/or migrant groups).

ADRIENNE: Oh, well em, there's no other cultures that bunch together like that. Like, black people, they don't like, they hang around with different groups and everything like. They hang around but they don't all hang around together.

KK: Who would they be, would they be mixed in with the groups you already mentioned (Swots, Filipinos, Weirdos, Scumbags)

BETH: Yeah

KK: Which ones?

BETH: Mainly the scumbags.

ADRIENNE: Yeah, or the ones -

KK: Why is that? | ADRIENNE: Or the pimps. Seriously! (laughs)

BETH: It's cause like, you know the way if you're from a different country, and you come over and you start in another school, like, what's the group you'd mainly go for? The group who's like the loudest and seems to have the most friends and everything, or the weirdos who everybody seems to not like? You go for like, the scumbags because they have the most people and like, a lot of people are like, wouldn't really stand up to them and stuff?

KK: Yeah. So you think scumbag is the biggest group?

BETH: Yeah there's a lot of them.

Ambiguity around respectable whites in physical places: turning to psychic space

Ambiguity and certainty emerges with respect to how assumed indicators of (white-Irish) class⁵³ are spatially mapped. They are ideally imagined as a series of differently valued, discrete things, located in clearly working class areas/middle class areas. Relatively clear cultural and residential designations can be made in other areas: there

⁵³ For example housing, work, family structure, styles, accents, leisure interests

are traditionally white-working-class estates and privately owned, more white-middle-class estates near Dromray. Working-class areas might have developed partially through the relocation of some inner-city Dubliners – residents of the 1960s/1970s ‘flats’ - to social housing in the sprawling Termonfort. But Dromray and Haroldstown might be tacitly class-ambiguous, partially because of credit availability and renting/mortgaging of developed greenfield sites between the late 1990s and mid-2008 (e.g., high-density apartments and townhouses). While the interview was conducted in the class-ambiguous Dromray, the neighbourhoods are referred to by the girls in the interview are

- Cherry Meadow (desirable, where they both hang out);
- St. Fiachra’s Park (desirable, close to where Beth lives);
- Brookfield (undesirable, where Adrienne lives) and
- St. Enda’s (undesirable, very near the school).

Beth’s primary school friend came from a variously-middle class area with a respected school⁵⁴. But according to Beth, she took on the affectations of what they consider the socially and numerically dominant group in Dromray Community School: scumbags. These affectations are referred to above as a common accent and a stupid walk, i.e., they are ridiculous and undesirable. But for Beth’s primary school friend to ‘fake’ scumbag, which is even more ridiculous, real scumbags must be present in and around Dromray.

Beth appears to have a morally-charged solidarity with the authentic scumbags and weirdos of Dublin’s inner-city. Their moral outrage at growing up in ‘common’ conditions is represented as being stolen by these plastic suburban scumbags (for whom life is not as difficult). Here is where the producing processes of bodily-psychic differentiations with and through symbolic and literal, material spatial divisions are important to deploy. Beth and Adrienne’s critique might not result from solidarity with the usurped real scumbags of urban Dublin, or ‘town’, as it is known. The overtly deployed discourse of solidarity might not be produced from a position of moral outrage, but from a tacitly produced anxiety at the constant escaping of a desired, safe working-class/middle class, inner-city/suburb set of dichotomies. For Beth, *real scumbags* should be in a different place. But their bodily presence in Dromray is a threat to the management of desirable subjectivity, produced as they might be through notions of a stable, discretely classed space. The white-working class Other might also

⁵⁴ Incidentally, this was the primary school that I spent time in before deciding to work solely in Dromray.

be a threat in and of itself to the security of their bodies and homes: Beth suggests Adrienne is afraid of her neighbours.

Real and plastic scumbags in Dromray represent another threat: might the girls be classed in this way? Scumbags could present the threat of *misrecognition*, and how close Adrienne and Beth are as bodies to emerging in a context of undesirability and non-viability in the school and in Termonfort. The ridiculing of plastic scumbags (and by implication, the real, former inner-city scumbags of areas in and around Dromray), is an emotional artefact (of indignance) produced in this dynamic, having further circuitous effects. Adrienne is iteratively returned to certain markers of undesirable life when she goes home. She lives with her mother and sister in what she suggests is an unacceptable area with unacceptable people. Her mother 'doesn't even live there', which could be interpreted in numerous ways: a practice of her mother's own disgust with the area, the multiple requirements of a one-parent family, or annoyance at her mother? Taking up anxiety, Adrienne attempts to differentiate herself as being in a different space *psychically*. She also moves through different *places* bodily (hanging out in Cherry Meadow, shopping for less-tacky clothes). Beth's family, while living in a more unique and almost farm-like space near the suburban sprawl, might not authoritatively draw on economic partial-indicators of middle-classness to process a middle class subjectivity: her father labours (physically) in the construction industry.

The girls might genuinely be at risk of falling foul of a phantasmically desired binary of discrete, far away working class spaces and present middle class spaces. In the productive processes of classed subjectivity and the maintenance of a stable classed self, a mind/body split needs to be devised and managed as the girls move through spiritual homes and material homes like Adrienne's house or sometimes, for both of them, the school. Through an interruption of physical place with the intangible psychic space (I'm not really here, or this space is not my home), Adrienne and Beth constantly manage and protect themselves as happy-respectable-fun-loving (white, girls). Through producing these divisions beyond a notion of material space, the girls can win, speak from and produce certain patchy privileges. Importantly, the residue of privileged respectability that the school holds on to and capitalises upon at a symbolic market level through emotion, e.g. memories of former glory, indignance at ridiculous neighbours etc. is something that is shaping and being shaped by the strategies of students like Beth and Adrienne. There might be a psycho-spatial production of the terms of variously unassured and ambiguous middle-class and white-Irish respectability, which configures

through Beth and Adrienne subculturally as pseudo-hippies, helping them to manage the fragmentation of discretely classed space in and around Dromray.

I turn next to consider how school and social space *more definitively* maps and is mapped by a notion of immutable racialised bodies: the newcomer Other. As stated before the interview data, race cannot be seen as a secondary phenomenon, but as a vector which mutually engineers and is engineered by imaginings of place and self.

Certainty around immutable black, Filipino bodies in physical space: denying psychic space

The analysis above suggested that classed Dublin identity might be somewhat incoherent and/or mutable, i.e. a threat that respectable, variously middle class people must fight. However, we might also see how race is made certain and immutable as a ‘newcomer’ phenomenon and which does not provoke any anxiety. The beginning of the fragment above, which starts as a description of scumbags, was part of a wider analysis of groups in the school that I co-constructed with the girls. Moving away from ‘scumbags’, I asked about Filipino kids. They were not classified by Beth and Adrienne as an undesirable group like the class-specific scumbags. While Filipinos could be referred to in terms of ethnicity-nationality, the category ‘Filipino’ is mentioned by Adrienne as a category of difference to ‘black’. It may thus be cited here as a marker of a racialised body.

Certainly, much constitutive, racialising work is done in drawing on Filipino kids *as clustered*: “they hang around together and all... there’s no other cultures that bunch together like that”. Beth and Adrienne assume multiples-of-the-same essential Filipino body through a notion of clustering in space. In as much as classed Irish spaces and selves are now incoherent, physical space is deployed to make race immutable. Homogenous clustering or grouping is rendered undesirable, and mixing is viewed as desirable. The girls manage these desirabilities through psycho-social differentiation: we can mix with scumbags, but we are not scumbags. Their designations of school space like the yard, the hall and the classroom and *organising within those spaces* do much racialising work, ironically, complementing diversity management policy in Dromray: *integrate, be sociable*. The uncritical idea of mixing bodies ‘to be intercultural’ returns Filipinos entirely to their bodies. ‘Mixing’ relies on the notion that the body (skin, stature and style) is an *a priori*, one-and-only surface from which race

can be named or produced⁵⁵. Rather than being distributed and divided in terms of gender-sexuality and social class, as white (Irish and Eastern European?) kids are, and like some of the bad black kids also mentioned, Filipino kids are entirely reduced to their bodies and made unsociable raced objects: homogenised and physically and symbolically produced as separate, private, and thus potentially read as feminised in social life. In ordering Filipinos as socially deficient, Adrienne and Beth overtly draw upon the material school space (the yard, the hall and the classroom) and orderings of how the self should use space. The girls can be psychically somewhere else: they are not.

The potentially classed and subcultural bodily differentiations of Filipino students in the school is constantly reduced above to 'Filipino culture' and by implication, the racialised Filipino body. Western-state exigencies of requiring Asian healthcare workers which contribute to producing a Filipino community of families mostly living and working to some degree of affluence near the hospital are unknown or forgotten. The particular Filipino kids in this school are not considered as possibly differentiating themselves from 'scumbags' in the same complex manner that Adrienne and Beth might. By assuming that racism is produced only from the body and not exercised through processes of production (like class, skin, gender-sexuality, family), the reductionist policy compulsion to 'be (ethnically) intercultural' is part of racialising production. This has the effect of placing Filipino kids at the bottom of an enduring space of social desirability (not edgy, communicative, able to slag others, sexy?) The girls strategically manage a glaring contradiction around (respectable) white-(Irish)-ness. It is necessary to be sociable and to mix within schooled space-time, even with scumbags: but not outside of this context. The perceived and produced 'inability' of Filipino kids to be sociable both in and out of school marks them as lesser and is essentially an active disabling. The production of a separated, hard-working Filipino culture is partially what later places 'them all' on the good side of the good/bad migrant dichotomy academically.

What needs to be explained about black kids is that they are different in their distribution – they can mix with scumbag whites in as much as Beth and Adrienne can. But they are not as clever in their mixing: while Beth and Adrienne are psychically somewhere else, or ironically present, black kids are present only in the body, and not

⁵⁵ Other processes which reproduce apparently *a priori* bodily characteristics like skin colour and classed respectability (who we have sexual intercourse with, who we socialise with) are closed down. The psychic processes that Beth and Adrienne use are not negotiated.

extended psychic agency. They are effected as socio-biologically, innately promiscuous. The positioning of black students is done in a very simple way: black kids are essentially louder and can deal with those who are uncouth, or they are uncouth already. Filipinos are neither, but they are largely uninteresting. In this sense, blackness is formed and ordered as an immutable socio-biological handicap that prevents movement away from scumbag-hood. Indeed, it already is, or mutates into, another subcultural (but mainstream gangsta rap) form: pimp-hood. Perhaps the idea that black students can be scumbags, or be, or gravitate towards being ‘pimps’ is an oblique production of the classed location (respectable/scumbag) of race: Filipinos and blacks, in that order. The discourses produced in the interview both objectify and consume ‘black kids’ through their produced sociability: black kids are popularised, consumable as pimps. The benign, unthreatening Filipino is not desirable⁵⁶.

It is interesting that while anxiety around class designation might subject Beth and Adrienne to psychic tactics in undesirable social situations, the certainty of their logic of Other-body-as-race might backfire when confronted with the *most populous* Other. As later fragments might suggest, the white logic of body-as-race makes West-(Irish)-whiteness mutable to less respectable (eastern European) whites. Anxious entrenchment in class positions might then be sought as a way of maintaining anxious hierarchies of greater and lesser whites in Ireland?

Psychic space provides conditions for Beth and Adrienne’s differentiated emergence. Their symbolic and physical ‘movements’ are preservations of viability, and thus, the self: a psychic space is an alternative, a condition of possibility, one that might be variously deployed as contexts like those around Termonfort shift. These movements suggest that as subjects, the girls constantly strategise to avoid or compensate for lack: these analyses do not ‘explain’ melancholia, “they constitute some of its fabular discursive effects” (Butler, 1997b, p. 171). After each analysis, I will bullet-point some tools generated in the interview and analysis. These will be drawn upon in considering white-Irishness, racist effects, the desire for recognition and the order of viability in the final chapter (9). Using the above piece, tools include:

⁵⁶ Greater word-space and further readings might facilitate an analysis of how blackness is hetero-masculinised in its physical socio-spatial promiscuity, and Filipino-ness is androgenised or hetero-femininised in its private use of physical space.

- Examining class anxiety and race certainty through space and the body might be one way of deconstructing homogenous Irishness and the hardening immutability that is afforded blackness and Asianness. This requires a moving beyond ‘class versus race’ to see classed anxiety and race certainty as coalescing to work a contemporary matrix of differentiated white-Irish middle class;
- In terms of the dynamics of racialisation, psychic agency is afforded to the framer while only bodily movements are afforded to the framed;
- The girls’ shifts into psychic space and avoidance of certain places may disrupt the good intentions of bodily mixing: managerialist intercultural policy as a tacitly spatial and bodily logic is dependent on the mixing of embodied selves (culturalised, racialised traits) which can, if managed uncritically, normalise Irish/Newcomer boundaries and power relations;
- The ‘plastic scumbag’ may be a useful tool: a non-original copy of a copy that might be used to evoke the radical performance of class and gender for social justice purposes. The ‘pimp’ may also be interrogated for the ways in which blackness mutates in racist discourses. In this account, it takes on some of the pathologies of the Irish male working class, as well as transnational pop-cultural notions of black masculinity and sexuality. It is of note that ‘Filipino’ remains statically embodied in the above.

Re-justifying School/Home: dis/placing conflict outside ‘neutral’ school walls

Research often assumes the school and home as related, but obviously quite different institutions that are physically, symbolically and emotionally separate. In the analysis below, I deconstruct school/home as a taken-for-granted dichotomy. This analysis interrogates where conflict is *placed*. I suggest class might have traditionally been imagined in Dromray by displacing conflict into the social and out of the good school. This placing may now work to frame good/bad newcomers and re-justify school in meritocratic ways. It is important to state that this can occur despite the genuine care ethic that is espoused by the principal in the interview (below). It is also of note that Dromray, like other schools, is operating without much state support in a highly ambiguous professional vacuum (Devine, 2005).

Generating data in this interview:

P: Principal [50s, white-Irish, female]

KK: Interviewer [28 year-old, white-Irish, male]

P: A lot of them would be over here working. The eastern Europeans would be here to work and they would be ambitious people as well. The only thing is that both parents would be working... very hard and the children seem to be left alone quite a bit, evenings, night times, so supervision isn't there.

KK: Right

P: That could be a problem. Then there could be a problem that they just wouldn't have an awful lot of money, they would have to come over to get jobs so that they would need support, financial support. The only financial support we could give them would be free books. And behaviour problems there might be a bit problematic. But then you get overseas children whose parents would be professionals themselves. They would be in the medical profession down in (the local) hospital: doctors, nurses, social workers, things like that. And they would be very ambitious for their children. And very steady backgrounds.

KK: Right. In terms of behaviour, you mentioned behaviour patterns there?

P: Mmm.

KK: Could you expand on that?

P: Well again, it depends. Some of the African children would be well-behaved. But there would be a tendency for some Nigerian boys to have a very different standard of what's right and wrong maybe. Some of them, em, tend to be very dramatic sometimes. To be loud sometimes. And em, I would also be nervous about bringing in parents for wrongdoing. Normally, our policy would be you contact parents, you get them on board and they work with you to remediate whatever the problem is. But there are times when I would definitely hesitate before I would – especially if I have had experience of the parents once... so we would try to deal with them another way.

KK: What strategies have you, have the school adopted if that's the case?

P: We would, well first of all, just talk to them. Get them to explain what's right and wrong. Then give them some punishment work within the school like cleaning the canteen or going on detention or something like that. And not get the parents involved if we think that wouldn't be wise.

Here, genuine concerns about family and care divert attention from the regularising effects of the institution outside of its own walls. This subjectivated/subjectivating depiction of good/bad families is multiplicitous and incomplete. There is not one telling of what the right/wrong type of home is, nor will there ever be. Explanations of such families can change, or can be reconstituted in different ways at different times. But they have a few common features: justifications of the school's strive for recognition through 'evidence' of those who are (knowable as) good and bad, deserving and

undeserving. Public and private space is physically and symbolically divided up in this telling. Certain new families and students are classified as 'at risk', masking the effects and performative dynamics of these constitutions. Despite the contingency of such constitutions, they are highly meaningful, and are often patterned and enduring.

The description adopts a neutral stance at the beginning, as the adult/child dichotomy is cited as grounds for concern. Meritocratic notions of ambition and motivation can be drawn upon without using an uncomfortable degree of overtly racist speech. Racialising and classed constitutions are initially articulated through the acceptable pathologisation of youth: homes where parents have to work evenings etc. cannot provide the support adequate for young people, who - being a certain category of (unpredictable, unknowable newcomer) young people - are unlikely to conform to the expectations of the firm-but-fair school. This iteration of ultimately-helpless care work provides an acceptable means of rationalising potential and actual student failure within the school context. This can work within and against the terms of institutional racism policy, by locating inequality outside the school walls. Through a iterable ciphoning of social institutions (resourced school/deprived home), schools are entirely depictable as safe havens in a conflictual, unequal world (e.g. free books, after-school study sessions, etc.) The meanings adopted above infers that various minority ethnic youths fall on the 'bad' side of a binary opposition about the young/old (innocence/experience). These intersecting binaries constitute 'at risk' students who need to be saved from themselves and where relevant, their families.

Making School/Home: Risk and uncertainty

In the above excerpt, the public space and the public good is reiterated, using the terms of equality and concern. The terms of equality mutually constitute/provide the grounds for articulation of race knowledges, as public concern/care of families are manifest through pre-emptive criminalisation and risk profiling. The public/private spatial distinction is the very mode through which the principal can talk about child 'risk' (Harden et al., 2000). Here the importance of adapting to local and individual needs of students, which in theory, might ask us to racialise, actually elides racism in order to work. This is possibly a politically stronger strategy than colour-blindness: the framing of 'at risk' students very much speaks to an epidemeological, evidence-based view, one which denies its own constitutiveness. Beck regards risk as a means for modern societies to deal with the hazards and insecurities of modernisation itself. Risk allows the "separation of diagnosis from treatment, the classifying of caring/assessment as an expert activity and the further subordination of practitioners to administrators" (Corbett

and Westwood, 2005, p. 123). Risk allows the transformation of hazards into decisions on 'what is best' and where to intervene. It requires categories in order to predict, to profile and to survey. The coalescing justifications of care and risk allow school and race knowledges to coalesce.

These are not just unfortunate outcomes; such pathologisations are ultimately the effects of discipline and governance. The arrival of new unknowns – migrant families - intensifies the generalised need to produce good/bad families rather than question it. Biological discourses of race may thus be replaced with socio-cultural/socio-political regulations of 'newcomer care' and risk-justification. It is significant that the principal does not risk her place in the discourses that are drawn upon to inscribe Dromray/home. Here, risk is something that can happen outside of school, i.e. in public, on the street, or in certain cases, in the home. Indeed, she very much enacts the Irish constitution's (1937) positioning of teachers as being *in loco parentis*, as well as fulfilling, one could argue, her role as the Department of Education's (2001) Designated Liaison Person for Child Protection.

Making School/Home: Mutations with pastoral care

The remarks are framed as entirely acceptable and as understandable in this new and demanding context. The hierarchies cited may be softened similarly through another professionally acceptable discourse in Irish education (framed in Christian terms): the deprived family. Aside from sweeping legislative changes in the late nineties which heighten awareness of professional accountability and liability, the Irish teaching profession has, it appears, to a large extent avoided the technocratic language that pervades contemporary public school systems like that of England. Certainly, the accoutrements of a sophisticated, globalised nation are very much in evidence throughout many Irish schools (through curricula, young teachers and teacher/student IT, progressive home-school policies and classroom management systems). But the root innocence of a culturally Catholic, respectable school system (even in lesser-religions schools such as community colleges) is heavily sedimented and permeates this context. The school as a public space is not ethno-religiously flattened or neutral: its white-Irish-Christian-liberal contours are very much apparent in the above statements. Despite being a community school, this heritage is actively promoted in this school. The school emblem is a Christian symbol and slogan (in Irish). This is seen in different places around the school, on school uniforms and on different school literature. The principal can cite vaguely religious or pastoral terms (around right and wrong, etc.) about 'overseas' students quite legitimately, and these terms afford a natural stability to the

terms of school success. The theocentric and mercantile paradigms of Irish education may work intertextually here (O’Sullivan, 2005). A recognisable, viable principal is produced as maintaining a viable school in uncertain times for Termonfort, necessarily displacing the ‘origin’ or presence of conflict as outside of the school’s tacitly and sometimes overtly Christian walls.

Making School/Home: Racialising meritocracies and cultural clashes

Moving away from oblique discourses, there are many well-trodden, recognisably racialising meanings immediate in this excerpt that firmly position students and their families. They largely centre on the assumptions made about the ‘types’ of immigrants that come to Termonfort, and strongly cite the widely circulating discourse that migrants to Ireland in general are welcome as they can help support national economic, service and welfare needs. Of course, accepting immigrants in terms of their utility has an expiry date once economies begin to contract⁵⁷. Further within this however, we possibly see the stratifying immigration dynamic of ‘Fortress Europe’ and ‘Fortress Ireland’ in 2008 replayed in the tone of white-immigrant = legitimate worker and black immigrant = illegal/asylum seeker (Bryan, 2006; Lentin and McVeigh, 2006). This has been suggested to influence Irish teachers’ views of their students in recent years (Devine, 2005). There is clear potential here for institutional bias and selectivity in terms of home-school contact. While the school would appear to welcome contact with certain (hard-working, respectable) families, there is a silent constitution that suggests others require institutional distancing because of their perceived potential for abusive behaviour. The above practices may align contemporary, well-intentioned liberal educational orthodoxy of meeting ‘individual needs’ of students with pastoral care and support (protecting certain students from harm at home). This co-articulation of discourses may unexpectedly elide sustained and patterned discriminatory treatment against the wider group that certain individuals may be recognised as being ‘part’ of (Gillborn and Youdell, 2000).

Again, what is speakable here rests on a citation of intersecting white/black, rational/irrational, mind/body dualisms. Discourses of cultural relativism are cited and,

⁵⁷ In September 2008, as the Irish government announced an emergency budget to combat the onslaught of recession, opposition TD Leo Varadkar suggested a repatriation scheme for immigrants to Ireland. 66% of people polled felt immigration policies should be made more restrictive given the worsening economic outlook (Irish Times, September 10th, 2008). In November 2009, the Fine Gael Mayor of Limerick suggested that unemployed migrants should be ‘sent home’ after a short period of welfare support. Both politicians’ suggestions received widespread political condemnation. The Mayor retracted his statement some days later, but still wished to cite the circulating discourse of ‘non-national’ welfare tourism (Hurley, 2009).

by implication, cultural 'clash' is articulated, suggesting that there is a very different standard of right and wrong which needs to be addressed within the context of Dromray. The implication is that this is not just a different standard, but a deficient one. Of course, this locates the perceived clash firmly within the student and *his* background which, again in this case, is based on a string of skin-nation-gender designations (black-Nigerian-male), without attention to differences within those designations. In macro contexts, a clash of civilisations discourse works to legitimise the secularisation of public European (and American) spaces for Islamic groups, for example (Modood and Kastoryano, 2006). In this particular scene, it may work on the basis of the confrontation of white-Irish/black-Nigerian bodies. Yet it is not purely 'culturally racist', if such a purity exists: colonial notions of the difficulty with educating the biologically inferior male, recognisable by his physiognomy, haunt this excerpt. They are knowable, but not speakable in this way.

Acceptable Other families are those who work mostly in the professional medical sector, and who avoid the clash that other ethnic groups broach. The thin erasure of race, nation and ethnicity from acceptability is made with reference to family, stability, social class and where appropriate, religion. The families the principal is referring to are more likely to be those of Filipino, Indian and Pakistani backgrounds. Many of the students in the school from these countries have one or two parents working in the large local hospital, or are in healthcare in other parts of the city. They are produced in this context through globalised, westernised neo-Orientalist discourses of middle class Asian respectability and, particularly for many Filipino students in the school, an implicit cultural congruence with the requirements of the school (post-colonial, Catholic, diasporic, middle class students). The notion of cultural congruence is of course, not natural or even culturally fortunate; it is a reiteration of a power/knowledge grammar which suggests hierarchies are transcendent, not constitutive. Here, complementary cultures are obvious, rather than historically conceived and given meaning through potential discourses explored above. Cultural compatibility is pinned here around same/difference dynamics of (gendered) middle class Europeanness/Asianness.

This notion of cultural congruence produces the school as being fortunate with some families, while having their hands tied with other, more problematic ones, who must effectively embody their deficit in this configuration. Because of the sedimented nature of congruence hierarchies, it can (and does) easily presume a head-start for some Asian

students over certain white-Irish students in this school⁵⁸. Points for consideration here include:

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- Notions of liberal inclusion, risk and care may work to displace conflict and effect the ordering of formerly classed and now also racialised viability, without ever mentioning class or white-Irish middle class dominance overtly. Spatial imaginings and physical places may re-effect notions of good/bad Other across both race and class matrices. The public/private integration dichotomy, which may belie assimilationist logic, is drawn upon and reiterated (Parekh, 2006).
 - In justifying itself, the school might displace and expel politics and conflict to its limits: outside institutions, particularly certain homes/students that do not 'fit' the school context. While regarded as partnership, the school-home relationship can be depoliticised in that very term in Ireland (O'Brien and Ó Fathaigh, 2007).
 - A politics which works within and *against* the terms of institutional racism policy - which are not developed in the school yet - could be developed here, where individual schools, if unquestioned after the moment of drawing up policies on institutional racism, 'do their best' to care *within their own walls*, while effectively displacing the issue onto externally-imagined social processes.

In closing this chapter, two fragments briefly consider the crossing of contexts by Theo and Franklin, two boys who have come to Termonfort in the previous two years from dialectically and geographically different parts of the Philippines. Their migrations and memories of home might disrupt earlier reductions of 'Filipino culture' to the racialised body. As 'the local' takes on/produces new meanings, congealing processes of reclassification for new migrants and certain undesirable Irish bodies might be demonstrated. Certainly, it seems the school frames the home in the above. But school and home are technologies of power that, "while competing with each other, also mutually reinforce each other's claims to power... through the very process of

⁵⁸ This notion of cultural congruence (e.g. in terms of whose culture 'fits' the school) can be turned on the school liberal critiques; can school not fix itself? The issue can be turned back into one of intentions and resourcing; racism is moved to an issue of technical procedures and administrative problems. Schools can acknowledge the problem of institutional racism, can aspire to changing practices and outcomes and can accept the critique of intentionality. But in a technocratic education system, nothing allows justification of racialising practices more than presence/lack of resources.

contestation” (Staiger, 2005, p. 555). Theo and Franklin’s words equally suggest their attempts to frame this new place via their newly framed cultural embodiment.

Memories of home: school recognition and viability in Philippines/Ireland

Theo and Franklin both live in a relatively new and somewhat more upmarket development of apartments, duplexes and townhouses near Termonfort’s regional hospital, and are now close friends. Franklin’s father is a nurse, while his mother is a medical sales rep. Theo’s mother is a nurse and his father a mechanical engineer. Theo and Franklin always appeared very happy in the school. They considered living in Ireland, meeting new people, etc. as “great”. They stated they had friends of lots of different nationalities and loved playing basketball at lunchtime⁵⁹. Theo and Franklin reported accounts of occasionally overt racism from other (usually white-Irish-male) students, including one incident where a senior cycle student physically hurt Theo. The school, as always, quickly moved to deal with this occurrence and suspended the student. Yet in similar ways to the dividing lines excavated in the previous two fragments, liberal anti-racism and highly advertised pro-migrant (and bad migrant) positionings divert attention away from tacit race-class divisions. The analysis focuses specifically on their accounts as student-selves in both places. This account is used to suggest how, similar to Adrienne and Beth above, they psycho-spatially must maintain themselves as they have physically crossed borders into new contexts of emergence: Ireland, Termonfort and Dromray. Having ‘got to know’ the boys a little throughout the year, I noticed how they often did not speak in their (B Band) lessons. Having also met repeated generalisations of ‘Asian’ docility that were generated in teacher interviews, I was interested to incite them to speak about action and participation in class.

Generating data in this interview:

FRANKLIN: [15-year-old, Filipino, male, student]

KK: [28 year-old, white-Irish, male, researcher]

THEO: [16-year-old, Filipino, male, student]

KK: How would you say you act in class?

FRANKLIN: Me? Quiet. Sometimes a little giddy, get hyper!

KK: Would you be that way in the Philippines or in a different school do you think?

FRANKLIN: In the Philippines? (laughs) Oh my God – I’m like crazy! (laughs) Yeah,

⁵⁹ This particular group is returned to with fellow basketball players Steve and Jonathan in Chapter 9.

like I'd be sent to the principal twice a week I think.

KK: You get into trouble all the time? Why doesn't that happen here?

THEO: It's a different country

FRANKLIN: People change

KK: You've changed?

THEO: Yeah

KK: Yeah. So why did you change, or what happened?

FRANKLIN: It's just, I don't know. At first, I'm not that good in English. I don't talk, like.

KK: Did you find it difficult with English at first?

FRANKLIN: Yeah, at first. Then I got good. Now I'm (ok).

KK: Yeah. What about you (Theo)? How would you say you act in class?

FRANKLIN: Me? Same as him as well, I don't really speak that much more English. In the Philippines I was the same as him as well, really noisy in class, keep messin'. But when I came here, same as him as well, don't really speak that much more English. What do you call it, just find it quiet.

KK: Do you find it comfortable to talk in front of people in the class, like if the teacher asked you a question or whatever?

THEO: Sometimes, it's like. I'm always shy in class. That's why I'm doing Transition Year⁶⁰, to build up more confidence in myself.

KK: Are you doing Transition Year (Franklin)?

FRANKLIN: Yeah, I think so. I need to work!

KK: How do you mean?

THEO: Cause you get working experience.

FRANKLIN: I don't want to be like, askin' your parents for money

KK: Ok, you want some independence?

FRANKLIN: Yeah.

KK: Ok.

The question 'how do you act' itself invites the boys to speak truth directly to their identities, i.e., to self-report and self-reflect on their relation to themselves in particular contexts. But using subjectivation, we can partially examine the discursive terms through which they are recognised and made viable, positioned and positioning in expressing identity. While the terms and the norms they use are never their own, they can maintain or reshape those norms, having effects on their selves and on contexts.

The reasons for the differences in their experiences of school in Ireland (i.e. not being punished so often) are put down to moving country, to people changing and to feeling

⁶⁰ Transition Year is a one year programme usually taken in the fourth year of post-primary schooling (i.e., after Junior Certificate year, but two years before Leaving Certificate) in Ireland. It is optional in most schools, including Dromray. The purpose of the year, according to the Second Level Support Service (<http://tv.slss.ie/aboutus.html>) is to "promote maturity" in terms of self-directed learning (and alternative assessment techniques), a greater emphasis on work-related skills, and a focus on building confidence and communication abilities. Taking on Transition Year means that students will stay in school for one year more than is necessary to complete their Leaving Certificate. It is largely regarded as a desirable programme in the educational mainstream.

shy about using English. Yet these are not fixed givens: they are indications of how boundaries actively recreate objects. When the boys cross the borders of the Philippines and shift from doing 'indigenous' to 'migrant', new student selves are created and mobilised. Theo and Franklin both speak to a re-emergence and a new recognition in the new context of Dromray. In this particular school, Filipinos are largely regarded positively in the academic sense, and in a few teacher interviews, Asians more generally were considered 'good examples' for 'certain' white-Irish students. It might not be surprising then, that the boys articulate the need to maintain and use the advantages gained in the reputation that is sometimes bestowed. It is noteworthy that Rafa - a Kazakhstani boy that Theo and Franklin share English language support class with - also shares the supposed 'new migrant aspiration' to do well and gain independence. Yet Rafa, who has grown up in Ireland over ten years, essentially does not see success as happening through school. Furthermore, he sees transition year as a waste of time, and does not wish to stay on. Rafa's account is further taken up in Chapter 7. In a second interview later in the year, Theo and Franklin talk more about norms: perhaps the norms through which they might be recognised and made viable as students:

FRANKLIN: Do you know the - some of the Irish think that Filipinos respect, respect others. Like you know, my dad told me that I have to be like, less talking and participate in class. So that our, what you call like, they like our kind like, Filipinos.

THEO: A lot of people respect us.

FRANKLIN: (echoing) A lot of people respect us.

KK: Mmm.

FRANKLIN: 'Cause we have a good (inaudible on recording)

KK: Yeah. So you need to - are you saying to me that you need to maintain or keep

FRANKLIN: Yeah, maintain.

KK: Do you ever feel like not doing that?

THEO: Well, at first, but we're used to it now!

KK: And what about your friends from the Philippines would they say the same thing?

FRANKLIN: Some are like, real messers!

THEO: Yeah, they smoke, but we don't smoke. We just mess in class but we don't do really bad stuff like takin' drugs, smokin'. Mitchin'.

KK: Who smokes?

THEO: Some of our friends.

KK: Like who?

THEO: Filipinos.

FRANKLIN: But we usually don't hang around with bad people and all, bad influence people. Students. We hang around with those good people, group of students.

What is most interesting here are the contradictions in how ‘Filipino-ness’ is managed. In one breath, the boys quite overtly draw upon ethno-racial terminology to describe how well respected their “kind” are by ‘the Irish’. Yet in another, they refer to the possibility that there are ‘bad’ people who are Filipino. Could Franklin and Theo be said to be ‘doing Filipino’ when they regularly got into trouble in school back in the Philippines? Were they ‘doing boy’, or something else, and what does it mean for them to ‘do boy’ here? In other words, it is not that there is an essential Filipino (or masculine) set of attributes, educational or otherwise, despite this initial claim. Specific family, class and other vectors work to shape ‘Filipino-ness’ internally and externally in particular moments. The borders around being Filipino in Dromray are not fixed, but *worked*, and there appears to be a suggestion by Theo that he has become “used to” (naturalising?) this performance. This mutability is important to note when juxtaposed with the external imposition of Filipino-ness as an embodied, variously benign, docile and/or model minority culture in previous and forthcoming fragments of data. While the boys use the language of good/bad Filipino, psycho-spatial work (their memories of school in the Philippines) disrupts any externally imposed notion of good/bad migrant student articulated by the previous two readings in this chapter. The fragment above raises questions about how social class and subculture are ignored in the ‘positive-negative’ collapsing of ‘Filipino-ness’ within their bodies, ultimately another Othering (Archer and Francis, 2007).

Prologue to Chapter 6

The deconstruction of variously coherently imagined space, physical place and the body above might interrupt racist effects and framing narratives of a ‘pure’ local white-Irishness and newcomer Other. In the above data, the coherent and contradictory ways in which bodies and places are re/classified and re/imagined provided examples of issues that could be explored in praxis. The use of a psycho-spatial trowel particularly exposes the fragility of maintained spatial divisions and representations, whether in terms of housing, neighbourhoods, clustered or promiscuous bodies, psychic-cultural differentiations or neutral/conflictual spaces. In Chapter 6, I move to undermine the attribution of certain hierarchised, immutable values to particular learner-bodies. This is attempted by interrogating the limits of modern institutional inclusivity through ‘mixed ability teaching’.

Chapter 6

Interrupting the repositioning of learning meritocracy

'Mixed ability' hierarchy dispersal versus 'learning as performed'

Teaching and learning in Dromray is based on a two-tier system, allocated on school entry. Students are granted places first, and are examined via cognitive abilities tests and referrals from their primary schools second. The tiers are called bands (A and B), and not streams, because they incorporate a partial move towards mixed ability teaching. This move is indeed but partial: in second and third year, the core subjects of Irish, English and Maths become further grouped into higher, ordinary and foundation level classes within their bands: this is technically 'setting' within each band⁶¹. Thus, there are three main practices operating in the school: two bands/tiers, with some 'mixed ability' subjects and three 'set' (core) subjects within each tier. Mixing A/B students in class is done on a very limited basis. It is not insignificant that the only time that A Band and B Band classes are mixed together is during Physical Education class. One of the deputy principals informed me during interview that there is a conscious effort made to achieve a balance of gender and ethnicity across classes in each band; Tara and Rachel's experience (later on in this chapter) suggests there are behaviour management motives, or at the very least, effects, also associated with the further 'learning division' of students after first year.

The 'acceptable' logic of mixed ability bodies: racial classification anew?

There is a range of ways of organising learning in Irish secondary schools, and teachers' use of the terminology involved (particularly banding and streaming) can become conflated (Lynch and Lodge, 2002). 'Banding' may sit in its own hierarchy of socially acceptable practices in Ireland and elsewhere: Lyons et al.'s (2003) study of maths teaching in Ireland implicitly regards streaming as the most hierarchical form of grouping, while 'total mixed ability' classrooms are considered the least hierarchical within the school walls. It is useful here to consider what has officially congealed as speakable/unspeakable or progressive/unprogressive over recent decades of school practices, perhaps informed by progressivist learning and inequality research.

⁶¹ The term 'setting' was never used, to my knowledge, in the school. The ESL co-ordinator told me in interview that Maths, English and Irish are formed differently. In Maths, students are tested at the end of first year or beginning of second year. Irish teachers decide amongst themselves where students are to be placed. English teachers also decide on students' level based on their observations and work, behaviour and perceived commitment.

Generating data in this interview:

P: Principal [50s, white-Irish, female]

KK: Interviewer [28 year-old, white-Irish, male]

P: At senior level then, the options subjects are totally mixed ability. And the English, Irish and Maths (subjects) then

KK: Are streamed

P: Would be banded, they would be banded, not streamed. Banded.

KK: Yeah, ok, sorry

P: Em, so em, so it is more a mixed ability setting. Now you were asking me about did I notice differences between because, yes, absolutely because parental involvement is a huge influence on the amount of study children do. And how seriously they take their education⁶².

Research has intervened and undoubtedly made massive ground in the area of detracking both in Ireland and internationally (Rubin, 2006). But there are unexpected consequences to this now common knowledge. The moral imperative against tracking and streaming potentially pushes modes of speaking around continued achievement hierarchy towards prohibition in the above fragment. The move (above) to correct my mistaken use of the word streaming was quite embarrassing for me: yet technically, the term which refers to the above practice in English, Irish and Maths is ‘setting’. Despite the rhetorical distinction made between banding and streaming by us both, the two practices might be quite collapsable in their wider effects.

The imperative to ‘not-stream’ may silence many of the ways in which the ‘more acceptable’ banding and ‘most acceptable’ ‘total mixed ability’ philosophies themselves are conflated and thinly implemented. Every lesson that I encountered during the ethnography was strongly teacher-centred, based on whole-class learning and discussion. This reiterates:

- ‘Learning’ as accumulating knowledge (essentially attempting to learn everything), thus;
- Requiring a valuing and prioritising of certain knowledges over others, as time is limited, hence,

⁶² The last point (about families) made above turned into a longer discussion around school/home which was explored in the previous chapter.

- Despite the various contexts and discourses through which selves are produced and made intelligible, it names, normalises and orders bodies in terms of their ‘past experience’ in these contexts as ‘*ability*’.

The presence of new migrant bodies, produced as different, within the same class theoretically provides exciting grounds for the production of new knowledges and the disruption of embodiment of knowledge. The radical inclusion of ‘mixed experiences’ in one room should facilitate this. In its most overtly, processual form, it ideally encourages the self to critique his/her relation to others and to move into that space: collaborative, socially constructed learning (Good and Brophy, 2000). But in Dromray, and in much formal schooling constituted as liberally inclusive, it is entirely interrupted and recuperated by the underpinning exigencies of a modernist, product-driven approach: progression through a mandated curriculum, required skills, improvisations and drives of global-state-school exigency. There are three underpinning logics that merit exploration:

- Can ‘ability’ be regarded as a linear, ‘developmental’ accumulation of skills, knowledge and experience over time?
- Might the above imply that even critical arguments around the *socialisation of ability* still rely on learning as an accumulated embodiment of experience?
- If so, doesn’t this return us to a default position of superior/deficient bodies when certain marginalised students’ are faced with imposed norms such as competitive state examinations?

In short, there is a deeper critique that can be mounted here around the ‘most inclusive’ notion of mixed, embodied ability.

Interrupting the immutability of ‘embodied trait’ discourses: learner and learned

Several critical interventions have been made which multiply critique ability and intelligence as not fixed, but a social construction, particularly effected and ordered via race, class and gender in non-neutral institutional arrangements (Lynch and Lodge, 2002, Gillborn and Youdell, 2000). ‘Ability’ and ‘potential’ discourses have been examined for the ways in which they mask effects similar to historic race-intelligence links via the socialisation and culturalisation of social and educational inequality in the face of normalised achievement imperatives (Gillborn, 2006, 2002). Mirza (1998) argues that a reliance on ‘facts’ and outcomes creates a post-biological pseudo-science

on race and sex ‘difference’ using IQ. Gillborn (2002) notes Sternberg’s remarks on IQ: “the fact that Billy and Jimmy [sic] have different IQs tells us something about differences in what they do now. It does not tell us anything fixed about what ultimately they will do in the future” (1998, p. 18). Yet, as studies in Ireland and the UK have shown, this future is very much structured in the now through institutional practices organised around fixed potential, ability and intelligence testing (Lynch and Lodge, 2002, Gillborn and Youdell, 2000).

What might be more fundamentally problematic beyond the specifics of intelligence tests are wider institutional/modern underpinnings of ‘learner development’. In these discourses, cultural knowledge is taken up as an essential trait of the learner which variously enables/disables him/her. Learners can be viewed as embodying ‘traits’ of ‘their culture’ (Gutierrez and Rogoff, 2003) over time. Practitioners are always returned to deficit notions of those who do not fit certain norms when curricular and assessment norms are not shared or contested, e.g., when product-driven models overtake curriculum as a process or praxis (Kelly, 2004). The British social model - which emphasises the socialisation of disability over biologism - attempted to unsettle the embodied self as a root cause of deficiency. Its aim was ‘barrier removal over time’. But crucially, its disability/impairment differentiation relied on a socially disabled/biologically-impaired politics which returns ‘the impaired’ to their bodies and not to, e.g. discursive constitutions (Shakespeare and Watson, 2002). Youdell states:

as in the case of feminist and race politics, this shift displaces the encounter with (rather than fundamentally interrupting) prevailing notions of deficit and continues to cite a normative discourse of normal/impaired (2006a, p. 181).

Despite the repositioning of school procedures somewhat towards a mix of abilities, normal/impaired bodily hierarchy is necessarily still intrinsic to the school’s *modus operandi*. Furthermore, this slight repositioning and dispersal of ability hierarchy might constitute the school as benevolent (given its positioning on good/bad binaries). The terms of the relationship with the home are changed; drawing on now moralised discourses of taking responsibility, the family is now expected to respond to this apparent correction of power imbalances: “how seriously they take their education”. The repositioning of tracking as immoral and hierarchy as less of the school’s responsibility denies the possibility of changing middle class advantages through education, for example (Ball, 2003). It thus supports an enduring and acceptable notion of respectable/disgraceful families. Further produced in this elided hierarchy is the

speculation of one's likelihood of moving away from the embodied self produced in past experience: '*potential*'. In a social model of schooled 'disability', everyone has potential. But due to the competitive exigencies of *educational time and priority*, we have the movement of only a highly limited number of bodies out of lower band classes and into higher classes, for example. This may be an important feature of a process that enduringly renders certain students as more viable in formal learning contexts than others.

My questions for this chapter are: how might modernist assumptions about the relationship between *knowledge and the learner* work to tacitly re-justify exclusionary 'inclusions'? How can we use an alternative view of learning that interrupts the foundations of the 'most progressive' ability hierarchy? I attempt to interrupt racist effects by examining how one teacher might produce A/B Band learners as having accumulated or 'embodied' their experiences, which are then normalised, classified and hierarchised. The learning (resistances and recuperations) that might be performed is examined here through a fragment of interview data with two white-Irish girls, Rachel and Tara. They reflect on their 'bad class' allocations, their achievements and the incorporation of a mix of 'good/bad migrant-learners' into their class groups.

'Learning' is read here not as chronological, incremental, or developmental, but as a subtle process of recognition and viability: of shifting to participate in different and differently valued contexts. The work of Barbara Rogoff, for example, makes clear that practising culture *is* learning and *is* action (Vásquez, 2006). By understanding *learning-as-performed*, I offer another way of intervening on the endurance of the 'new IQism' (Gillborn and Youdell, 2000). I turn to more conceptual work around the body, knowledge, and the folds of production before considering two ethnographic pieces regarding the repositioning of streaming towards 'more inclusive' 'mixed ability' banding.

The mutual production of 'now' via 'knowledge': 'learning' the self

One cannot reference 'this time' without knowing which time, where that time takes hold, and for whom a certain consensus emerges on the issue of what time this is (Butler, 2008, p. 1).

When we say we 'know' something, we pin down that knowledge and secure an embodied self. We remove its spatial and temporal mediation: chronologically past and future interpretations of what is 'known', as well as various configurations that make that known. The knower-known relation has long been elaborated on by influential

figures in the field of cultural psychology, such as Lev Vygotsky and Jerome Bruner. Yet the linear 'developmental' component that assumes selves as chronologically accumulating often lies undisturbed. Using Stoler's (1995) explication of the folds of discourse, we can consider that when moving into a knowledge-context, that context has been and will be equivocally interpreted in the chronological past and present. In making the self, we attempt to relate it to and contain it within an accumulated or embodied self that 'gains more knowledge'. This might be illusory. A theory of subjectivation suggests that as the self is emergent through various discourses (knowledges, norms, institutional arrangements, etc.), s/he is always produced by 'new' knowledge-exigencies. S/he divides and is divided, or emergent in certain possibilities and not others (e.g., spending greater time on social networking sites and other technologies rather than reading 'classics'). The self is not passive here: s/he is also productive of knowledge. In the interaction between the self and knowledge, knowledge is taken up in a new way based on the self's ways of knowing itself through the interaction of now (past, future) and knowledge. Indeed, using *prior knowledge* is regarded as a key means of connecting with learners in socio-cultural perspectives on teaching (Good and Brophy, 2000). Once the self is *made* recognisable through the dividing, producing practices of shifting contexts, a process of *losing oneself* - movement out of one context that produces the past-self into another self - takes place.

Learning as performative: making anew and losing the self

Subjectivation might suggest learning is a process of the making oneself and being remade in shifting contexts. Certainly it happens in chronological time, but here, it is not equated with a modernist concept of increased self-progression over time. The self in a 'new' or 'changed' context is not entirely made by that context, nor making that new context. The 'new' self is always already attempting to maintain a self outside of the current time, e.g. memories, photos, relationships with others and the current self in the context of now: it may be a process of psychic re/inscription and iteration which draws and re-reads the self, and negotiating self in a new context. Learning is retained here as a performative term which includes time (and space: the notion of displacing politics from the previous chapter is implicitly recited here). The dynamic, non-linear interaction of knowledges and time, through which the subject emerges, is the process it performs. Learning might be a constant process of forgetting and recuperating/remembering the self: participation and moving forward in context, iteration and performance. A decentred subject of time and space provides a useful way of provoking further insights about race, school and the order of viability. Here I

explore, 'what might be happening with power when learners are named in a 'more inclusive' community school with a 'more inclusive' banded-mixed ability frame?'

Making and ordering student **selves**: confirming 'the past' via a meritocratic mixed ability 'now'

Generating data in this interview:

MR. BARRETT: [late 30s, white-Irish, male, teacher]

KK: [28 year-old, white-Irish, male, researcher]

Mentioned: Regina [second year (14 year-old, white?) Latvian, girl]

KK: Earlier on we were talking about the higher classes and lower classes and stuff like that, could you talk more about that?

MR. BARRETT: Yeah, I think the vast majority of our children from a cultural and ethnic background are in lower band classes. That's probably because their English isn't as good. Their written and spoken English. But having said that, if a child comes in here from a different cultural background and they master English very quickly, there is scope for them to move up and to be challenged, and that has happened in the school that we have children who have moved up to A Bands because you know, they've shown that they're driven, they're motivated and their basic skills are very good for them to be challenged more in school, you know?

KK: Would you have specific examples of students you could tell me about?

MR. BARRETT: Yeah, I know one, just I can only - I know one student in second year who's been moved up from a very weak B, a B Band up to an A band.

KK: Right, and who's that?

MR. BARRETT: A Latvian girl, she's called Regina. She's from Latvia and she - very bright girl but she was thrown into a weak B Band group and it became very very clear that she was demoralised and demotivated and very quickly then at the end of the year, she was moved up because she's doing much better now in an A band class. Now there are other examples, just this one I could give off.

KK: Ah yeah, ok. And what was it about her, was she achieving very highly in the class and -

MR. BARRETT: Well she wasn't achieving her best at the lower band class because she was in a pleidhce⁶³ class with messers. And you could see that she was getting fed up. And she's been moved into an A Band. Her work is much better, her general outlook is better and she's much more positive about school.

⁶³ This Irish language term (the English phonetic spelling of which is something like 'plike') is a gentle means of saying idiotic, foolish or 'messer', as Mr. Barrett comments above.

...
KK: Do you think that there are other kids that should be moved?

MR. BARRETT: I don't see them. No. Not in second year or first year, no. I don't see them at the moment. The reason why I pick out that example is it's an example where it can be done. And where it is being done.

...
KK: Would you be concerned about kids who would have English as a parallel first language if you like that aren't –

MR. BARRETT: Absolutely, I mean I know the school tries to give them extra classes and that's going on.

KK: No, but I mean kids who would actually speak English, who would be of immigrant background but who would have spoken English since they were young anyway, you know what I mean?

MR. BARRETT: Oh you mean, kids who would have gone into primary school?

KK: Even, even kids - like a lot of African kids or whatever who would speak English, that kind of stuff, would that concern you that they're not, that language isn't really the main obstacle for them?

MR. BARRETT: Yeah, yeah (pause).

KK: Or is it something that you're familiar with, I don't know.

MR. BARRETT: This is probably going to sound awful here but they're not, and I found this in England and I'm not being, stereotyping but I find certain children from certain backgrounds aren't particularly motivated in school. And it was well known in England that children of certain African-Caribbean backgrounds - very very hard to motivate them in school. They lived in ghettos in south London, they didn't see the point of going to school, their parents didn't see the point of sending them to school. And I can see that being replicated here. Now I don't know if that's a cultural thing, I'm not sure, but, that's not a stereotypical thing, that's just my own experience.

KK: Sure.

MR. BARRETT: Eh, typically your Asian kids are generally well motivated towards school, it's coming from their background, you know, the possibilities that education can give, give them. That's coming clearly from home; it's a cultural thing as well. Em, but that's another, that's a cultural problem that we have with certain children coming in, that being in education isn't necessarily seen as a way of improving themselves.

The uncomfortable series of fragments suggests that an important, modernising process of student differentiation is possibly reiterated here. While the rhetoric has changed somewhat from ability grouping to mixed ability in Dromray, learner abilities have not been unmoored from the hierarchical classification of embodied experience. Racialised, gendered, classed, subcultural experiences are, in their interface with the normalising exigencies of the 'progressive' school, iteratively mapped on/through more or less academically viable or unviable bodies.

Being not racist/describing the reality/justifying school in the now

Here, I focus on the word 'improvement' for new migrants as a central effect of the discourse of time and progression evoked above. Improvement is a key assumption of modernity, and relies on the notion of a self which accumulates 'experience'. It has an important role to play in symbolising and producing bodies differentiated as respectable, viable, or otherwise. Objectified, raced/ethno-nationalised bodies ('Asian', 'African' and 'Latvian') are produced as repositories for a collapsed set of experiences in the above.

Yet citations of ability are not based on an historically racist notion of intelligence: *schooled disability is somewhat socialised*, but the fault lies in the community. It is also quite notable that generic socio-economic circumstances of certain minority ethnic groups are actually taken into account in the above. Indeed, at other times, the teacher - like many others - names certain African students as intelligent. The important point made by the teacher is that it is not that black African students cannot learn. It is that "education isn't necessarily seen as a way of improving themselves". In the teacher's words, the school context is something that is, or has become undesirable, or unnecessary to African-Caribbean people in both south London and African migrants here in suburban Dublin. Given *'their'* experience of segregation, they have developed other priorities. In not suggesting that these students cannot learn, he unexpectedly reveals something: selves are *always learning and always practising in context*. They are known only via a constant process of moving in and out of, and making and being made by different contexts. It is the dynamic making, division and production that is 'improvement through learning' that students are racially divided, differentiated and ordered in 'mixed ability' discourses. But this learning is recuperated to school norms: there is an implicit defence of the system in the *ordering of African (black) priorities*, by avoiding saying 'they cannot learn', but that they are not *into* education.

In effect, black students' educationally deficient selves and actions, although somewhat recognised as produced in racially ordered contexts, are known in the now as incrementally, transnationally embodied: recognisable as 'black school ability' and 'black educational motivation'. This relocates lesser school ability within black bodies, and simultaneously recognises and ignores the shifting transnational politics of race and socio-educational contexts. The past, producing socialised ability, is silently constitutive of the now in a new context, simultaneously ordering race and safely returning us to a notion of school-as-progression. As the modernising assumptions of mixed ability are untouched, the future is already rhetorically structured: "I can see the same pattern being replicated here". Black ability and motivation is made and remade in a new migrant space and time⁶⁴. But the school, the teacher, and the politics of socialised race are rendered passive or helpless in the objectifying, official school recognition of or gaze on certain 'unmotivated' black Africans. This gaze, which relies on unitary selves via physical bodies, can only but revert to culturally racist explanations, and, notably, the essentialised, wounded race-object ordered out of school. School can equally be justified as progressive through evocations of future-hope (social justice identity politics) or (perhaps above) cynicism. The symbolised, essentialising future (potential) is constituted and further acted from, re/iterating the now in this fragment.

Good (unfortunate) migrant learners

While black students are not constituted overtly as undeserving, it is 'not racist' nor professionally risky to cite Asian students and Regina as deserving, motivated and full of potential. A modernist inclusive discourse of (meritocratic) mixing allows the future to be constituted by and constitutive of the racialised now. Regina, a good migrant, was in the wrong place. Other good migrants, such as Asian students, are currently in the wrong place due to language issues. Regina is also known as unlucky in being placed in a B band class initially with a bad mix, but ok now. The emergent and solidifying intelligibility of Asian students as currently deserving success (but unfortunate because of low English proficiency) is a useful example of how students' potential is ordered via what is observable in the now. Asian students who are waiting in the wings to learn English are currently understandable in the above as 'unfortunate', drawing on a cacophony of normalising discourses.

Because of their acceptable (Asian) effort, these students are deserving, but also positioned hierarchically. Asian students are now at risk of, or are already becoming

⁶⁴ Drawing on flows of affect, this is an uneasy subject for the teacher, who, constituted via discourses of professionalism and pastoral-progression, emotes "this is probably going to sound awful".

intelligible through Orientalist-race discourses of ‘model minorities’ in Dromray. They are further constituted in official discourses as not risking this positioning via subjectivation, e.g., certain normative school requirements of apparent practices of docility. Yet any reader’s sense that such students would eventually gravitate towards being ‘the norm’ in the school fails to notice how *both* school *and* race knowledges (along with gender and other knowledges) co-constitute ‘Asian students’. Any apparent gravitation towards ‘good school’ behaviour is intelligible as such because it is repeatedly *already racialised*, and is thus unlikely to be ‘truly’ intrinsically valued. In doing school, which requires docility, these students are also reduced to embodied selves and culturalist ability discourses: cast as ‘doing Asianness’. Mixed ability is complicit in the depoliticisation of racial ordering, as such ‘model’ students are, through their model practices unlikely to be viewed as risking their Asianness and/or exposing whiteness. As the data fragment might suggest, current Asian unfortunateness may not be supplanted once the students ‘learn English’ – some may be re-emergent in *locally* new discourses in the future-now which are, in the folds of discourse, already present in the global past and global now: those of freakish intelligence and/or feminine boys. The logic of mixed ability reproduces a transnational ordering the most viable embodied experience.

Approximating white (Irish)ness? Conditional positive positioning

The citing of Regina is important as an exemplar of equal-access, meritocratic discourses, which are productive of her conditional respectability and viability. She is inferred as initially unfortunate, in the sense that she landed in a class of ‘weak’ ‘messers’. This mix of B Band learners produced a particularly unpalatable bunch, or perhaps a particular, masculinised set of school subcultures: ‘pleidches’ who are understood as not – or not being able to - take responsibility for their learning. This masculine categorisation (which is not appropriate to use with hetero-feminine girls) suggests the commensurability of subcultural masculinities with notions of being anti-school. Regina is produced within discourses of respectable, hard working (white) immigrant, and further knowable through commensurate discourses, which internally link school effort to femininity (Renold and Allan, 2006, Renold, 2001): docility, multi-tasking despite exceptional circumstances, etc. Regina is approximating privileged whiteness, practising ideal discipline, acting her place in discourse. She is attempting good-whiteness, and (not in an unlinked way), doing school and leap-frogging undeserving white kids. This is facilitated by her brightness (a legitimised doing based on curriculum and test meanings). Regina is intelligible as deserving via school

knowledges and associated knowledges of respectable whiteness. To not approximate whiteness might risk many different things for Regina: her intelligibility as human (were she to do, e.g. Chinese), her intelligibility as a (good) student, and her status as deserving. Why should she risk it? At the same time, Regina is positioned as a newcomer and cannot entirely fulfil *white-Irishness*. While she is on the right side of good/bad migrant discourses, it is clear that other eastern European girls such as Theresa and Ruthie in later chapters do not benefit from this acceptably feminised, conditional form of positive positioning.

The calling up of Regina as an exemplar is important because it articulates the discourse of success as available to those who ‘choose’ to take that path and whose ability and motivation can spur them on. Success is a hegemonic concept reiterated in multiple ways above, and in order for there to be success, there has to be failure. The unequal system is unlikely to be called into question, and norms are unlikely to be shared or contested openly in such modernising logics. The Asian students cited above, as well as the Latvian girl, are temporarily unfortunate learners in the B Band class. These are learners who, if it was not for temporal and language issues, would be really succeeding (i.e. A Band students) now. Indeed, they are symbolically already succeeding. Amongst new migrants, the question of ‘who is deserving?’ endures more fundamentally as an already schooled-question of potential in these terms: ‘who is viable?’ Useful tools for politicising education in the above include:

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- Exposing how the notion of ‘learner’ and ‘abilities’ have not shifted from the notion of the differentiation of embodied experience, despite the repositioning towards ‘mixed ability’. Racialised, gendered, classed, subcultural experiences are, in their interface with the normalising exigencies of the ‘progressive’ school, iteratively mapped on/through more or less viable unviable bodies as traits (good-unfortunate/bad-undeserving migrants), which disregard white-Irish framings. The notion of mixed ‘ability’ somewhat disarms calls moved learning towards the sharing of learners’ experiences and move lessons towards processes of meaning appropriation, critique and participation (Wenger, 2008, Kelly, 2004).
 - In its facile attempt to ‘move beyond streaming’, banded-mixed ability strategy immediately injects students into an already presupposed ‘better future’ which retains the modernist strictures of learning as ‘past-embodiment’. Future

'potential' is always, already rendered within these terms and is *made and acted from* in the now. The 'incremental ability' critique can expose the processes of differentiation, forgetting the self or 'educating out' that *will always occur* if an individualised, embodied 'self' is to shift and re-emerge in contexts of 'greater viability' (from being a failure to being a success). This would require us to think differently about the individual self-as-embodied, and more towards ideas of performative learners and learning.

- The above critiques re-interrupt the 'cultural clash' and good/bad migrant dichotomies produced in the home/school dichotomies of Chapter 5. In this particular context, it works to expose the folds of discourse (time and space, selves and contexts) and contest a notion of chronological progression, i.e. the re/emergence, via a suburban Dublin configuration, of temporarily unfortunate model migrants, juxtaposed with enduringly lacking white-working class and black students.

I move next to examine the production of non-viable, unfortunate and deserving learners who reposition themselves and Others, as Dromray is reframed as a mixed ability, new migrant context. In doing so, I wish to suggest the complexity of their learning performance beyond any essentialised, accumulating set of traits. I also allude to the recentring of white-Irishness on academic and social planes.

Making and losing themselves in mixed ability, migrant mutations: reconfiguring resistance in the B Band

If learning in Dromray has truly turned towards being more equally valued with a two-tier, mixed ability system, why is it that resistance remains important for certain students? The following interview fragment reads how two girls might 'do' B Band, subculture, and sometimes achievement. Their practices of viability and respectability draw on memories and future possibilities, which both agree with and rupture Dromray's 'more inclusive' now. In this complexity, white-Irishness is openly and obliquely effected as superior.

The girls are some of the first students in Dromray to experience the entire junior cycle (first to third year) within a two-band system. Both are from traditionally 'disadvantaged' white-Irish working-class patches, but do not attend their local school. Like a number of other students in Dromray, the girls are not definitely 'working class' at all. While Rachel wants to be a nurse, Tara wants to be either a dancer or open her

own horse riding school. These aspirations are fraught with conflict in the interview⁶⁵. Rachel articulates Dromray and another other school mentioned (St. Declan's) as 'good schools' outside of her own less affluent, 'less respectable' neighbourhood.

Generating data in this interview:

RACHEL: [15 year-old, white-Irish, working class, female, student]

TARA: [15 year-old, white-Irish, working class, female, student]

KK: [28 year old, white-Irish, middle class, male, researcher]

KK: Do ye not have closer schools to ye?

RACHEL: Yeah, but I wasn't allowed go to the school around the corner from me.

KK: Why?

RACHEL: Because me brothers and sisters went there and me brother left three weeks before his mocks⁶⁶, me sister got kicked out for not havin' her exam papers and she never went back. So I wasn't allowed go to the school.

KK: Your parents didn't think - (that you should go to the neighbourhood school)

RACHEL: Yeah. So I just had - it was either here or (St.) Declan's.

Tara and Rachel's respectability and viability as good students was possibly not secure or likely in the pre-migration context. But the 'more inclusive' two-band process does not secure it either. The change from an A/B/C system to A/B banding might have scattered and reconfigured the form of resistance, but not diminished its necessity or possibility. Race-class-gender configurations are not addressed and redistributed by the new system, they are displaced, making resistance more complex and contradictory. Tara and Rachel are making themselves and being made recognisable in a somewhat less coherent, 'more equal' B Band, a tier where students are never easily classifiable as pro-school or anti-school.

Perhaps in similar ways to how Beth and Adrienne used psycho-spatial strategies for recognition, viability and respectability, Tara and Rachel use psycho-temporal resources like memory inscription for resistance/enjoyment in an official context which recognises, but devalues their learning and career hopes. Tara's overt resistances in particular have implications for her likelihood of official success and viability. In other

⁶⁵ Despite local/national differences, the material might resonate Walkerdine et al.'s *Growing Up Girl* body of work, amongst others (e.g. 2001).

⁶⁶ 'Mocks' or 'pre-s' are vernacular terms used by students, teachers and parents to denote pre-Junior Certificate trial or mock examinations. The practice of examination rehearsal is common in Irish school settings. It is used in order to familiarise students with procedural aspects of their upcoming exams, and as a means of focusing them on their current levels of achievement across exam subjects.

words, she may be 'moving out' of as opposed to 'moving up' in school (O'Brien, 2003). This is not to suggest a *fait accompli* around Tara or Rachel's education, nor that they are not constantly learning (as particular types of selves and students). I draw on the interview responses above and below to explore how the girls' (non) viability as learners is now more complexly *enacted*, rather than determined, in subcultural fields as the official school context changes/has changed (new migrants, greater inclusiveness). Further intervening on the coherence of resistance are the bodies of certain new migrant students. The fundamental question is, how do these girls learn *about the system and themselves*, i.e. make and lose themselves, in changing Dromray circumstances?

Students mentioned in the interview with Rachel and Tara:

ADEOLA: [15 years old, black-Nigerian, female, student]
 OMALARA : [15 years old, black-Nigerian, female, student]
 BARAN: [15 years old, Indian, male, student]
 BILLY: [15 years old, Chinese, male, student]
 FEYI: [15-years old, black-Belgian-Congolese, female, student]
 ROBERT: [15 years old, Filipino, male, student]
 OTHERS: [white-Irish boys and girls, approx. 15 years old; mentioned]

RACHEL: I don't know like, Adeola and Omalara in our class, like at the start of 2nd year Omalara used to be always talkin' and like after the summer it's like 'yeah get away from me' and all that sorta thing. Like she was a bit, real bitchy and like it would offend Adeola cause she was the same colour as her an' all.

TARA: I had a fight with Feyi yesterday and we always have fights. She's gas.
 KK: Do you think people have, I wouldn't say a problem, but an issue with people of different colour in the school?

RACHEL: Sometimes.

TARA: I don't. My nephew is half cast. My sister's (pauses and waits for me to deduce)

KK: Your sister's boyfriend is black is he?

TARA: Yeah.

KK: And where's he from?

TARA: He's from England. He's not *black-black*, he's kinda - but you'd know

KK: He has brown skin?

TARA: Yeah.

TARA: (referring to some new migrant classmates) They're not swots, they just don't like making a joke. Em, Baran, well he's nice, I think he's nice but he's just very quiet.

RACHEL: Billy's quieter.

TARA: Billy, ooh he's very quiet. He kinda freaks me out a bit.

RACHEL: Yeah.

TARA: But he can remember like, the whole lot. He used to writ (sic) down an essay thing we had to remember off and he remembered the whole lot.

KK: Are they the only two swots in the class?

RACHEL: No, Robert.

TARA: Robert and Adeola. They're alright though!

RACHEL: They're smart but nice.

...

TARA: MY first year class was the best, that's why they didn't make it any more. Took it out cause it was the worst class in the year.

KK: Ok tell me about your first year class.

TARA: Aw it was gas. The *amount* of us in it. It was gas.

KK: Who was in it?

TARA: Me friend that I knew for years, she lived round the corner from me in Greendales, she was in it. Murphyer - you know Murphyer? Amy Murphy?

KK: Yeah.

TARA: Ciara, Shauna, Nicola (laughs) we all got put together. Lauren McDermott, Maria, that's the only good girls in it, like the only *sound* (good girls), and who else - Hannah. Oh, it was a deadly class. We were on class report for like two months.

KK: Class report?

RACHEL: Yeah and we were on class report for about four months!

KK: And how did they split ye up?

RACHEL: The whole year got split up. We all got into different classes.

TARA: Cause we're like the worst year in the school. Well supposed to be, that's

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KK: Your year?

RACHEL: Yeah.

KK: Why do you think that is?

RACHEL: Cause they always tell us that. That we're one of the, either the worst class or else we're the worst year they've ever had.

KK: Who's told you that?

RACHEL: Most of the teachers.

TARA: When we were in assembly they were always sayin' that's why they split us up.

The constitutions in the above interview show a great deal of learning, as defined as the self being emergent through and productive of shifting contexts. The school context would define this performative learning as subversive or importantly, an unfortunate 'waste of their time'. Yet there are quite a striking making and losing of the self at play as the girls move from first to third year. Contradictory positions about race, but also about 'hard work' and 'craic' (or fun) are constantly made common sense, worked through the past and the now. These are not accidental, but necessary contradictions in a mixed ability meritocracy: the girls must negotiate their (past?) positioning as being more academically mobile than their neighbourhood peers in this inclusive school. They

also must turn to face what could be now a socially, academically mobile, new migrant Other. The girls tell me during the interview that they are not very close mates outside of school, but they “stick together an’ all in class”. Irish/foreigner, learning/leisure and school/subculture dichotomies are cited around studying/making a joke. These binaries are variously mapped to themselves and to those constituted as newcomer Other: Adeola, Baran, Billy, Feyi and Omalara. Tara and Rachel emerge as disrupting and also working in and through school/subcultural dichotomies. Liberal discourses about racial inclusion are tentatively cited through a (gendered?) ethic of care in the interview; their ‘okness’ with colour is made understandable through Tara’s authentic relationship with the quasi-Other: her mixed race nephew. In needing to adopt both pro- and anti-school positions, solidarity with the newcomer Other is largely fleeting, and is racialised/made hierarchical. The dynamics of these ‘mixed ability mutations’ are further read below.

Working hard, having craic: disrupting pro-school/anti-school

Important memories around the division of their randomly allocated class after first year are called up. These appear crucial to current self-recognition in a less coherent B Band tier. The past, never observable, moves to the psychic and to memory in the present. In this past, racial differentiation within the class group (as done with Adeola, Billy, Baran, Feyi) was not known/necessary to practice anti-school or pro- school. The word ‘gas’ - but particularly the way Tara pronounces it - carries a weight of local memories and modes of speaking with it. Focus on the *craic* (or fun) that is/was had with other (white-Irish) girls ensures doing school as tolerable as long as resistances (ranging from mild sarcasm in the main, to very occasional defiances) are staged or remembered. The performance of ‘craic’ and nostalgia is important for the intelligibility and viability of the girls as they position themselves and are positioned at the intersection of good school/bad home, white-Irish/foreigner discourses.

In producing (male) Asian and *female* African swots, the girls refuse to define hard work at school as undesirable in Others, or as incommensurable with themselves. They relay their apparently modest achievements with reference to the ‘foreigners’ in the class. But rather than predictably closing the book on these students (e.g. as geeky foreigners), their attitude towards them constitutes an inclusionary exclusion: quasi-comrades. Their refusal to define working hard at school/success as a bad thing has its own conditions, perhaps based on the necessity to reiterate traditional white resistant subculture. Those who work hard must not be ‘too’ successful (as in the case of Baran, who failed English). Some of the Asian kids are not swots as such, they just don’t seem to like “making a joke”. In other words, they are in their class, but they don’t *get* this

particular subculture. Perhaps more importantly then, those who achieve academically must be intelligible as having low subcultural status. Billy, Adeola and Baran are referred to as “smart but nice”, i.e., are interpellated as being relatively low status socially/subculturally. Baran, Billy and Robert are ‘nice but quiet’ Indian, Chinese and Filipino boys respectively. Billy is rendered both freakishly quiet and freakishly intelligent – calling up familiar notions of the costs associated with being a ‘model’ Chinese student in British school research (Archer and Francis, 2007). Asian students in particular were referred to as unfortunate (non-threatening), compliant workers in the previous interview. Here they are recognisable as non-threatening hard-workers in subcultural terms, and thus ‘out’ of resistant subcultures. Billy, Baran, Robert and Adeola are readily acting their places in this racialised B Band ethic of care; they are not asking for too much. Adeola’s non-threatening place is important in terms of how she is intelligible to Rachel and Tara as black-girl. This conditional acceptance of Adeola will be returned to when discussing her best friend, Omalara.

The academic, social conditions and costs of naming a ‘bitch’

Even though the racialised opposition inscribed between black and white girls is transnationally familiar, it is also always locally provisional. The episode with Omalara - who told me in interview herself that she distanced herself from some of her classmates after joining the school in second year - and the calling up of Feyi (who is considered in detail as a celebrity student in Chapter 8), is important to how race might be constituted in this B Band class. First, we have the very direct calling up of a physiognomic category (colour) as relevant to the discussion: the mentioning of Omalara sparks Tara to think of Feyi. Both Omalara and Feyi are assigned as potential-black-bitches. Tara, however, shifts ‘bitch’ away from being a problematic category. ‘Bitch’ appears acceptable as it might mean some type of resistance, and works within Tara’s understanding of school/subculture and related good-girl/bad-girl femininities. She states how ‘gas’ Feyi is (meaning hilarious, entertaining etc.). She appears to enjoy a resistance of mainstream meanings of what a bitch is, stating that herself and Feyi are always fighting.

But Omalara is the wrong type of (black) bitch. Omalara’s story of social and academic mobility disrupts Tara’s new migrant framing of learning/leisure and somewhat puts a mirror up to how ultimately fragile and ambiguous this framing is. The (forgotten?) dilemma of being upwardly mobile, in a sense, is possibly remembered by the girls when faced with an apparently socially mobile, subculturally competent black-Nigerian girl: Omalara. Working hard in multiple ways *appears* to have no effect on Omalara –

she does it effortlessly. Whereas for Tara, high status in resistant subculture - which is granted through her subjectivation through class and gender – comes at a cost. This cost is her status as a viable student. Subjectivations through good migrant/bad indigenous-school/subculture binaries creates multiple conflicts which may be ultimately expressed by Tara and Rachel via Omalara as resentment. Omalara, by her actions, is an affront to her race, if reports of Adeola’s reactions to her behaviour in the first few lines are to be believed. In her efforts to do school in the B Band, Omalara is somewhat positioned here as not doing blackness correctly. The internal relationship between race and school, respectable-white/deviant-black is re-cited in the girls’ subcultural knowledges. In their efforts to perform learning (re-do effort and to do resistance), the girls’ attempts are in some ways *undone* by their deployment of race knowledges and other co-articulated categories. Tara and Rachel’s sophisticated learning and reframing is still underpinned by a discourse which suggests fixed relationship between school effort, race, class and gender. When Omalara disrupts this, she troubles many tales that are drawn on and foreclosed, tidied and made appear discrete.

Meritocratic mixing: mutations of newcomers and white-working class

The discourse of good/bad migrant students in the mixed B Band intersects and mutates with – it does not parallel the already formed subculture resistant to schooling. The girls are always obliquely re/learning, making and losing themselves, and are not as intrinsically lacking as a reorganisational shift towards mixed ability might suggest. A provisional, fragmented alliance between racially inflected, classed, gendered identities is articulated by the girls here as part-resistance to the school disciplinary norms. But yet ‘newcomers’ are heavily, overtly positioned in this learning, undermining their own learning (good/bad bitch, as swot, as freak, as subculturally uninteresting). The most important tools here are:

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- The girls develop oblique, contradictory strategies to deal with being upwardly mobile in their own neighbourhood and being resistant in an ‘intercultural, anti-racist’ school. Ultimately, their psycho-temporal strategising is *as* sophisticated as Beth and Adrienne’s psycho-spatial work in terms of re/working and being re/worked by the new positions of the institution and the Other. This notion of making and losing the self may demonstrate the performative nature of learning beyond essentialised traits.

- The possibility of resistance to school may be sophisticated and oblique, but entirely vulnerable to being lost and open to recuperation. They continue to overtly rely upon a closing down of the Other in their deployment of ability-learner and meritocratic logics, possibly diminishing their own possibility for being rendered viable. As understandings of B Band Self/Other coalesce and mutate in Dromray, the meritocratic logic of embodied ability remains uncontested.

'Mixed ability' and the folds of discourse (space, time, selves, contexts)

In performing curriculum, or school, or peer group, student selves are not uniform in their performance of gender, race, class, sexuality. Rather, these categories interact to produce new divisions and new spaces of emergence for the self. The self is learning and losing 'itself' all the time: producing and being produced by various contexts. Those who are reduced to not identifying with or are not valued in this logic of embodied progression can be obliquely or overtly constituted as deficient or unnecessarily obstructive. How might research be taken up politically, when Gressgård (2008) states

The ethical-political "will to empower" could just as well distract attention from complexity in terms of "events" that cannot be subsumed under the prevailing criteria for judgement. Ultimately, therefore, the attempt to break a historically enforced silence, and focus on that which has real integrity... could contribute to a continued silencing of those others who do not comply with the dominant evaluative standards (Gressgård, 2008)

The dominant evaluative standard being interrogated here is that of the now itself, a known that shapes both the known past, and known future. Social justice movements' attention is constantly diverted towards *hope and embodiment of accumulated experience* over a more useful political tool: the impossibility of ever naming the oblique 'now'. We might interrupt the differentiation and hierarchy built into notions of progression by disrupting the apparently universalised notion of a self-present, static now and the accumulating embodiment of skills, knowledge and learning. By using the critique of embodiment of knowledge and 'progression' as a political tool, we can find new ways of interrupting facile, depoliticised inclusionary discourses of institutional improvement. This is not a rejection of hope: it is a shaking of hope out of its institutionalisation from the past (Civil Rights-wound embodiment) and redrawing it for

current conditions. If we constantly disrupt the now via its oblique, discursive constitution, we may make an overtly unequal future less certain.

Reflection on Chapters 5 and 6

Chapters 5 and 6 have worked largely to deconstruct oblique, tacit spatial and temporal (modernising) discourses. The final paragraphs below stop to collect some tools thus far, using some fieldnotes generated in Dromray. While redrafting Chapters 5 and 6, I came across this piece of data and thought it useful to include. It can be used to pose a number of questions which interrogate the implicitly modernist notion of intrinsically embodying race, class or gender. These questions interrupt the notion that one is an embodiment of one's experience, and suggest the self as a constellation/configuration of, e.g., race, class and gender, one that is only emergent in a particular way in particular contexts. Such a theorisation challenges the implicitly raced and classed notions of lack and deficit that Dromray's context of 'mixed ability' invokes.

Fieldnotes, April 2008: Period 2 in the School Canteen

As I walk by the canteen, I see that a third year B Band and A Band class have been put sitting in the canteen. It is Sports Day for 1st years, so their 3rd year joint PE class has been cancelled. Much of the A Band (almost entirely white-Irish) class sit in a block, chatting and studying, while the B Band class are dispersed throughout the canteen. The B Band students' seating arrangement appears to be almost a direct division of good new migrant kids and not-so-good white-Irish working class kids. There are one or two exceptions to this, particularly Ben, who along with Adeola and Omolara, is viewed by his class tutor as one of the best academically in the class.

I sit in beside some B band students that I know. Ben, who is hanging out with Omalara, Adeola (discussed above), their close friend Natalia (who I am told by one teacher is Irish but has a foreign name and surname), and two other white-Irish girls. Periodically, one of the two supervising teachers, Mr. Brett, who is in his early twenties, comes over to our 'good' group and tells them that the countdown is on and that they should be studying (for their Junior Certificate exams in two months' time). He does not do this, however, with the more resistant Nicole, Gillian and another girl. These three chat and eat in much greater proximity to where he stands with the other, largely stationery teacher. Nor does he intervene with the two Daniels and another kid who are chatting in what is known, during lunchtime at least, as the 'black spot'. Nigerian and Congolese males and females of different ages variously hang out here at lunch time: some of them name the area the 'black spot'. Not all black kids in the school agree with the black spot, or choose to sit there: it is open to contestation. Four relatively recent migrant boys Baran (Indian), Robert (Filipino), Ali (Pakistani) and Billy (Chinese, all referenced in the previous analysis) all sit together, and talk quietly amongst themselves on other benches.

The girls talk about Ben's hair. Ben says he might grow it a bit longer and put it to the side. Adeola says "don't grow it as long as Aiden Keane". She then leans back behind

Ben's back to whisper comically to me 'Karl, he's gay!' Ben, who was meant to hear this jibe, says "yeah I'm acting gay to Mr Brett, it's really freaking him out!" I begin to realise that this may be why Ben made some more dramatic gestures than usual and spoke in a higher pitched voice earlier, when Mr. Brett came over to tell them to "quit the chat" and "get some work done". I don't really respond to their jokes. When the supervising teacher comes back, Ben again puts on a strange voice to talk to him. I can't make out what Ben is saying, but the girls all laugh.

Performative praxis questions that arise from this piece and from the previous pieces include:

- Is this configuration of seating accidental, or is there a complex set of race-class-gender configurations occurring through:
 - Dividing space up in terms of physical bodies? (B Band Asian swots, B Band white-Irish and black female swots, B Band resisters?)
 - Time, when Daniel, who constantly makes overtly racist jokes) sits in the black spot, but never would (or could) do so at lunchtime?
- Could the fact that there are close black and white friendships such as that between Adeola, Omolara, Natalia and in class, Ben, be seen as evidence of 'successful integration', in light of Chapter 5's critique of interculturalism as requiring embodied (racialised, ethno-nationalised) selves who are variously respectable/disgraceful? Might this group not speak to a more fundamental, contingent process of being recognisable as a good student, where race-class-gender are configured in complex ways, rather than any one category ever necessarily being predictive of who will be successful?
- Would it be useful to carefully deploy a performative politics of a non-originating self, if we consider the *reality* of Ben's performance-as-gay as socially configured in time and space? While Ben parodies gay in this context, he is read as 'actually gay' in another context: an interview fragment where other white-Irish working classmates talk about B Band 'swots'. Could a politics of a copy of a copy, if attuned to the order of viability, disrupt the ordering of Ben's viability-as-white-Irish-masculine-academic? In the same way, could the plastic scumbag, a cultural phenomenon designated as fake in the previous chapter, be contingently used to interrogate the performance of white-Irish-middle-class?

Chapter 7

The politics of 'doing English': Language-Support as access to academic and social meritocracy?

Generating data in this interview:

JEN: [13 year-old, Nigerian, female, 1st year student]
ALIKA: [13 year-old, Nigerian, female, 1st year student]
KK: [28 year-old, white-Irish, male, interviewer]

KK: But then you mentioned that you're the only black person
JEN: Black *girl*
KK: Sorry there's two of you, black *girl* in your class and, why are you mentioning that as such? You said you need to be careful about something?
JEN: Yeah. I wouldn't talk to somebody in my class the way I talk to like, African - Nigerian people.
KK: Yeah
JEN: When we talk to each other, we talk differently. And we talk, usually really fast. And then we understand that. 'Cause if you say something wrong they'd be like, uhh, 'she said this so I don't want to be her friend any more'.
ALIKA: Probably if you said something really really fast they might think you said something else, and then you get in trouble for saying something.
KK: Someone in your class might think you're not being...?
JEN: Yeah, that you're being, I don't know its sort of like, a white - I don't want to sound mean, but it's usually like, if a white person says something wrong it's usually like, oh its ok, you didn't, it's... (trails off).
KK: So you feel you need
JEN: I need to be more careful where I'm coming from.

Smyth et al. (2009) provide interesting data on the 'systemic needs' of the Irish education system in *Adapting to Diversity*. The report, based upon the opinions and practices of Irish school principals, teachers and new migrant and (white) Irish students expresses a concern about, and produces data around potential:

- academic exclusion through language proficiency;
- lack of social/peer supports because of low English proficiency and
- barriers to accessing schools and achievement due to the location of many migrant students in DEIS/disadvantaged, mostly urban schools.

The first two concerns are based around ‘newcomers’ lack of English proficiency. The third relates more to these students and social class. However, the report itself does not deal with the intersection of these issues, i.e., the ways in which academic English is taken up in variously valued or devalued local school contexts. In this chapter, I examine more closely how language use, class and race might coalesce. I go beyond the simplistic notion that learning English grants equal access to school, to teacher knowledge and to peer acceptability. The chapter demonstrates the politics underpinning how the English language is/is not taken up, stylised, hybridised or silenced in ‘new migrant’ and working class B Band experiences.

‘Newcomers’ as subjects of language support

As Chapter 3 suggested, ‘immigration’ has crystallised in Irish education around the notion of English language support as necessary for integration and success. Additional English language support teaching has been the main and largely only government-led response to both young and old minority ethnic and minority language persons in Irish education in the past decade, and in particular, the 2002-2008 period⁶⁷. Indeed, the term ‘non-national’ has often been connotative of English language learner acronyms such as ESL/EAL/ELL in government discourse and in earlier research, including my own literacy work (Kitching, 2004). The quantification of English language learners in the school emerges in statement after statement. The appendix includes an earlier form from the DES, to support ‘non-national’ primary pupils where necessary. Quoting the DES website, www.education.ie:

This year the Department of Education is spending some €120million on English language resource teachers for primary and post primary pupils and over €10million on English language provision for adult immigrants. *Press room, Department of Education and Science (22/04/08). www.education.ie*

The Department has commissioned the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) ‘to undertake a large scale study into how an increasing diversity of students impacts upon the resource requirements and day to day teaching and learning in our primary and post-primary schools. This

⁶⁷ Ireland’s language support approach has been largely similar to other developed countries (OECD, 2006; Eurydice, 2004). The government conceded to lift the arbitrary cap of three language support teachers to each school that exceeds a threshold number of students regardless of school size or location. Under the pre-2007 rule, a school with 1,000 pupils could have the same number of language support teachers as a school with, for example, 250 pupils. However, in the emergency October 2008 budget, language support was reduced again to two teachers per school, despite the major disparities evident in the DES’ own statistics on the number of English language learners in different areas of the country (DES, 2007).

will ensure the language provision is appropriate to meet the needs of newcomer students'. *Former Minister for Integration Policy Conor Lenihan commenting on the provision of English language assessment toolkits and research to 'integrate' students (22/04/08) www.education.ie*

Critiques of this approach have regarded it as a 'band-aid' attempt to new migrant education (Nowlan, 2008), suggesting the government thought the issue was 'just going to go away' (Wallen and Kelly-Holmes, 2006). Language-support has, as Chapter 3 suggested, been couched in a nationalist surveillance of minority communities in a similar fashion to community cohesion policies operating in Britain (see *Migration Nation*, DoI, 2008). This logic ultimately sees potentially or actually excluded communities as self-excluded rather than systemically, structurally marginalised, and targets the education system solely as the language elixir. This is despite a raft of evidence that suggests learning a new language like English does not sit in a 'zero-sum' game with migrants' mother languages; first languages in fact facilitate continued cognitive development until the new language 'catches up' (Thomas and Collier, 2007). Still, minority language students are conceived of in public policy as language resource categories: where low, they are intervened upon to a limited extent. Students of high academic English proficiency are left educationally unsupported in terms of further resources. Thus, as suggested in Chapter 3, the phenomenon of supporting new migrant and/or minority ethnic students is deracialised and depoliticised (see NCCA 2009a; 2005).

Standard English? The oblique nature of performing English: race and class

Language performance is entirely bound to systemic politics of inclusion/exclusion. Moves such as Proposition 227 in California were recently taken to limit bilingual education, along with the anti-illegal immigrant Proposition 187 and the anti-affirmative action Proposition 229. These moves further legitimised discourses which suggest bilingual education 'does not work' when minorities do not succeed educationally. Students are knowable as subjects of biopower: in logics of meritocracy and viable bodies, they are not overtly punished for their linguistic difference. Rather, they are, educationally, variously allowed to live and let die, more obliquely through race, class, gender and hierarchical school positionings than through issues of *which language* per se.

International research demonstrates how English is *performed*, i.e. taken up in variously standard/non-standard ways, and variously valued through social positions in schools. Language is largely associated with the socio-cultural and socio-political emergence

and sophisticated practice of particular ethnicities, old and new (Harris, 2006), racialisations, and cultures of class (Cregan, 2007, Bryce-Heath, 1983). I explore ways in which simplistic policy notions of language-as-access and policy's elision of language style might tacitly or overtly elide race as discursively co-constructed through class and gender:

- The first data fragment examines language silencing and its potential link to exclusionary discourses of migrant choice, integration, and 'good/bad migrants'.
- The second examines some points of resistance to the depoliticised nature of language support through an interview with three minority ethnic male students.
- The third investigates how hybridised, valued and parodied English language styles expose academic and social inclusions and exclusions: how race, class and gender overlap with doing school and achievement (good) or doing resistant subculture (bad).

I attempt to deconstruct how English language practice, style and *non-practice* are underpinned by race, class and other positions in school. A move behind the veneer of language-support possibly exposes certain students as academically/socially viable and not viable in Dromray.

To integrate or not? Policy as silencing politics

Generating data in this interview:

MR. THOMAS: [Early 50s(?), white-Irish, male, teacher]
KK: [28 year old, white-Irish, male, researcher]

MR. THOMAS: A lot of the students who come here from different ethnic backgrounds are either settling in the community or have a lot of problems with family and, the move from their own country obviously causes a vacuum for them. But they tend also to be here with either mothers not here or fathers away working, you know, there's a lot of that. They also have a difficulty with language, with understanding simple things that go on in class depending on language skills, depending on English skills. And they also have a difficulty then simply getting to know the system that we have here. Not just discipline but the system we have for examinations, the system we have for university and getting employment afterwards. And eh, they sort of arrive in here and Dromray has a high percentage of them because we're in the Termonfort area where there are a lot of foreign nationals around. Which in one way is a good thing, but in another way they've

landed on us very quickly and we weren't ready for it. And we're now playing catch up in trying to accommodate them in English, accommodate them from the point of view of social welfare and pastoral care in school and also in society generally.

KK: Achievement - how do you see things going in the classes that you have?

MR. THOMAS: For the ethnic students? Em, some of them, usually the Asian ones will perform very well because they work, you can't use the expression I was going to use now - they work very hard. You know? And they, they work their backs off. And even, they have difficulties with English and so on, they have a very strong support at home, and they manage to survive and do very well. Others that come in are happy to be, I had a group here last year, they were happy to leave school and sell cars. And import cars and bring cars back to Poland or wherever they were from. This idea, and they're quite happy to do that, and they don't necessarily want to improve their English skills.

KK: You mentioned kids from European backgrounds and Asian - kids from African backgrounds? How do you think they're - I'm generalising hugely but do you see any particular pattern with those kids?

MR. THOMAS: It's hard for me to see a pattern established because I will have maybe a Nigerian student in the class, one of them one year and then I could have a student from, you know, Bulgaria another year. I don't see the pattern but I do see they're all different. Em, one particular Nigerian student who, apparently had stories of being strongly disciplined at home, that they'd been whacked, and it might be quite shocking to an Irish culture. But where they came from this was quite acceptable, you know? Another year I had a student from, I think it was Nigeria, who was actually a Prince. That was his title, he came, and he was attached to a tribal family over there and he came over here for his education. And he was immaculate, he behaved like a prince. He was apologetic if he was in any way late if his homework wasn't done, he was like a breath of fresh air, to have a student apologise to you and he'd be bowing with respect to you in the classroom which was a bit embarrassing. But he was a beautiful chap and very well behaved and very mature for his age, you know? And compare that with somebody else from Nigeria who would be not able to speak English well, not interested in being here. Spend more time and money on going across to the shopping centre for to get their hair done in the new Afro style or whatever it was. No interest in school whatsoever, no concept of work or examination. So it's hard for me to see a pattern.

The above fragment might create huge dilemmas for more traditional ethnographies. My questions could be regarded as incredibly leading, or as 'exposing' a racist teacher, contradicting the scepticism around truths articulated in Chapter 4. Given the raw nature

of what is said, we could bypass structure and culture, and conclude that this is a lone, aberrant, racist speech act. There is little doubt in my mind but that a well-circulated analysis of the above piece would effect a certain rush to professional language prohibition. (Politically) correct modes of speaking about minority language students might proliferate in its wake, constructing professional knowledge within further government discourses (Macrae et al., 1997), again eliding wider social inequality. The problem might be that the above could be classed as a racist caricature, thus privileging a 'misrepresentation' analysis over one of discursive conditions. Certainly, most teachers in the school did not speak in the above terms, and a number would find them quite shocking. I am more concerned with wondering:

- What part might the above speech play in the wider governance of speakable/unspeakable words in education-society in general?
- How might we miss wider, oblique mechanisms of race and school by dismissing this as an overtly exclusionary anomaly?
- How does the assumed, acceptable transformation of minority ethnic students into subjects of English language support through discourses of 'integration choice' play a part in this wider racist exclusion?

Certainly, the teacher appropriates a more sophisticated and complex picture than I extend to him: I offer a crudely race-invoking framework around 'patterns' which is fragmented and reworked. The teacher's talk of 'high percentages' and 'trying to accommodate' overtly cites management discourses and a resourcing frame. Such technicist discourses offer all students (including SEN students and others) to the school as objects (problems), which are to be acted upon where resources permit. In this sense, given the constraints that are present in the system (lack of enough language support teachers, timetabling, exam pressure etc.) minority ethnic-language students are intelligibly and acceptably produced as lacking and support-able only where possible. Medico-pastoral discourses are deployed in administrating and managing minority ethnic populations, subjugating minority languages and previous cognitive development in the process. The concept of integration is put forward as the key goal: migrant students are implicitly understood as posing a threat to social-school cohesion because of their low English proficiency. English is constructed in opposition to minority community languages in a zero-sum game: if students are using their mother tongue (and not learning English), they are subtracting from the school system, its capacity and its viability. This threat/subtraction may be underpinned by an assumption that learning

another language does not contribute to the cognitive development of students (McDaid, 2009).

The contingencies of learning English/car selling

Home and out-of-school practices might be a key site where racialisation and alternative languages overlap. The teacher's description of certain Polish students and car selling provides an important example. These Polish (male) students are largely unintelligible as students for many reasons, including their unwillingness to learn English. They are 'only interested in selling cars', and thus not interested in gaining high English proficiency. Perhaps this was certainly the case with some students the teacher encountered. But we could conjecture that such students were operating on the basis of certain contingencies: time, money, and the likelihood of various successes. The necessity to speak certain languages thus infuses and forms part of these practices. The exigencies within which certain (racialised, minoritised) households must act and how this can manifest in school may be captured in the concept of subjugated 'funds of knowledge' (González et al., 2000). But these students are not carriers of static cultural traits (like language, or lack thereof): they are making and losing themselves, operating on the basis of mobile, local and transnational, power-laden situations.

From the teacher's racialising position and positioning, car-selling is non-threatening because these students are *gastarbeiter*: once their business here is done, they will or should leave. Their particular presence is inconsequential to school, and might be generalised to other 'eastern Europeans' where possible. Indeed, 'not learning English' is not directed specifically at Polish students as an ethno-national group – it is Poland 'or wherever', constituting a lesser category of whiteness in this western European context. Both the practices of selling cars and race-speech authenticate each other as truth-mechanisms. They reinforce the local idea that this is what some Polish (or eastern European) people 'do'. These car-selling students 'do' Polish/eastern European correctly, and respectable white-Irishness is simultaneously secured. In this context, they are self-excluding, sojourning (inferior) whites. These students might also be doing their place in class discourses correctly in Poland (and here). Out-of-school practices, in this way, intersect with language and ethno-racial authenticity in school. Their 'choice' to embody and practice lesser whiteness (and not the English language) is positioned as ultimately equivalent with the choices a respectable white-Irish student could make. In the meantime, they are at best a drain on resources.

The matrix of English difficulty- 'proper student' respectability

Notice how 'difficulties with English' are articulated for different students in a complex matrix – for the unfortunate Asian students of the previous chapter, for the deserving African Prince, and for the undeserving (sexualised?) Nigerian Other. The (male?) eastern European students - while barely intelligible as students because of their English skills - are produced as vaguely respectable and intelligible as such within the school, perhaps because of their work ethic. Proper ways of embodying oneself are language-supported (speak English; speak it correctly if possible). The teacher draws upon a colonial exemplar (literally a prince), regally commanding his education in a western country while 'beautifully' fitting in with indigenous students during his welcome visit: an example to all of us? Exotic notions of ruling class and respectability are cited amongst/over the wider race of savages/lesser classes. This exemplar is used against the other Nigerian students, who are labelled as potentially disruptive (because of their hyper-aggressive home culture). It descends into insults about an intrinsic laziness coupled with a prioritisation of the latent physicality over cognition and academia. The fact that 'the prince' was a breath of fresh air possibly speaks to other disrespectful Nigerian students, but also to the disruptive white-Irish students who, in a class-ambiguous context like Dromray, might worry the school's originally middle class reputation and ability to draw 'good' families. Other black African students 'may not' speak English well, and are immediately and almost comically cast as likely to lose interest in school. They are constituted as a possible threat to the school's business, by their Nigerianness. As with the previous chapter, Asian students are regarded as more determined to succeed, allowing business-as-usual through model minority discourses. Language learning fuses itself to liberal equality of opportunity: students are given the elixir of language support (McDaid, 2009) and there can be no complaints.

The idea that whacking "might be quite shocking to an Irish culture" refuses to acknowledge public and private norms in Ireland around bodily displays and bodily sanctions. This regularises the 'right way' to rear children and to treat people in public, with the effect of silencing discourses around aggression in the home. This alignment of spoken and unspoken discourses about aggression towards children may seem surprisingly effective given the proliferation of child abuse scandals over the past two decades in Ireland. On the other hand, such an outpouring of distressing and brutal stories of sexual and physical harm in the white-Irish context perhaps only served to 'purge' the nation of its abusive flaws and in effect, further westernise, nationalise and ultimately racialise what it means to raise a child.

Of course, 'naming' racism can lead to new, context-free, reifying policy knowledges or effects. However, *not naming* the presence of minority languages, of non-standard modes of communication and of racialised minority bodies in the school is crucial to highlight. It helps us focus on the unspeakable ghost that haunts this excerpt: the possibility of (often) black failure. A history of global racisms comes to re-present itself in this 'new', local, 'intercultural' context. How can (black) failure be possible or speakable when, following national policy discourses, we want to avoid the mistakes of other countries and 'support newcomers?' The logic made deployable here fundamentally elides social positioning as relevant to schooling and school achievement, facilitating localised and national modes of selective colour blindness and language deafness. This is a selective audio-visual⁶⁸, as the 'language needs' of Asians and certain (white) Europeans are constantly recognised. It re-installs the capacity for schools to make racism a feature of the institution *de rigueur*. To summarise, certain analytical productions here include:

-
- Minority language bodies, where not English-speaking, emerge and endure as somewhat unknowable in the Anglophone public context, as non-integrated, language-passive and thus unintelligible as viable students.
 - In their recognition as subjects of language support, a co-constructed ordering of raced and classed viability tacitly occurs for good/bad migrant students.
 - Clashing cultural (school/home, Irish/foreigner) dispositions immediately make certain languages more or less viable. Minority languages are pitted in a zero-sum game with English, constituting certain migrants as potentially subtracting from learning and making the (national) system deficient.

As the next section suggests, the lack of extension of language, learning or meaning-making capacity to certain students in the school disregards how they might contest their positioning as more or less viable subjects of language-support. Using the terms of their recognition, they might interrupt the implicit meritocratic ordering of raced, classed and gendered viability that tacitly works beneath official discourses of achievement for new migrants. Yet in this resistance, it becomes clear that they are not recognised or currently possible as successful students.

⁶⁸ This audio-visual is taken up as the main analytical focus in Chapter 8 (next).

Dodging *de facto* learning support: troubling Same/Other classifications in English language support policy

The following interview fragment was produced with three ‘new migrant’ 3rd year boys. The three boys are exempt from Irish class and are in English language support class, despite the fact that they have all lived in Ireland before the threshold age of 11. Rafa⁶⁹ moved to Ireland from Kazahsktan with his parents when he was approximately 5 years old, and has been formally schooled entirely in Ireland. Bobby’s first or parallel first language is in fact, English. Bobby and Tank are in receipt of language support with students who arrived from the Philippines in the previous two years. Timetabling structure dictates that although Bobby, Tank⁷⁰, Franklin, Theo and Maria (Theo’s sister) are all in the same language support class, they are there for different reasons and purposes. The Filipino students are in language support. The failing ‘migrant’ boys are not in language support, although this is what it is named: they may be in *de facto* learning support. Through the interview fragment below, I suggest the school timetabling of language support for homogenised migrants - via state policy and resourcing - masks the possibility of racialised, classed, failure. These boys are not produced as failing just through racialised and class schooled subjectivation, but additionally through being produced via and productive of gender-sexuality ordering (male/female, hetero-male/homo-male).

Rafa, Bobby and Tank could dodge language support class to a certain extent at the beginning of the year because timetabling for support classes cannot be done until the year begins. There is some uncertainty for a short period about who is to teach which students ESL. This section of the interview begins by asking the boys where they went when most of their classmates went to Irish class. Instead of going directly to language support, or ‘extra English’ as everyone seems to call it, they hang around the canteen and are told to move by the principal.

⁶⁹ ‘Rafa’ is not the student’s real name; it is used to represent the abbreviation/Anglicisation of his ‘more difficult’ full (Kazakhstanian?) name in Dromray.

⁷⁰ ‘Tank’ is a replacement name for his actual alpha-masculine nickname, which is derived slightly from his (South African?) name.

Generating data in this interview:

BOBBY: [15-year-old, Nigerian, male, student]
KK: [28-year old, white-Irish, male, researcher]
RAFA: [15-year-old, Kazakhstani, male, student]
TANK: [15-year-old, black-South African, male, student]

KK: You know when the others had Irish and –
BOBBY: Oh yeah yeah yeah!
TANK & RAFA: Oh yeah
BOBBY: We don't like going to that gay class
KK: No, but em
TANK: We went to an extra English class
KK: Oh did ye have one?
RAFA: Yeah
KK: And were you gonna go even if the principal hadn't come over?
TANK: No!
RAFA: No, we weren't even if the principal *was* there, we weren't gonna go. We were waitin' for him (the ESL teacher) to come down lookin' for us but -
TANK: Cause like, he caught me. And there's just two people in the class
KK: Who's the teacher?
TANK: Mr. Sully. So he caught me, and I couldn't go, I couldn't mitch.
KK: Yeah
TANK: Borin' class though
KK: It's boring is it?
TANK: You'd be on about stuff you already know
RAFA: "I went to the shop, I'm goin' to the shop" - we already know it
TANK: (laughs) Grammar an' all
KK: Why do they do it then?
TANK: That's what we ask *them*
RAFA: They think we're stupid
TANK: No we asked them, said "why do we have to do it?" And this teacher's always, he starts sayin', especially us, when we get a job all of them, when we get a job they're gonna wanna find out about our English more than someone that's Irish or American or English.
BOBBY: But that's not true (i.e. our English is fine)
TANK: I go "why?" He goes "because they wanna know if you know English". I go "but what if you can talk English?" "Still, they wanna know your qualification in English" an' all. And I go "why won't they ask an Irish or an English person", I mean -
KK: You guys have spoken English, some of you have spoken English since you were
RAFA: Yeah, kids
BOBBY: I've been speaking English since I was born. I haven't spoke my language for a very very long time. Till now I don't speak my language.

KK: Till now?
BOBBY: I understand it, but I don't speak it.
KK: Ok. Eh, so if the teacher doesn't come you kinda hang around here?
TANK: Yeah.

The key discursive question here might be: what happens when language support – which in Ireland promotes basic communicative skills – meets oblique discourses of race, class and gender? Proper English language proficiency is the minimum qualification of education. Its emergence through talk with their teacher is not one of many, but as the *solitary* artefact that the boys have to trade from suggests is being produced from and is productive of the dynamics of which might constantly effect raced, classed positioning.

However, as the subjectivating discourse of language-support attempts to craft two homogenised, Same/Other object-populations (one English-speaking and one non-English speaking), there are disruptions. Tank makes use of the discourse of language support (basic communicative skills, social integration and liberation), effecting a new, previously unheard of frame. His interruption might suggest that language support is permeated by xenophobia, racialisation and classed divisions: “why won't they ask an Irish or an English person (for their qualifications in English)?” By asking this question, Tank creates a new argument, one that suggests that the racial Other actually might exist on the *English-speaking side* of the binary created through language-support policy discourse. His subjectivity shatters the binary and shapes a new argument: language is not the (only) issue for the (black, working-class, male) Other.

Yet at the same time, language *is* a problem: the boys *do* need language support, and the school makes efforts to support their viability in the longer term through constrained timetabling arrangements. However, this is *learning support*, a failure to develop refined English literacy skills processed via school/social subjectivation. It is not by coincidence that Rafa thinks his intelligence is being insulted in language support class: “they think we're stupid”. The boys speak fluent English, and can understand, interpret and use formal (official school, variously middle class) English. They might understand the boring grammar they are subjected to. But they themselves do not produce ‘proper’ English, or show signs of developing refined academic language proficiency like other migrant students. They speak quickly and are potentially classifiable as ‘common’ or Other in classed, ethnicised hierarchies of language use.

It is not by chance that the word ‘qualification’ is used by the language support teacher or by Tank. It describes the commodification and trade of skills: this is a labour *market* they are entering. The qualification itself - one in English, is almost insulting in what it signifies, once its labour market worth is confronted. English language proficiency is a basic skill: why are other qualifications that might subjectivate white-Irish-working class boys not being talked about with Rafa, Tank and Bobby? The discourse of learning society ‘qualifications’ is one that can work to make race, class and gender divisions incoherent in ways similar to ‘language support’ (Macrae et. al, 1997). Qualifications is an object produced and is productive of ‘skills’ that are useful to a ‘smart economy’ like Ireland’s, tightening and ensuring the ordering of academic (knowledge-based) skills over manual and service industry expertise. Unnecessary or low-utility skills include certain forms of non-European hybridised cultural knowledge, or languages. These include Kazakhstani or Russian, which Rafa speaks to Moldovan 3rd year boys he is acquainted with⁷¹. The boys’ words suggest that, ultimately, it is possible to disrupt the English-language-support logic by displaying how it is related to a wider cultural logic of employability and qualifications, in which they are less desirable. But they are already effected as low value commodities in the qualifications/skills/labour market. Rafa spends a lot of free time waiting in a local restaurant, and has a much lower attendance record than his classmates. Larry and Tank already practise petty crime. With a lesser (official) skills base to choose from, their ability to disrupt race and class positioning can be recuperated by the logics of school.

The above data suggests the elision of race and class with respect to some subjects of language support. It interrupts the notion that simply ‘learning English’ should grant equal academic access. In the final piece of data, I trouble the notion that learning English grants equal access to peer acceptability (in B Band classes). I examine how *stylised* language codes offer a window into the constitution of multiple racialised, ethnic and class inclusions and exclusions at peer level. Phonetic spelling is more deliberately used to approximate students’ accents. I consider how (unrespectable) white-Irishness is performed: approximated, practised and embodied by some white-Irish working class lads and their mate Ruthie, a white Lithuanian girl. This group all have quite ‘strong northside’ Dublin accents. They often speak inappropriately in class

⁷¹ This does not mean that ‘non-Irish’, or ‘non-English-speaking’ cultural knowledge is not useful to the globalised Irish economy. Continental European languages which, not coincidentally, are an important pillar of the curriculum in Dromray and elsewhere, are highly useful in terms of the multiple international service sections of major US IT firms e.g. (Apple, E-Bay, IBM, Google, Facebook). These are located in Ireland as European headquarters due to low corporation tax and proximity to/relations with the US.

at regular intervals: interrupting or talking at the same time as others. Ruthie does language learning the wrong way for the school's purposes, but she still cites, inscribes and reaps the rewards of subcultural white (Irish?) femininity.

But before this dynamic becomes apparent, legitimised and parodied styles of English police and effect a silencing of Adeola. Adeola was already referenced in Chapter 5 by Rachel and Tara as a 'good student'. Adeola emerges as 'good' partially through strategic 'hybridities' and standard performances of English: she often silences practices of a faster (Nigerian, or as she calls it, pidgin) form of English and often publicly practises respectable north Dubliner (black) girl through standard English and appropriate behaviour. Adeola is not considered successful academically or through her representation of the school in team athletics. But she publicly extols many virtues of the school, particularly that of achieving through merit. While she enjoys school life, she accomplishes her identity through multiple resistances to attempts to position her. Potentially similar linguistic and behavioural practices to Adeola's have already been hinted at in the accounts of Jen and Alika at the beginning of the chapter.

Learning English helps you make friends? Authenticating whiteness, parodying blackness

Generating data in this scene:

DEREK:	[15 years old, white-Irish, working class, male, student]
ADEOLA:	[15 years old, Nigerian, working class, female, student]
RUTA/RUTHIE:	[15 year old, white-Dublin-Lithuanian, working class, female, student]
DYLAN:	[15 year old, white-Irish, working class, male, student]
PIOTR:	[16 years old, white-Polish, working class, male, student]
KK:	[28 years old, white-Irish, male, middle class, researcher]
MR. STEWART:	[mid 20s, white-Irish, male, middle class, teacher]

Fieldnotes: 3rd Year B Band Woodwork class

I sit in the materials construction (woodwork) workshop beside Piotr, who is suspected by teachers to function at a low English language and general literacy level. This suspicion is based on his assessed, below normal production of English (speaking, reading and writing) since he came to the school three years ago. Students are working on their respective Junior Certificate projects and the room is quite noisy. People are allowed to walk freely around the room, and it appears that as much socialising is being done as work on projects. As I speak to Piotr about what language he would find it easiest to write in (he says English), I look up and see that Derek has taken a pencil from Adeola. Adeola is sitting two desks up from Piotr and I. As Derek begins to walk

away (towards us), Adeola hits him with the metre long plank of wood in her hand on his elbow, shouting:

ADEOLA: Give it back!

DEREK: (drops the pencil and holds his arm in pain while walking away, shouting) Ya shtupid cunt ya!

I dare not look behind me to where Derek has gone as it might appear conspicuous in a sensitive moment. I think he has gone down to the teacher, Mr. Stewart, at the back of the room. The teacher comes up and talks to Adeola two minutes later. He shakes his head as she appears to relate what happened. He then goes up to his desk and he starts to write something. In the meantime:

DEREK: (walks back up to where Adeola is sitting and stands in front of her, speaking aggressively) Who the fuck do you think you are, hittin me with tha?! You're a few! You sap.

ADEOLA: (turns her head towards him but says nothing)

DEREK: (walking away some moments later) Yeah, what the fuck do you think you're lookin at? (to people behind us) Did you see tha?!

Adeola is told to go to the bench in the main hall as punishment, and leaves the room. Derek goes up to the top left hand workbench near the classroom door and recounts what happened with his mate, Dylan. Ruthie has been sitting with Dylan all this time, mostly chatting but doing work here and there. Adeola comes back in some minutes later for her pencil case. With the drilling going on, I cannot hear most of what is being said. But as she leaves the room for the second time:

ADEOLA: (opening the workshop door, looking at Derek, quietly) Whatever.

DEREK: oooh, wot-EVER, you're not from the Bronx, ya... (trailing off)

As Adeola leaves the classroom, he gets up and parodies her, swinging his hips exaggeratedly and shouting fiercely at the closing door:

DEREK: WHAT-EVERRR! (then sits down again)

RUTHIE: What did she do?

After scribbling some notes for almost ten minutes, I go up to Derek, Dylan, Ruthie. They are standing and/or leaning over the front workbench, chatting and working on their projects now and then. When I arrive at their workbench:

DEREK: Karl did you see tha?

KK: What?

DEREK: She hit me!

KK: I did yeah.

DEREK: I nearly said ih, I nearrly said ih!

RUTHIE: (rhetorically, without a questioning tone) Wha. Wha are you not allowed say?

DYLAN: (mockingly admonishing) Oh no now Derek, you can't be usin' woords like that. You're not allow-ed use woords like tha.

Dylan tut-tuts and shakes his head, giving a sideways smirk at Derek. He and Ruthie continue to flirt and play with each other as they often do (even though Dylan is going

out with Daina, another infamous 'Litho'). Ruthie, laughing, pretends to kick Dylan and grazes his crotch with her foot while doing so. Dylan, sore and annoyed, attempts to walk away.

RUTHIE: You got me in the boobie ayrlier (*sidling up to him as he tries to push her away*) Ah, you love me reeally.

A common code like English is subject to sophisticated and multiple deployments and embodiments, in style and substance. This piece suggests 'knowing English' is constitutively shot through with a politics of appropriate language style, arising from gendered, racialised and classed embodiments. At play here in particular are linguistic stylings and embodiments of legitimate white-Irish working class masculinity as subculturally dominant and incommensurate with schooling. Under subjugation is Adeola's stylised black-Nigerian code of speaking English *and her mainstream English*: both as outside of official school knowledges and in B Band, white masculinised student subculture.

The performance of English: doing 'good African girl' incorrectly

The events above are unusual as this is the only occasion I have ever seen Adeola - who is considered relatively quiet, well behaved and well liked by many teachers and classmates - in significant breach of the school code of behaviour. Adeola was sent to the bench (where disruptive students are placed when ejected from class) and had a report filed on her as a result of what happened. This is also the only time I have witnessed one student physically assault another in Dromray, although I been told tales of racialised, masculinised 'scraps' (e.g. between Tank, above, and Derek, below, or between Moldovan and Irish boys).

Adeola is called into question in the scene in a number of ways, particularly in terms of her resistance to harassment. Adeola's mainstream (good-girl), quieter Africanness is drawn upon in the interaction. Since racialised 'black styles' (being loud etc.) are positioned as incommensurable with good-student in Dromray, Adeola works this constraint by being silent, or avoiding costs by not effecting such styles in public or with those who do not understand them. But here, she upsets the natural order of mis/behaviour in the B Band group. She hurts the infamous Derek ("who the fuck do you think you are?") The constitution of 'good African girl' is at risk of becoming undeserving-black-student, as she is sent to the bench. Adeola's quiet utterance "whatever" is taken Derek as an attempt to assert black-cool slang over him. But Derek then uses the term to both name and inferiorise her blackness and parody globally

imagined black femininity. By stating 'you're not from the Bronx, ya...' he attempts to strip imaginings of black currency (status derived from 'urban' cultures) away from Adeola. Even though Adeola uttered 'whatever' in a quiet way, Derek attempts to hold up the word as defined by black-street-authenticity and thus inappropriate for an African immigrant to use. Derek articulated this inappropriateness for African students a couple of times to me both in interviews and informally. Adeola is rendered undeserving of the word 'whatever' (as a good girl?), perhaps reinstating the transnational white positioning of imagined, popularised blackness. Interestingly, certain white-Irish girls (e.g Beth and Adrienne) appropriate 'Americanised' cultures and language styles with cost to their gender, but not racialisation.

Derek could not be mistaken for a (black, popularised) ghetto princess. But as Adeola leaves the room, he almost congratulates himself on doing ghetto princess better than she can, swinging his hips and shouting dramatically. Through his interpretation of the word 'whatever', he 'names' and demotes urban blackness (as melodramatic, inferior) and positions migrant Africanness as not even there yet. Ironically, the fact that he stops short of using an overtly racist term of abuse (and exclaims he 'nearly said it') confirms the need for clever modes of speaking and organizing, as with youth in black urban settings (Ginwright, 2007). Of course, Derek's restraint in this regard is in no way an indication of anti-racist policy working. Racist terms and ideas are perhaps reinforced through his celebration of self-censoring. Dylan's mocking words ('you can't be usin' words like tha') perhaps subculturally parodies official school anti-racism itself.

Though the students all use English, different styles create important boundary markers and at once position authentic racial embodiment, confirming hierarchy within school and subculture. Derek's disavowing interpretation of 'whatever' simultaneously forms the partial basis for his acceptability and recognisability. Being hit hard by a low-status, Nigerian, female classmate calls Derek into question as a (white-Irish-resistant) man, and as a 'known' high-status member of the mixed group of unfortunate and undeserving learners. Derek successfully and berates Adeola by drawing on a repertoire of insults appropriate to everyone's recognition in a hyper-masculine environment, through his hyper-sexist rendering (cunt, fewl [fool], sap [pathetic, weakling]). Derek also perhaps confirms his true white-hetero-masculinity (and by implication, its superiority) through the fact that he can 'do' ghetto princess. Perhaps he exposes a privilege of his own subjecthood: we can use words and gestures to act black (and even girly) if we choose. But we don't want to, as it is ridiculous and inferior. White

(Dublin)ness is centralised through a location of difference and power in individual language performance.

Performing bad white (Irish?) girl: the authenticity of an accent

The acts performed by Derek were not what drew me to this data in retrospect. I was more concerned with Ruthie's relatively small role towards the end, and her successful performance of 'bad (white) north Dublin girl'. The relative mundanity and lack of visibility with which Ruthie may emerge here is not insignificant. Ruthie approximates (unrespectable) white-Irish girlhood in this scene, confirmed especially through her impeccably melodic and nuanced north Dublin accent. She has lived in a local working class area for approximately 8 of her 15 years. Her name is anglicised from the more 'foreign' name, Ruta. But her surname is distinctively different in this context, and perhaps serves as one of the only reminders of her difference in school when cited in roll-call⁷². Ruthie is repeatedly viewed through school lenses as troublesome, given her constant talking in class, disregard for many teachers and her apparent lack of interest in (this school's organisation of) learning. Ruthie does 'bad girl' in a mixed-sex gang that allows only two white 'foreign' girls the privilege. The other girl is Dylan's girlfriend, who is also from Lithuania, and who also has a highly nuanced local accent. Amongst the play of signifiers, the local Dublin context, particularly that of the housing estates around which the gang hangs out, becomes crucial to peer group affiliation. Ruthie asks Derek in a rhetorical tone about what he is not allowed to say. She confirms Derek's mocking of school anti-racism but draws on a certain authority and authenticity in doing so. This authenticity might be secured through her acceptable, even applaudable class-dialect and sex-gender-sexuality performances.

Ruthie's practices are the source of much pride, amusement and hence, recognition, amongst the white-Irish (unacceptable) female friends she hangs out with. The girls who introduced me to Ruthie were satisfied that I had been initially fooled into thinking she was indigenously Irish, saying "see! You *wouldn't* know". The girls professed insights into what they term her 'Litho' background; Ruthie speaks Lithuanian with her ma, and her friends giggled at their attempts to speak a few words to me (in her absence). Ruthie destabilises the promise of English language learning by practising the wrong type of English for school: a working class code. This disrupts the homogenising instrumentalism attached to learning the language of business in Ireland: how can Ruthie be acceptable as a professional in the labour market with such coarse ways of

⁷² Ruthie/Ruta is of course, not her real name. Her name was abbreviated/Anglicised in the school in a very similar way.

articulating herself? At the same time, Ruthie can authentically perform or approximate hegemonic whiteness, *almost* as a linguistic choice, rewarding racialised and some subsequent social, subcultural privileges. Adeola never can (nor does she want to)⁷³. Partially through her impressive accent, Ruthie inadvertently acts as a conduit for unequal femininity, protecting its (white) integrity and purity. School/subcultural dichotomies and race are securely linked, partially through the choices, constraints and costs of certain language styles.

The above analysis suggests:

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- Adeola negotiates multiple contexts known and unknown to the teacher and to Ruthie, Derek and Dylan. She emerges and is recognised differently and be made differently viable in those contexts, contesting and reshaping them where possible partly through English language appropriation.
 - Excavations of linguistic authenticities and parodies display the embeddedness and boundary-setting of official/unofficial English language style, far beyond policy notions of academic and social integration through English language use.
 - Race and school knowledges endure partially through the subjugation of how language styles are engaged in these sophisticated peer group processes. Were the above data to be rewritten in ‘proper’ English, many racial and intersecting meanings might be lost.

The notion of being known and unknown (above) is taken up in the final data chapter as, for now, the final analysis on the enduring ways in which certain students might be made viable or acceptable in the different contexts (e.g. school/subculture) of modern institutions.

⁷³ Leaving school that day, I met Adeola and we talked about what happened with Omalara. Omalara was disgusted with Derek. Adeola was glad she did what she did, as Derek is constantly ‘at’ (i.e. harassing) her, in subtle ways she feels she can handle. Adeola told me that Derek got what he deserved, and Omalara agreed.

Chapter 8

A-Z Celebrity Students: known, unknown, deviant and ordinary

Using the school audio-visual to 'turn' on recognition of the self

Fieldnotes, Staff Room, January 2009

When I go into the staff room during a free period, three (white-Irish, female) members of staff - two teachers and a special needs assistant - are having a friendly chat about first year students over a cup of tea. Laura (a black first year girl) and her class come up for discussion. One teacher describes Laura, suggesting in a bemused way a number of times that she "has got a real attitude". At one point, she impersonates her: "oh no you didn't say that about me! Miss, did you hear what they said about me?" She makes large, dramatic arm gestures when she is mimicking Laura, and the others laugh. "You should see her - and the way she dances!"

"Why does the visible matter so much in this world?" (Mirza, 1998, p. 109). How and why are the exchange of knowledges about certain students meaningful, possible and perhaps necessary and even pleasurable in their surveillance? How is a first year student, such as Laura above - who is quickly accepted as entertaining - sometimes obstructive, but usually little else, within a caring institution? This chapter more formally moves to use economies of perception and recognition: what is seen and heard by staff and student selves, as its object of analysis. What is 'hearable' and 'sayable' about students and teachers, are considered constitutive and masking technologies of recognition and viability. This process goes beyond any truth/falsity claims, or even the most genuine desire for honesty. Some of the overt justifications and less obvious conditions that might produce/interpellate certain students as *deviant* and others *ordinary* through, or as a condition of the school's 'audio-visual' spectacle are examined here. Talk of infamous students might become part of the ongoing justification for them falling foul of disciplinary procedures and not being taken as 'marketable' or viable. Decisions are constantly made based upon implicit and sometimes overt raced-classed-gendered frameworks of perception. Logics of viability enduringly effects these positions (good student, low achiever, resister, deviant).

The raced, classed and gendered norms potentially hegemonically tied to the school's spectacle of who is 'loud and visible' (often, but not necessarily black/working class/male) and who is 'quiet and invisible' (often, but not necessarily white/middle class/female) are explored here. Yet these terms of students' recognition, while constraining, offer the possibility of transgression from and reworking of the places

offered in school, subculture and deviance from both. Rather than predictably acting their place within this audio-visual, 'Christian', 'Feyi' and 'Theresa' can contingently change its meaning within racialised, gendered subcultures. They might not overtly disrupt the business of school, but, e.g. silently make use of its instrumental focus on education (Youdell, 2006a, Mac an Ghail, 1988). Even if *overtly* rejecting the hierarchies that school might be complicit in re/producing, they can use its terms and other terms to make meanings and priorities with which to practice from (Willis, 1997). Students blur simple boundaries between compliance and resistance as they are produced and act within hierarchising audio-visuals.

The impossibility and necessity of perception: where and when are we made recognisable and viable?

Those 'known' in celebrity culture and new media spectacles are useful to think about when analysing 'the modern self', power and identity. Understanding both 'iconic' and infamous persons is arguably important: Gayá Wicks et al. suggest in the case of David Beckham:

On the one hand, Beckham's iconicity could be understood to speak to the national conversation around such aspects of modern life as celebrity; style; success; performance and wealth. But just as Beckham's iconicity fuels the celebration and hype around these aspects of modern markets and culture, so it could be understood as a concentrated site for the problematisation of the same (2007, p. 404).

The decentred subject can be made useful here to understand the manner in which the particular *context of the spectacle*, whether the official school or the wider media - governs 'appropriate' and 'viable' subjecthood. Popular and institutional conditions of recognition require a coherent narrative and a coherent self. But there are individualising risks to this imagined coherence: McRobbie (2004) refers to a double entanglement of the 'post-feminist' subject in terms of and popular and political culture. The apparent success of the 'ambitious girl' is largely knowable through the effects of governance that preserve male/female dichotomies. Via a logic of utility, 'feminine bodies':

are a good investment, they can be trusted with micro-credit, they are the privileged subjects of social change. But the terms of these great expectations on the part of governments are that young women must do without more autonomous feminist politics (McRobbie, 2004, p. 258).

Contemporary discourses and media technologies incite the acute regulation and new technologies of the 'designer', 'agentic' self. The 'feminine' subject is further made meaningful through its interaction with sexuality, race and class in and through the

spectacle of television. Makeover TV both requires a bourgeois femininity as normative, and promises it to its audience. Wife and family swops reiterate class difference in popular culture through the juxtaposition of sophisticated/uncouth cultural capitals. Tales of rescuing ASBO girls both requires their middle class femininity and depoliticises classed inequalities. Class differentiating discourses of pleasure and disgust may compose a white (but also possibly mixed race), comically ‘chav’ mum (Tyler, 2008). The unproblematised pressure to approximate the required and prohibitive norm, is made look easy in this spectacle, and thus why not down to the individual (Ringrose and Walkerdine, 2008, Wood and Skeggs, 2004)?

A cacophony of reports claim or imply the schooled feminine subject as now ‘more equal’ or even ‘too equal’, and the boundaries of male/female hierarchy are reiterated through what is masked by this assumption. The school might not be an all-powerful, final word on gender equity, but only knowable as ‘school’ in its reciprocity with the economic, cultural and social exigencies of global-state relations. Such reports assume girls’ success in schools as the final word on equality, masking the governing conditions that effect and assure the school’s viability. Meritocracy engineers multiple requirements of proper femininity that are at once requirements of academic success within schools in e.g. Ireland and the UK. The question ‘if you are not bright (and beautiful), why haven’t you done something about it?’ is one that confirms the logic of the system and school intelligibility (Renold, 2005, Lynch and Lodge, 2002). Furthermore, femininity is pathologically recast as ‘overachieving’, perfectionists, wrought by paranoia and (implied intrinsic) fear of (implied intrinsic) lack (e.g. Kindlon, 2006).

Thus, regardless of the potential of a limitless media to shift subjectivities and meanings, economies and technologies of perception - both old and new – might provoke strong regulatory effects. Despite claims of a more democratic, user-friendly media (e.g. youtube, the blogosphere), there has been little change in the alliance “between elite media industries and traditional social institutions and hierarchies” (Tyler, 2008, p. 32). The apparently coherent, gendered liberalised subject is still rendered through the wider exigencies of modern global-state-local intelligibility (Rose, 1989). In a sense, the at once global, national and local, institutionalised, iterated question ‘why don’t you fit in?’ requires deviance and mundanity as a condition of its own intelligibility as a *relevant* question for modern subjects. In a governing episteme that requires gendered and other hierarchies, these questions, whether tacit or overt, are

interpellations. They simultaneously recognise and position the subject's difference as measured against forcibly maintained sets of norms (Youdell, 2006b), iteratively creating spaces of celebration and abjection.

The possibility of mobilising the 'recognised 'self' in the school audio-visual

In a system that disciplines, normalises and hierarchises, 'acting out' or 'being ordinary' is part of a governing logic which effects certain students as academically celebrated, others as mundane and others as disruptive. But while the mediocre, resistant or deviant student might not be prized as educationally viable, students who are tacitly or overtly designated in these ways are never unreadable or unknowable within school. The domain of the successful, achieving student does not cancel out the deviant or failure as:

oppositions are, after all, part of intelligibility; the latter is the excluded and illegible domain that haunts the former domain as the spectre of its own impossibility, the very limit to intelligibility, its constitutive outside (Butler, 1993, p. xi).

As Eckhart's (1989) study suggested, the hegemonic significance of her successful students (Jocks) and leisurely Others (Burnouts) is not "the categories themselves, but the opposition between them" (1989, p. 5). This double presence is itself constituted, and thus *required* by the dividing practices of meritocratic school hierarchy. The student known as deviant or ordinary is related to all other subjects of the school (including teachers) as s/he inscribes their limits. S/he is thus a knowable subject, to some extent, of the school, offering him/her possibility. But the question for schooling always is: in what context is s/he viable, and to what effect?

The limits of academic viability often cite and inscribes resistant subculture, while the limits of both these fields cite and inscribe chaotic deviance and near unrecognisability. I consider three students who might negotiate and/or interrupt how they could be known in or outside school/subculture inscriptions (loud, deviant, ordinary). First, I briefly consider how 'Christian', a Congolese-Belgian male, subverts tacitly official school discourses of aggressive-black-male behaviour. He invests in privileged, desirable subcultural black masculinity: keeping it low, playing it cool. However, this subcultural, masculinised recognition comes at a cost to his possibility as academically successful. Analyses of Feyi and Theresa, the next two students considered, might offer Christian and indeed, each other possibility. Juxtaposition of their negotiations of male/female, white/black and popular/deviant/ordinary positions might suggest limits to the

choreography of these binaries. The tools I read as emerging from processes of popular, deviant and ordinary subjectivation are offered towards the end of the chapter.

Keeping it low: being known, but being subtle and being popular

Generating data in this interview:

CHRISTIAN: [15-year old, Congolese-Belgian, male, student]
KK: [28-year old, white-Irish, male, researcher]
SEAN: [15 year-old, white-Irish, male, student]
TANK: [15 year-old, black-South African, male, student]

CHRISTIAN: (Describing student groups in the school) There's the mad crew, the junkie crew, there's the smart people crew
TANK: (laughs)
KK: Smart people crew? Who are they?
TANK: Like, Emily and all them. All the smart
CHRISTIAN: Like they're not smart in class. They're just –
TANK: They're all like, all the quiet people, all the quiet girls just sit and they're all quiet an all.

...

CHRISTIAN: They're like, I suppose like us.
TANK: Will you stop, you're not smart! (laughs)
CHRISTIAN: I am smart, damn!
TANK: YOU *wish!*
CHRISTIAN: Like you can be smart sometimes and study hard.
TANK: NO you have to be a full time or part time
SEAN: Yeah
TANK: Me, I'm a full time part smart person
CHRISTIAN: I'm a full timer then I just quit for a few days! (laughs)
TANK: (laughs out loud) I don't get paid so I quit! (laughs)

...

KK: Is there any particular reason why you're mates?
TANK: Cause we like the same things
SEAN: *Yeah*
CHRISTIAN: Yeah, we all like the same things. We all like - eh...
TANK: We just like the same things! (laughs)
CHRISTIAN: I was about to say, we all like...
TANK: We just like the same things like
CHRISTIAN: We all like the same thing like we share...
SEAN: (wryly) Music an' all
TANK: Everything

...

CHRISTIAN: Low profile is good (in relation to rapping).
TANK: (laughs)
KK: Tell me more about that.

CHRISTIAN: Low profile? That's like, keep it like, the teachers don't know that you rap, but your mates will know that you rap.

KK: And why

TANK: *Everyone* knows like

KK: Like, explain to me

CHRISTIAN: If a teacher knows that you rap its like

TANK: You don't, I just don't like to

SEAN: Tell people

TANK: No, I don't like the idea of

SEAN: What you're rappin' about

TANK: (laughs)

KK: You started a sentence there (Christian) ... if teachers know that you rap, you didn't finish it

CHRISTIAN: Me? I don't tell the teachers that I rap. Teachers don't know that I rap its like, I don't know, it's just weird.

KK: Is it something to do with the reputation of rap or

CHRISTIAN: No, no. Reputation has nothing (to do with it) because a lot of people you know, keep it low. And that's it. Keep it cool. Play it cool.

KK: Do you keep a low profile in the classroom?

CHRISTIAN: It depends whose class it is.

TANK: Try to. Try to. Especially this year, I'm just trying to be quiet. I'm just doing my own thing in class.

Despite a relatively more subtle or less acute resistance to schooling this year, Christian, and also Tank, are *known* by their history. They are known also to other students perhaps through a wider form of racialised subculture that has emerged both outside and within the school walls. Christian records and distributes rap through social networking sites. Veiled, wry references are made during the interview to what Tank described (to me, elsewhere) as the interests that the boys share: priorities outside school, occasionally smoking cannabis, rap, girls, etc. Although Sean - who is white-Irish - balks at the idea that he might rap, thus perhaps reinstating its 'authentic blackness' - he shares a similar space of covert resistance to schooling, and is good friends with Christian and Tank. Tank and Christian in particular might require greater overt surveillance as a potential threat to authority as active-black-male. Largely masculinised youth subcultural forms (resistant rap, anti-school) inscribe them both and partially make them recognisable and high status within student subculture, but outside the realms of academic viability. Christian's lack of interest in school is not knowable in deracialising logics as an organising of priorities on the basis of contingencies, but as an active, unnecessary breach of rules. His male-blackness is already associated with laziness and carelessness, because of its deployment outside the realm of what is constituted as 'smart' in the official school context.

Certainly, Christian disagrees with any suggestion that he is not intelligent, despite not being part of the ‘smart people crew’. He claims to be smart and he acts smart within the school, but not in the sense that can be officially known as viable. This is despite, for example, his talented expressions in art class. His practices of subcultural black masculinity are sophisticated, but are rife with constraint. In the school he can win space from teachers by not doing what is tacitly expected of him: keeping it low, which makes him not-bad student. He deliberately avoids teachers knowing that he raps, and indeed, he refuses to make references to race or racial conflict at official school level during the interview: perhaps his own working of tacitly official school colour-blindness associated with whiteness (Dixson and Rousseau, 2005). In a way, Christian tangibly turns down the volume on his blackness as a way of disrupting the school’s visual, its gaze. This may be an appropriation of what Pollock (2004) terms a politics of ‘color muteness’: with ambivalent effects. In this practice of maintaining a low (race) profile, he may avoid a space of official school abjection. Yet at the same time, through his continued emergence in (masculinised) subculture, he is not viable as a student.

But Christian’s embodiment of subcultural cool is recuperated through another framing narrative, which can become associated with being anti-school: the practice of active local, Termonfort masculinity. His blackness might be commodified by winning favour through the popular (white) subcultural youth gaze: Christian is famous and knowable in both black and white-working class student subcultures as an authentic Dubliner, because of his performance of variously mainstreamed elements of hip-hop. There are embedded citations of a privileged *local masculinity* circumscribing his black acceptability: Christian, amongst resistant students, has a ‘real Dublin’ accent in this new migrant context and importantly is *sound*. This may incorporate him into traditional subculture as a desirable Other, unlike Feyi. There is a sharp contrast drawn with Feyi’s black-femininity in the following fragment. She is designated as obtuse, with a ‘gruff’ foreigner voice. Rainey, Aideen and Natalie (below) interpellate Feyi as outside the limits of acceptable girlhood via her black (foreign, African)ness, and thus also outside the limits of their ‘traditional’ (white, often working class) resistance. The below piece again focuses on student gangs and who they ‘hang around’ with:

Generating data in this interview:

AIDEEN: [14 year-old, white-Irish, female, working class, female, 2nd year student]
CHRISTIAN (mentioned): [15 year-old, Congolese-Belgian, male, student]

DEANO (mentioned): [Unknown to KK]
 FEYI (mentioned): [15 year-old, Belgian-Congolese, female, 3rd year student]
 KK: [28 year-old, white-Irish, middle class, male, 28-year old, researcher]
 NATALIE: [14-year-old, white-Irish, working class, female, 2nd year student]
 RAINEY: [15-year-old, white-Irish, working class, female, 3rd year student]

KK: Would you have any Asian or African friends?
 RAINEY: Yeah. Christian and Deano.
 NATALIE: Deano (inaudible surname)
 RAINEY: He's in 2nd year.
 AIDEEN: Yeah he's real sound.
 RAINEY: Then Christian, he's in my year.
 NATALIE: Christian's cool. He's a rapper.
 KK: Why do you... | NATALIE: (puts on 'rapper' voice) he *raps* |
 KK: ... like those guys?
 RAINEY: He raps
 NATALIE: No, not just that, they're just sound.
 RAINEY: Yeah they're sound.
 KK: Would you say that there is anyone that isn't easy to talk to or that you wouldn't get on with?
 AIDEEN: (puts on gruff voice, imitating) *Feyi!!*
 RAINEY: (growls) Feyi! You know what she said, oh my god, d'you know what she said right, she said em, she said eh, we were talkin' about bullyin' in school, oh I already told you!
 AIDEEN: Yeah! Macaroni face!
 RAINEY: No, she said I'm only in Ireland to get all your white trashy Irish money!

There are multiple politics of the self at play here, particularly the equalisation of claims of racism, using Feyi's insulting remarks (white trash, orange, undeserving of money). This equalisation protects Rainey from being called racist, part of a subtle reworking of anti-racist politics through class positioning/injury. Christian readily engages with and across (male) Dublinness. He is positioned as (sub)culturally competent. He cannot be designated as unpopular in the manner that Feyi emerges: loud, black, female and *unapologetic*.

In the forthcoming section, I consider how Feyi is emergent through a *required* space of abjection from raced, gendered school viability and traditional subcultural possibility. This requirement binds and has costs for her, but also provides her grounds to act. Feyi's subjectivity reveals the gendered, raced delimitations of both school and

subculture. This offers the possibility to disrupt and remake school-subculture relations. But, again, her interpellation as deviant, disruptive (Other, girl) - is also her cost.

Justifying abjection: excavating how Feyi might be officially 'known'

Feyi, a Belgian-Congolese girl, seemed perhaps one of the most 'known' students in the school. This was apparently the case in her 3rd year group, but also across the student body and teaching staff. Feyi was often smiling in school, and appeared largely unapologetic for her transgression of a number of school rules and associated requirements of hetero-femininity (white, slim, quiet, sexually compliant/docile). She is largely not reconcilable as viable in achievement terms, despite references to her intelligence (below). She often appeared unafraid of school sanctions, at times walking into class late, being absent from school. She was rarely overtly disruptive when I saw her in class, but her legend always seemed to outweigh my observations. Narratives of her using racist remarks against certain white girls (white trash, orange), or of fights on school buses disrupted current (white) resistances. She was also not afraid to clash with certain respected black males. Voyeuristic myths and legends circulated about her in the B Band: students from different groups told me that she was seeing a '20-year old guy with a Mercedes'. There was regular speculation amongst students about whether or not she had dropped out of school. Possibly the unacceptability of her body and its associated actions tests the limits of school and often masculinised and/or subcultural discourses. Yet while Feyi is acceptably marginalised in terms of participation in school life, this is not to suggest she is passive, nor that she does not derive some pleasure in constantly 'being trouble'.

I turn particularly here to one quasi-official teacher designation of Feyi as a way of suggesting her story (i.e. her enduring constitution) is neither unnecessary, unfortunate, nor easily resolvable. It is a *requirement* that Feyi is knowable in school 'bad (Other) girl' stories, effecting the intelligibility of discipline and also constituting traditional resistances.

Generating data in this interview:

KK: [28 year-old, white-Irish, male, 28-year old, researcher]
MR. BURKE: [40s, white-Irish, male, teacher]

MR. BURKE: There's a number of them I don't think have a hope in hell really. Julie unfortunately, I don't think will pass it. I don't think she will do well in the junior cert as such. Em, Feyi because she's an

extremely, she's clever enough to pass it but she very very disruptive and has had to be excluded for throwing stones at people and for her, you know she's excluded for throwing a large rock at Karina. A very large - the size of my fist... It didn't hit her but it came very close to hitting her... so I know that there is tension between Karina and between Feyi. And probably there is other sources as well. Em, Greg comes to mind, it's quite possible. But I do feel sorry for Feyi in some ways, nobody wants to be victimised or be the, and then be the focus of... but she's had a lot of chances and that and she doesn't help herself either.

KK:

Do you feel that she gets victimised in some ways or - ?

MR. BURKE:

I don't know, I feel, I don't know whether she gets victimised or whether she brings it on herself but I do know she's unpopular. And I've had, I've defended her a few times if you like, because I'm fair to everybody and like, I would be more than happy to have her in the class if I didn't think she'd be a major source of - but I mean, she can't be trusted and I mean, that would be not just from me, other teachers would know her as well as being trouble, you know?

KK:

Did she get just excluded from that class or is she excluded from (school)?

MR. BURKE:

I think she's not excluded from the school, but I think she's been - she goes up to the bench on that class and from time to time, I give her things to do or I check on her and I see if she's ok. If I don't get a very positive response from her I just leave it. Because you can only take the horse to water as they say.

The above narrative of Feyi is clearly not objective: she is storied, routinised and categorised through an important governing logic: the *humanistic narrative* (of the self) that modern schooling heavily draws upon. This narrative, relying on an invisibly normed (white, male) human, both 'knows' and shores Feyi up as deviant. It simultaneously makes her recognisable as a member - but a lacking or incapacitated member - of the (academic) school. Feyi's storied actions emerge and are professionally-pastorally knowable through multiple unknowns, or masked citations. These may include violent-other girl, charity case, risk-category and pre-emptively disciplined/criminalised (Fitzgibbon, 2007). Her knowability and production or regulation through these knowledges inherently limit the possibility of her being known as a successful student. Her disruptive black-girlhood is an important means of strengthening the place of the ideal good girl student and justifying school discipline. Feyi's blackness is of course, not intrinsically incommensurable with being a good student. But it is enduringly associated and tacitly cited as anti-school, creating the common sense opinion that she is a hopeless case (despite her recognised intelligence).

The sensational, abject Other girl

Feyi's sensational actions are readily open to depoliticisation and deracialisation: the tacit implication is that other girls do not act this way: sexist exclusions thus must not be a feature of the dynamic, as it is a case of individual responsibility. Furthermore, through her active disruption of the universal good girl, academic-femininity requirements co-obscure the possibility of naming racism. In a context of new migrant students, *other black* girls (such as Adeola and Omalara in the previous and in the next chapter) do not act this way. The narrative given above perhaps positions Feyi on a normative continuum of nice to mean girlhood, where any expression of violence or aggression is seen as Other to the essential, different, feminine (Ringrose, 2006). The sensational or unique appearance of Feyi's actions belies the reinforcement of a pathology that constitutes white middle class girls as in need of protection and surveillance. As Ringrose suggests, the Other girl's acts of isolated violence can become highly exploited, having

a place in the mean girl narrative as part of a postfeminist rhetoric of girls gone wrong – a warning sign about how feminine pathology might slip beyond its inherent lack as meanness (which is a normative condition of the feminine) into violent excess (Ringrose, 2006, p. 419).

Indeed, both Feyi and Karina are rendered exceptional cases of girls gone completely wrong, cautionary tales which shore up the fantasy of the good (white, middle class) girl. Ringrose considers that, while white middle class mean girls can expect guidebooks and counselling as part of dealing with the pathology, new criminal categories (such as ASBOs) are likely created for the violent Other mean girl. Feyi's outside-school, immigrant unknowability may form a part of the narrative gaze and a tighter technology of surveillance within the school walls. Why does Feyi act out in the ways that she does? What might be 'going on' outside the school walls that 'creates' this situation in an institution that justifies its existence through having her best interests at heart? Rather than being sent home, she is put on in-house suspension. Discourses of risk-avoidance are workable through the removal of Feyi instead of politicising the issues at hand.

Feyi's actions are vaguely articulated through social psychological knowledges: we know that the victim is at high risk of becoming the perpetrator. Thus, placed in the category of 'risk', deviant Other girl, she can perhaps become an appropriate target for prior diagnosis and pre-emptive discipline/criminalisation (Fitzgibbon, 2007). Through the fair chances afforded to her, she has proven she can't be trusted. Isolated acts of

good behaviour' from Feyi, rather than being out of character, can become intelligible as unfortunately rare moments of humanity (and girlhood) for the charitable school to incorporate, as justification for its mission.

The humanised, pitied story told around Feyi allows a deferral of meaningful engagement with her, perhaps always attempting to reconcile her with passive, acceptable girlhood. However, this pity secures the boundaries of palatable, viable blackness and girlhood by locating her outside of them. She is effected as a scapegoat and/or cautionary tale which simultaneously renders her possible as human but also relatable-to and thus, reterritorialised and retold. It is this constant scapegoating effect: enough agency to be victimised and culpable at the same time that may officially interpellate her. As the disciplinary gaze is exercised in a more acute way on Feyi, she becomes a fetishisation of what happens when normative conditions are disrupted. The only possibility for her 'rescue' becomes her own personal actions, i.e. you can lead the horse to drink – but her reluctance to drink is always and already constitutive of her, and further proof of the rule. Drawing upon her resistant acts, it becomes perfectly acceptable to denote Feyi as abject: more a risk to be managed than a citizen of the school.

The final student considered is 'Theresa', who appears usually constituted in school as behaviourally benign and academically unremarkable. She may be further unknown to resistant subcultures through her whitened, feminised constitution as ordinary. But in the fragment below, her silenced eastern European ethnicity is exposed, interrupting these constitutions and offering the possibility of another story. It is easy to be seduced during the ethnographic process to re/produce classic tales of infamy and outrage as a 'vehicle' for those 'seen' as placed outside norms of acceptability. This seduction might come at the expense of considering 'less sensational' students. The ordinary student's place in schooling could equally provide a strong troubling of the governance of apparently immutable sexed and raced school 'traits'. While white youth have long been considered as important in race theorisation (e.g. Nayak, 2003, Mac an Ghail, 1999), perhaps Theresa's designation and action as *quiet/ordinary* is important to read as an unmarked foil. Certain sensational students may be constituted as 'more policed' and 'more known' against this/these marking axe(s).

'Ordinary' does not equal passive: Theresa as ordinary (white-Irish?) girl

Central to the following fragment is the knowability of racial and ethnic categories in curriculum and the largely silenced, invisible constitution of proper, white, feminised

student bodies. These may infuse how the apparently quiet Theresa is not seen, or not heard as 'foreign'. The scene might provoke an analysis of how certain students are render-able as behaviourally and academically benign. They may be rendered *not acting, not subcultural* in tacit designations of average whiteness (and feminine Asianness) in the school's audio-visual.

Generating data in this scene:

DEREK: [15 year-old, white-Irish, working class, male, student]
JANE: [15 year-old, white-Irish, working class, female, student]
MARIA: [15 year-old, Filipino, female, student]
MR. CLAFFEY: [mid-30s, white-Irish, male, teacher]
THEO: [16 year-old, Filipino, male, student]
THERESA: [15 year-old (?), white-Moldovan, female, student]
TOMA: [16 year-old white-Moldovan, male, student]

3rd Year B Band History Class: Snappy banter goes on between the teacher and students: no hands up, usually just shouting out comments. The class are revising World War II and Hitler's racist ideology before the Junior Certificate exam, which is only a few months away:

MR. CLAFFEY: There was no age sign of weakness, no sign of Jews or anything like that
STUDENT (unknown) And what if you were (sic) blonde hair and blue eyes?
MR. CLAFFEY: You were counted as being Jewish even if you were Christian and your grandmother were Christian
THEO: That's real racist sir (the only thing he says).
MR. CLAFFEY: It is. There is racism behind it. This (Ireland) would have been a wheat farm and we would have been worked to the death if we were Irish – Ukrainian? (gesturing towards and talking to Toma)
TOMA: Moldovan
MR. CLAFFEY: Moldovan is it? You were in trouble. (Looks at Maria) – Filipino? You had to deal with the Japanese.
MARIA: (in a more muted voice) No we were dealing with the Spanish.
MR. CLAFFEY: Well in world War Two you were dealing with the Japanese.

Teacher then looks at Theresa, who is sitting at the back on her own, and says:

MR. CLAFFEY: Where are you from?
THERESA: Moldova
MR. CLAFFEY: You're Moldovan, you were in trouble.

Some of the class gasp and Derek turns around from his placement at the top of the class, saying out loud

DEREK: 'YOU'RE MOLDOVAN?!' jeez. You speak Irish though don't you?
THERESA: (quietly) Yeah.
JANE: (Almost jumping out of her seat at the top left of the class to defend Theresa) Yeah she's Moldovan and that's all about it so shut up. Her name is Theresa.

Theresa does not engage in the banter that characterises this B-Band class group. The banter, and indeed the teacher appears emergent through common discourses of male-authority and 'lad' hetero-masculinity noted elsewhere (Francis and Skelton, 2001), managing the input of information in the lesson almost through banter with the 'more vocal' (male and female) members of the B Band class. The curriculum itself might be rendered and enacted here through a discourse of teacher-possession/student-lack, which requires the instrumental *acceptance* of content as fulfilling academic achievement goals and associated, docile (femininised) subjecthood. The teacher overtly appears to use phenotype (the Filipino and the white eastern European)⁷⁴ as signifiers of 'nation' in order to make the content understandable, relevant and, ironically, to unite all students in the class as potentially oppressed in World War Two. Nation, religion and culture might allow for greater ethno-racial elasticity (e.g. we are not totally surprised if an 'Asian' person is actually born and bred as a US citizen). But in a new migrant context like Dromray, physical characteristics retain much currency as markers of nationality as ethnic markers such as names and languages. Theresa is particularly assumed by some as a natural, abiding (white, Irish, ordinary, invisible) girl until her ethnic Otherness is inadvertently 'exposed' by the teacher in the pursuit of a curricular goal.

The shock revelation of Theresa's ethnic background to others is a central feature of this scene, disrupting the circumscribed spectacle around whiteness. Unlike other 'quiet eastern European' classmates, Theresa (a pseudonym) has a Christian/Catholic first name that is not identifiable as 'foreign' in this context. The ethno-national category 'Moldovan' is imposed on Theresa by the teacher, and her whiteness is both constituted and somewhat downgraded by the shock revelation by some classmates. Raced, gender-sexuality regulations of what is knowable and seeable, in this case, mundane, quiet (academic, social) femininity, allow Theresa to pass not just as white, but more importantly, western, or Irish-white. Theresa is simultaneously, silently categorised as

⁷⁴ As well as perhaps some limited information about ethnic background (name, etc.) although this appears secondary.

ordinary in school discourses and outside of actively resistant subculture. The signifying chain of ordinary-white-girl might afford her a benign status amongst some peers.

Theresa's ethnic background may only be made publicly known through a gendered curriculum: home economics (domestic science) class⁷⁵. This is entirely acceptable in governing logics of female viability which enduringly overtly regulate 'appropriate' subject choice, arranging the sexes into subject spaces. Theresa is possibly only known as doing minority ethnicity in a secluded, non-threatening, and thus, feminised way in home economics. Indeed, a 'louder girl' like Jane, who shares home economics class with 'quieter girls' like Theresa and her Filipino friend Maria, jumps to Theresa's defence, reinscribing her ordinariness and her place outside of white-Irish subculture as she attempts to defend her. It is interesting that Maria attempts to further excavate her positioning *as Filipino* through Spanish colonisation. Theresa does not attempt a contemporary colonisation critique, and subsequently might not pay further cost for during this curricular decontextualisation of racism.

Being recuperated again to 'ordinary', but 'active ordinary'?

Theresa is not particularly viable as an achiever, nor as an exemplar of white-eastern European success like Regina, the Latvian girl mentioned in Chapter 6. Theresa's highest grade in the March 2008 exams was a C: most of the rest were D's. Although she appears to fit the B Band category academically, she is largely unintelligible in the subcultural discourses of leisure and overt hetero-masculinity and femininity that are incommensurable with school. To Derek and some others, Theresa is perhaps a relatively unremarkable (plain?) female. She is not likely as an Other they might consume, possess or reject in the same manner as Feyi, who is inaugurated into a space that is digested by all. It is quite interesting that Derek asks Theresa the key question: 'you do Irish though, don't ya?' Unlike a number of other 'foreigners', Theresa has either not applied for an exemption from learning Irish language and literature – which is a core subject – or she started school in Ireland before the age that an exemption could be sought, which is 11. It is interesting how Derek uses an arbitrary gauge like 'doing Irish' as a curricular subject. There is a possibility that Derek, who is in learning support and is exempt from Irish, has been usurped in terms of his distant Gaelic heritage. The remark might also be a check on Theresa's length of stay in Ireland, or a

⁷⁵ Theresa's teacher told me she taught about about food preparation in various (ethnic, geographic, socio-economic) contexts as a way of looking at various domestic contingencies, and thus drew on girls from 'different backgrounds' in order to illustrate teaching points.

comment on her chameleon-like invisibility in local school context. Theresa's very place – on her own at the back of the room – suggests both a literal physical and a symbolic separation from some of her more 'known' classmates. It might be her very mundanity and invisibility - via her feminised white student acceptability that perhaps racially diffuses the 'ethnic shock' and recuperates a still quasi-ordinary Theresa. A low level of information was available about Theresa's ethnic 'status' before this: while she is already unremarkable to the school's purposes, she may continue to be unremarkable to her more vocal classmates.

Yet one's 'place' in the spectacle as such a girl might not be all it seems: Theresa's largely silent schooled designation as ordinary, non-active white girl relative to more 'known girls' might be a productive constraint. Her unknowability avoids the pathologising gaze placed on Feyi, for example, as less information (conjectural, official or otherwise) is gathered on her. Coupled with her apparently quiet self, this makes her potential ethnic practices less known to those students and to the school. In a sense, Theresa, prior to this positioning, might have enjoyed a less categorised status via her constitution as white, ordinary girl. I would never suggest that Theresa has simply 'ethnically assimilated', or that she is passive for various reasons. For one, through processes of subjectivation, she actively practices and is primarily knowable through the quiet manner in which she does (white) 'girl'. The extent to which she regards herself as ethnically different is unknown, perhaps given her invisibility in traditional subcultural discourses and of course, lack of knowledge of ritualised home practices. It is not an unreasonable possibility that Theresa uses this quietness *as* possibility. She may accommodate the lack of recognition of her own ethnic difference in the school's audio-visual for the more instrumental purpose of school success or peace. She might ritually avoid the costs of 'outings' like the above in her B Band class. It may be important to Theresa's security from circulating, sometimes overt discourses of 'white subrace' that she does not reach beyond her stationing amongst certain peers, i.e., that she continues to 'do ordinary'.

Using recognition and perception as an intersectional analysis of subjectivation: turning

This chapter has used the selective intelligibility of the school's audio-visual (or spectacle) as a means of understanding the interaction of recognition and viability in reciting, preserving and enforcing gender and racialised orderings. Yet it is important to consider that the spectacle of the school is a productive constraint for these three students. They are knowable as deviant, popular, and ordinary, and these 'knowns' are

achieved through racist effects: the overt and oblique preservation of gender, race, class and other categorisations. At the same time, the reading suggests that there is possibility to disrupt and turn upon the preservation of these knowns by virtue of the school's limitless spectacle. By juxtaposing these three students we see how they, in various ways, are activated by these interpellations, and turn upon them:

- Theresa's 'case' speaks to the invisibility, and enforced privilege of whiteness in terms of how bodies and names are symbolically classified. Whiteness, with regard to Theresa, can be further understood as undisturbed (and thus assumed, accepted and normalised) with and through regulatory school discourses of feminine docility. The ordering of such school/subcultural dichotomies simultaneously render Theresa as somewhat unidentifiable with resistant student subcultures, or at least unlikely to form a meaningful part of such subcultures.
 - In this way, Theresa may be the constitutive foil to Feyi, discussed earlier: she can pass as the very embodiment of the good girl through disciplinary knowledges which normalise her whiteness and rely upon the constitutive mundanity of 'hetero-feminine' (good student) behaviour.
 - By comparison with Theresa, 'being smart' in school audio-visual for Christian involves 'keeping it low' (masculine) as opposed to 'being quiet' (feminine). Through discourses of black-race-threat and benign femininity, Theresa's silence might not be knowable as resistance – Christian's is. Possibly the difference between 'low' and 'quiet', in this school, is not just about the reiterated male/female boundary, it is its intersection with and through a white/black dichotomy.
-

Performative possibilities are evident in Feyi's exposure of the requirements of femininity, academia and grace and/or 'collective resistance'. They are also readable through Christian's 'smart' strategising around what is tacitly assumed as male blackness and through Theresa's private practices of the self. Is there some way that Theresa's practices might become known as being as clever as Christian's? In any case, all three students might be finding ways of dealing with the sealed 'story' of self that is perceived in Dromray.

Chapter 9

What now? Why 'now' for the green jacket experiment?

Integrating deconstructive politics into institutional racism analyses

In this final chapter, I address the three driving concerns of the thesis that were raised in the overview. Based on a conceptualisation of *racist effects*, I first return to white-Irish/Newcomer and race-class-gender-institution deconstructions produced in earlier chapters. In the closing sections, I revisit themes of intersectionality, relationality and overt political action. Ideas around praxis for schooling are put forward. These ideas intend to test the limits of justifications of self and school, and encourage the self to examine how his/her mobile constitution is entirely linked to the Other.

The flux and mutation of racist effects: what of white-Irishness?

Each chapter has suggested ways in which white-Irishness may be framing and effected as superior academically and/or socially. This was not always a directly nameable process. While it may be seen as occurring in overt framings of good/bad Others, the centring of white-Irishness was also dynamic, oblique and in need of deconstruction via the school and the self: a *vector* effected via various internal-external school planes (academic ability, language proficiency, family background, 'coping' with diversity, mixed ability teaching), and co-constructed through students' class, gender and subcultural bodily and spatial positionings. The work may support some social research in Ireland that indicates that it is of limited value to analyse youth in Ireland along one axis of difference, or as performed in static, unrelated social spaces (Ní Laoire et al., 2009).

In as much as I analysed race, I had to be drawn to other social positions and modernist institutional assumptions to understand the oblique effects of racism. It was suggested in Chapter 6 that 'meritocratic mutations' were occurring through race, class and gender in Dromray. It was also suggested that students' negotiations and resistances across overtly/obliquely racist effects were largely recuperated. In other words, they did not fundamentally challenge school, or jettison subcultural or social exclusion. Quoting Davies (2004),

At most (students) develop their own discursive practices through and which they can accord themselves a sense of self-respect or self worth, but that 'alternate' discourse exists outside the meaning structure recognised and legitimated (Davies, 2004, p. 138).

School and self remained justified in the face of the massive shifts around Termonfort. But attempts to articulate, deny and interrupt these exclusions were constructed via the researcher/researched in the following ways:

- Beth and Adrienne overtly suggested the immutability of a hierarchy of the racial Other in Chapter 5. But such racial immutability may be contradicted in the anxieties provoked by the ambiguities of class-based whiteness. It may be further contradicted in the mutation of local (Irish) scumbag and global black masculinity into ‘pimphood’.
- The displacement of politics and ‘risk’ outside of the school, which previously worked to effect respectable/disgraceful (Irish class-based) families, was regenerated in the principal’s interview. This hierarchises new migrant and settled minority ethnic groups relative to good/bad Irish families socially and academically. Discourses of cultural clash and cultural fit came to the fore in this deconstruction.
- Theo and Franklin’s memories of the Philippines disrupt the decontextualised naming of Filipino and other migrant students as *embodying* pro-school, superior, model or anti-school, inferior, deficit ‘dispositions’. They also suggested their appropriation of ‘model minority discourses’ as they crossed borders and were resignified. This reading of their experience encourages an engagement with the spatial, temporal in jettisoning simplistic good/bad, racialised and classed framings of new migrants and white-Irish students.
- The logic of mixed ability caused a repositioning of the streaming/tracking debate. But at the same time, it was underpinned by an ‘ability’ discourse which implicitly suggests learners’ embodied *accumulated experiences* must be measured against the norms of the school’s static knowledge. This has various implications for making certain students more viable than others. Its meritocratic discursive underpinnings instantly evoke notions of good/bad (migrant or white-working class) Other, suggesting these selves must take greater responsibility for their learning as they now mix with more successful students.
- The various negotiations that Tara and Rachel make, and the mutations they experience over the course of their first three years in Dromray suggests the need to contest and reposition oneself as (working class) Other. They also contest/reposition themselves in complex and ambiguous relation to new (migrant) Others. This may suggest a performative process of contingent

learning and unlearning which undermines any notion of static traits and accumulated selfhood. However, the process is ultimately recuperated by their imaginings of student (race, class gender) traits in a now 'mixed' meritocracy.

- The deracialised assumptions of language support as providing direct 'access' to education and to social networks in a new migrant setting are quickly troubled for their meritocratic underpinnings. This was done in reading how one teacher might multiply position new language learners on axes of race, labour and respectability. Rafa, Bobby and Tank might expose these axes, suggesting the futility of the exercise and its *learning support* implications for them specifically. Ultimately, their disruptions are recuperated by meritocratic principles of schooling, forcing them to seek other social/subject positions.
- The use of English styles to parody Adeola's blackness and authenticate/approximate/solidify white (working class, Lithuanian) categories troubles other notions of social support, cohesion and integration through English language learning.
- Tracing the knowability of Christian, Feyi and Theresa on academic and social planes as popular, deviant and ordinary/invisible might provide a means of targeting racist and gendered school and peer cultures (who is loud, deviant, or non-existent?) The three students may contest and or be recuperated in different ways along these axes. Moreover, it becomes clear that it is culturally possible to 'justify school' and in the same breath, possibly through charity-based discourses, render Feyi academically and socially abject.
- Finally, threads are weaved around Regina, Ruthie and Theresa as variously viable, unviable and possibly unknown white eastern European girls. These threads may suggest the interplay of gender, ethnicity, language and class in the *conditional* privileges afforded to some of them. Such privileges include acceptance into academic success, subcultural membership and/or relative obscurity. They might reap patchy or conditional benefits of whiteness, but can they ever fully occupy normative, respectable, gendered white-Irishness?

I do not make any claims to now 'knowing' white-Irishness, in the same way as I might not make such a claim of any racialised category. I would suggest rather white-Irishness is not a homogenous, discrete entity, nor can 'it' be seen to have simply switched roles from (passively) oppressed to (active) oppressor. While there are examples of overt racism in the thesis, privileged white-Irishness in education is also obliquely *effected* as

normative, privileged and superior largely through a process which fails to interrupt the co-constructed and mutating nature of race, class, gender, religion, Europeaness and Irish nationhood, via internal-external, school-social, global-local processes.

What now? Borders and viability

It is always seductive to seek a lesson and to return/be returned to certain questions: “how to act? *What now?*” Politics of ‘future improvement’ are intuitively admirable, and have seen major reconfigurations. But these configurations are often not without deficit-invoking identity foreclosures and, as Butler alludes to below, *never not border-setting*.

The point is not just to become mindful of the temporal and spatial presuppositions of some of our progressive narratives, the ones that inform various parochial, if not structurally racist, political optimisms of various kinds. But rather to show that our understanding of what is happening ‘now’ is bound up with a certain geo-political restriction on imagining the relevant borders of the world and even a refusal to understand *what happens to our notion of time if we take the problem of the border* (what crosses the border, and what does not, and the means and mechanisms of that crossing or impasse) to be central to any understanding of contemporary political life (Butler, 2008, pp. 2 – 3, my emphases).

I could have produced an account of Dromray that focused on the relative lack of indiscipline and the low level of overtly racist exclusion compared to what is rumoured to happen 10 minutes away in Haroldstown. Yet, assuming the boundaries of Dromray by reading it as a ‘success’ story potentially silences wider socio-political issues around race, class and gender hierarchy. Drawing on the notion of displacement of conflict from Chapter 5, systemic depoliticisation might be effected by the optimistic presence of a minority of apparently ‘racially integrated’ schools. Schultz et al. (2005) provide a useful reminder of what their example of such a school makes us forget. They state:

(1) the creation and sustenance of racial harmony at the school was dependent upon exclusions and silencing, and (2) students held a variety of perspectives on how race was in fact salient in their school lives (2005, p. 474).

Integration policy in a European nation-state like Ireland presupposes the strong filtering and sometimes criminalisation of familiar groups (e.g. sub-Saharan Africans). Integration, even in a community school like Dromray, might presuppose the filtering out of unwanted, unviable students via, for example, local school markets, and silence and homogenise conflicting experiences within the school. Translations of global-state-school exigency are the contextual conditions that force Dromray and multiple selves

emergent there to justify their existence, purpose and value. In Ireland, 'doing well' has already become co-opted as the tacit discourse of good migrants. This simultaneously works to effect deficit: it rhetorically provides an example for the 'bad working class'. It homogenises and positively positions migrants, on the condition they do not become 'bad migrants'. In a press release on the first national study of 'newcomer' students, the Minister of State at the OMI recently stated:

Newcomer students, I am very glad to note, may raise the standard and learning expectations in schools serving the needs of disadvantaged communities. They are also seen by school principals as hard working and motivated. This positive attitude must, in no small way, be attributed to parents' aspirations for their children (www.education.ie, June, 2009).

Schools, students and families all maintain recognition in the contingencies of global-state-school dynamics. These dynamics have particular configurations in different states and local contexts within states. Recognition and inclusion must be understood as constantly being produced with and through *viability* (e.g. you are welcome to be part of this school or state context as long as your 'presence' does not radically alter it or destroy it) and productive of that viability.

Deconstructing viability/not escaping discourse

It was argued at the end of Chapter 6 that 'hope' and 'potential' can become institutionally bound to the hierarchised embodiment of accumulated experience. By assuming we can 'improve' in the future, our attention is constantly diverted away from the way in which 'progression' invokes the self-as-accumulated (reifying race?) Deficit can become embodied when politics of recognition set cultural boundaries and fail to deconstruct selves' and contexts' viability. This deficient-body cycle will always intrinsically require social and pedagogical *differentiation*. Why is it that some new migrants are made respectable in certain contexts and others, including certain white-Irish-working-class students are not?

Respectability might be at once a mutual process of being recognised (belonging) and being valued (viability) in particular configuration of subjects, spaces and time. What is presumed a conscious self reshapes context and thus must be re-recognised and ordered again in that context. In this sense, *a constant process of differentiation is always at play*. Recognition of a unitary, discretely racialised self is never enough as a politics when selves and contexts are constantly mutually shaped. There is never a transcendental moment or 'event' of recognition based on a common identity. The question around recognition and viability is most importantly a question of *the subject*.

Subjectivation, for now, can grapple with the problematic of mutual shaping of self and context, and does not presume either as having *a priori* presence. As I will outline through one more ethnographic piece (later in the chapter), the key questions that may follow from the decentred subject and the mutations of racist effects are:

- Where and when are certain selves (bodies, practices) recognised, and considered non-viable?
- What places inside/outside the walls of the school are valued, and what practices are valued there? (Youdell, 2006a, b, Butler, 2004).

Racist effects: using deconstructive politics to interrupt the iterated present

“Strategic essentialism” may represent the *contre-histoire* in racial discourse, the form in which subjugated knowledges make their space. This may be its political virtue. But as a political strategy for rewriting histories that reflect both the fixity and fluidity of racial categories, that attend to how people reworked and contested the boundaries of taxonomic colonial states, it is, if not untenable, at least problematic... We might... ask a question similar to Foucault’s: how the polyvalent discourses on race and their effects might be better viewed as complex processes of rupture and recuperation (Stoler, 1995, p. 199 – 200).

Much critical research (on race and other analytics of hierarchy) appears to assume rather than make explicit what it sees as the relationship between research findings and the self. An important tension is the theory/action divide invoked by the question: ‘what can the individual teacher or school do’ in the face of race as an independent feature of the social system (e.g. Bonilla-Silva, 2005)? Anti-racist politics, where singularly based on racialised selves and racist outcomes, must be constantly interrogated for the risks they take in fixing and re-essentialising racialised selves. As noted in Chapter 1, foundational positions do not just close down other analytical structures (race, class, gender-sexuality, etc.), yet neither are essentialisms solved by certain intersectional readings. Modernist intersectional analyses inevitably allow the politics of subjugated difference to be played off each other:

The moment someone says something critical about “Whites” the whole world starts screaming about class and gender and every other kind of division they can think of (Gillborn, 2008, p. 13).

These arguments divert us from another key analytical object: our concept of ‘self’.

Direct and oblique racist effects: the importance of the subject

Adrienne and Beth's mundane chat about plastic scumbags in Chapter 5 speaks volumes about the production of classed ambiguity and the immutability of race in Dromray. The anxiety around the mutability of class speaks broadly – there are no claims to specificity - to both direct *and oblique* racist effects in school and wider media in the UK. Gillborn (2008) positions the panic around white working class boys as the subtle working of white identity politics. But it may be useful to also use a more oblique, discursive analysis. Concerns over failing white working class boys might be a process of corporate media's *class differentiation tactics* (respectable/disgraceful working class) that simultaneously, and equally masks how race is confidently assumed as real, immutable, and thus implicitly responsible for, e.g., 'black failure':

- Racism might not be put down to a tacitly intentional, powerholding whiteness necessarily, even when overt racism does occur. In liberal state and school policy, the effects of whiteness might be writ large - not diluted - as an associative effect of the ontology of *self-presence* and politics of *self-interest* itself, a politics that, in its various guises, automatically shuts down the relationship of 'self' and body to 'context', and thus *exigency, contingency and relations of power*.
- No one analytic object (race, class) is sufficient to use, no one basis like race or class can be claimed as fundamental. Such exclusions are in a mobile matrix: dynamic, mutating, and co-constructed.
- The foundational problem with modernist intersectional analyses is that they will inevitably dilute racism as a nameable axis of inequality if they fail to consistently use a decentred notion of the subject. The decentred subject is a constantly processed position that suggests the self does neither fully create contexts, nor do contexts ever fully create the self.

In politicising and exploring race-class-gender contradictions, contingent possibility might emerge. As well as investigating overt/direct framings of whiteness, we might iteratively draw out the impossible number of ways in which analytics of inequality like race and individualised embodiments like 'the self' are assumed, configured and ordered.

Subjects producing/being produced by new structures/meanings

A caution is necessary, because the argument above does not imply a transcendental answer. New contradictions will inevitably arise from the interactive changes in selves

and contexts, *making new subject positions*. These positions are further conditions of subjection, but also further possibilities to produce from. This is the basis for a contradictorily normative, but contingent placeholder argument. The task of social justice in education might be a process of constantly politicising and potentially resignifying what is knowable ‘now’. This politics does not attempt to stall production. It interrupts the effects of production and immediately creates new divisions, new significations and new objects to work from. This is a form of constantly, vigilantly *inventing* radical democracy. Democracy eludes us as each shift in the social creates new reifications and structures of inclusion/exclusion in constituting the ‘better future’. The notion of a ‘more equal’ future might be an impossibility that merely structures ‘the now’ of reified circumstances, one that can equally act to foreclose and exclude what might radically be called the *iterated present*.

Re-reading Freire’s words in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* draws similarities:

The point of departure must always be with men (sic) in the “here and now”, which constitutes the situation within which they are submerged, from which they emerge, and in which they intervene (Freire, 2003, p. 66).

While many of the ideas are similar, liberation in the contemporary context is not a post-revolution endpoint or, using Freire’s translated words, an ‘overcoming’ of ‘authoritarianism’. The difference is that here, politicising school is a process that even interrogates the institutionalised notion of liberation *itself for possibility*. Deconstruction, here, is neither an apolitical deferral, nor a purposeless playing with the parts of ‘the assembly’. Youdell states “the crucial point (is) that the practice of deconstruction is itself a political practice, albeit with reconfigured methods and goals” (2006a, p 181). There is a fear of nihilism around ‘pure’ post-structuralism, yet, by definition, such purity cannot exist. Such fears fail to recognise that post-structuralism does not exist outside of meaning, and is immediately subject to normative constraints and constructs (Francis, 1999). Deconstruction, as a situated tool *produces* new arguments, new objects of possibility and new ways of undermining the constant ordering of viability. In critiquing the order of viability within a given context (e.g. state, school or classroom), we might equally critique the *self’s desire for recognition*. This desire is entirely implicated in and potentially recuperated by the translations of global-state-school exigency.

What follows is an excerpt from interview with two friends, Jonathan (who is black-Nigerian) and Steve (who is white-Irish). This part of the interview focuses on the outcome of an experiment. The boys took turns wearing Jonathan’s green jacket on

different days. Plain black jackets are the only type that students are allowed to wear in Dromray, as part of the uniform policy. In the analysis, I examine what might emerge in the interaction of selves and contexts. This analysis moves beyond notions of ‘the boys’ as self-present individuals. I foreground a potentially identity-sealing subject-position that might emerge, or is in the process of being iterated in this interaction. This position is the truth-claiming subject of a wound.

The boys seemingly committed an overtly political act and made a discovery of racism, partly via ‘the green jacket experiment’. I consider how a deconstructive reading might figure ‘what happened’ to consider possibilities that both take advantage of the gains made in the institutional racism concept, but also to caution its limits: the complexities, constraints and possibilities of oblique discursive effects beyond modernist institutional rationality. This reading treats possibility as lying in power relations themselves, instead of in any unquestioned ‘truth’ generated in the interview. Prior to the fragment below, Jonathan and Steve discussed a number of issues with me around unfairness in the school, a concern frequently articulated by students across the social spectrum.

Re/dressing a wounded body: the green jacket experiment as political action?

-
- KK: Do you think the school is heavy on people?
STEVE: Depends on the teacher really.
JONATHAN: I’d say half of the school is racist.
KK: Would you?
JONATHAN: Yeah.
KK: Why?
JONATHAN: Alright. Em, yesterday, we had an experiment, right? I have this green jacket, right. If I wear it to school, every teacher that sees me complains about it. So I told - he wanted to wear it to see, right? So he wore it yesterday and nobody gave out to him.
STEVE: Nobody said *anything* to me
JONATHAN: To the last minute they stopped school, nobody complained to him but when I wore it all the teachers would be all angry and stuff.
KK: Do you think that happens to other people Jonathan or?
JONATHAN: I’d say, I’d say they’re just racist. I don’t think it’s only me.
...
KK: Do you see evidence of that in different ways, apart from getting told to get your jacket off?
STEVE: There was one incident | JONATHAN: lots really, but to describe it
KK: Both of you tell me then
JONATHAN: I told you last week about my friend Bobby, his teacher

KK: Does he think that himself, does he think that he gets targeted?
 JONATHAN: Yeah, definitely.
 KK: What were you going to say (Steve)?
 STEVE: It's just that last year, the prize-givings, you know, for squads and all that, there was me, Toby, Habib, Jonathan (all basketball friends) and a few other people, we were all sitting, we were whispering, right? And we got told to be quiet and there was a group of three or four girls, they were always shouting and laughing and they didn't get told to be quiet.
 JONATHAN: And eh, in first year, at the sports day, in the run I got like, we had to do a 100 metre sprint, I got 3rd place, and they gave it to somebody else. They actually told me I didn't get third place, I should go and sit down. And it was this guy called Robert, he was in 3rd year as well, he told me I didn't win it and he was like behind me and they say I didn't win it and they gave it to him.

Between a conscious/unconscious Jonathan and Steve: analysing wound circulation

A wound might be nameable as my questions are constructed to 'prove' something. The question "do you think the school is heavy on people?" incites further meaning to be made in that vein. This wound might become apparent, knowable and workable in Jonathan's readings of approximately 50% individual teacher disapproval: "half the school is racist". The boys appear to locate a politics based on this wound, and use it as a framework (the school is generally unjust) to interpret other situations, like the sports day, and vice-versa. However, we can locate politics somewhere else, take the wound away from being located in, or always associated with what is constituted as blackness (and solidarity with blackness). By shifting politics away from a self-knowing subject, we can intervene on blackness as made intrinsically lacking or disabled in this context, and create new possibilities.

Politics and power are understood here as the relational process whereby an innumerable array of objects interact to shape and produce each other, working certain orders and maintaining certain recognitions. For the purposes of analysis of the above, these might include:

- the notion of an unjust school;
- a wounded sense or feeling (indignance, grievance, hurt?);
- co-assertions of blackness, whiteness, youth, maleness, studenthood;
- the idea that Jonathan and Steve are conscious, predictable social actors and
- the idea that the school's teachers are conscious, predictable social actors.

Force relations that form and shape the bulleted points above, as well as other formations, are crucial to analyse via a *decentred subjectivity*.

The above points, in their interaction, may provide some of the possible means of Jonathan and Steve's subjection. Butler suggests an important way of reading subjection. When applied to race, this reading can provide a crucial means of not defining the racialised subject intrinsically by or through wounds. It contests deficiency in a foundational manner:

A critical analysis of subjection involves: (1) an account of the way regulatory power maintains subjects in subordination by producing and exploiting the demand for continuity, visibility and place (as accounted for in the desire for recognition and order of viability); (2) recognition that the subject produced as continuous, visible and located is nevertheless haunted by an unassimilable remainder, a melancholia that marks the limits of subjectivation; (3) an account of the iterability of the subject that shows how agency may well consist in opposing and transforming the social terms by which it is spawned (Butler, 1997b, p. 29).

Whether or not certain subject positions are taken up on the basis of an overt wound or grievance, the subject, processed and processing desire in the interaction of 'itself' and contexts, is *always marked by an impossible melancholia*. Melancholia refers to (in brief), the impossible field of knowledges that the subject cannot incorporate and must close down for its own recognisability. But if we open up the oblique field of knowledges and assumptions by using a decentred subject, the self can be remade, and further possibilities might emerge.

The intervention of the decentred subject on moral indignance, race and school

In analysing racism in school, the morally produced feeling or idea that the school is unjust, or might potentially be unjust, is often assumed. Yet this thesis has argued that meaning is equivocal in its production, and is constitutive of other meanings. The central mutual constitution of this thesis has been race and *school*. Following through on this assertion, the notion of 'the unjust school' might itself be always deconstructed. Such a call can immediately lead to fears of a return to a 'white' or 'right' perspective that equalises/depoliticises the production of difference (white, black) in schools. This is not what this version of deconstructive politics are about. Deconstructive politics might not cling to finding out whether or not an assertion is true or false, but what constitutes it as true/false. What are the conditions that reinvest the school as a site of the good, of progression, while simultaneously making the present intolerable for certain subjects in, out of and through school? We can remind ourselves that student subjectivities are

emergent and taken up in the mutual production and ordering of adult/child, work/leisure, white/black, male/female, teacher/student binaries via global-state-school exigencies. Again, this use of intersections is not to be mistaken with difference-relativism: the reading is based on a decentred subject and a notion of relational identity formation rather than an eternally self-present, hierarchical (superior/lacking) set of decontextualised identities.

Tracing racist effects via a morally justified (racialised) self

Rules around the black jacket and the wider uniform are expected to be enforced by staff and in particular, by each class' tutor. These rules seemed variously enforced or not mentioned by the teachers whose classes I observed. The uniform, however, while being used in the above fragment to make claims about racism, can be drawn upon through the production of moral-truth-claims in other situations and in other ways to make claims about unfairness that undercut or swallow the race claim. In short, we can trace *racist effects* through the self's moral claim. It is not foundational that the boys have multiple gripes with the school *as any particular category*, (youth, male, black, white etc.) This is because, at the very least, not all those represented by/identifying with any such singular category would make/be subject to such complaints. It would be facile to suggest that, e.g. Jonathan suffers under the weight of at least two levels of oppression in the school: black, student (boy?) This assumes there is a homogenous black student experience, and forgets, e.g. the ordering of gender in/outside the school walls. Furthermore, even when (or by virtue of being) known as oppressed, Jonathan is recognisable as a subject and thus always acts through his constraints. As a subject, he produces and is produced from (Butler, 2004, p. 218).

The argument must take account of the multiple politics of wound-claiming that the boys, as subjects, are invested in. In the school context, the uniform dressing of students' bodies might perform multiple constitutions⁷⁶. It signifies and is partially

⁷⁶ The black jacket requirement can be viewed as symbolic of an attempt by the school, or schools more generally, to do a number of things. It might be justified as promoting a common school identity (over student differences) while at school, and as representative of the school in other public spaces - on school trips, etc. More importantly, it can be justified on certain 'social' (meaning often class and gender) grounds: reducing expenses and competition around clothing. The school uniform, from some critical points of view, could be understood either as a form of market-branding, of disciplining and almost eradicating subcultural, stylised difference, and, in some schools, of ordering sex-difference and eradicating transgender possibilities through assumptions about skirts and trousers (Mayock et al., 2009). The school uniform is, as was mentioned in Chapter 3, challenged by racialised (Islamic) difference in the wider Irish state context (as well as internationally) but apparently not in Dromray to this point. The black jacket, in a context like Dromray where consumer credit had become widely available, may further depoliticise rather than trouble potentially constituted hierarchies of student (subcultural, class, gender) differences.

constitutive of the teacher/student, adult/child hierarchical relationship⁷⁷. It is the choreography of assumptions about the morally-justified institution that provide the boys' grounds for recognition and the possibility of the already-wounded, morally justified student subject. In the school's moral project, an institutional logic suggests students are uniformly, already acceptably wounded. Students are by definition inscribed as less knowledgeable, different-to-teacher, and even dressed to symbolise this hierarchy. Simultaneously, certain raced, classed and gendered configurations of students' bodies are made more viable: sanctioned lines of 'progression' are always already individualised, embodying certain skills (effected as traits). The boys quite cleverly deploy on their bodies the terms of the already moralising, wounding, delimiting uniform, significant and recognisable of lesser student-subject-subjectivity. Its terms are used to disrupt the wounds of white/black, Irish/Other hierarchies in Dromray, thus exposing the raced order of viability momentarily. Yet, morality continues to circulate as a condition of subjection. Despite a potential claim to a moral authority emergent from the green jacket experiment, the indignance possibly produced is not permanently or intrinsically located in the category of oppressed blackness. Rather, further productions are made from the felt, moral emotion.

On a subcultural and student plane, certainly, inter-ethnic friendships in this school, at both A and B Band level have already leapfrogged the moment of overt subcultural-racial polarisation suggested in Willis' (1977) *Learning to Labour*. Rizvi (2004) also states in the UK context:

Close friendships across cultures now exist widely, as does a substantial degree of alignment between White and immigrant oppositional youth cultures. It is therefore impossible to understand the cultural orientation of the White working class without theorizing its complex relationship with changing dynamics of race relations in Britain (2004, pp. 88 – 89).

Beth and Adrienne, Tara and Rachel's inclusive and exclusive meaning-making practices in Chapters 5 and 6 around white-Irish and minority ethnic and/or migrant students appear to emerge through new contingencies and associated, racialised otherings across B Band classes and in (white) resistant subcultures. Not dissimilarly, indignance is drawn on by Steve and Jonathan to position certain girls who were "always shouting and laughing" in the school, foreclosing the named girls' performances. Using the idea of injustice - a moral emotion - as produced from the

⁷⁷ In a particular way that can be different from how professional-adult/stylised-youth styles might act to differentiate in a non-uniform school.

interplay of race and school, indignance might be propelled in discourse and given further continuity, sealing other identities in their very naming (e.g. more loud girls).

Brown (1995) suggests three problems that could emerge here. These are the racist effects that are uninterrupted by a politics based on one's injuries:

- That of resentment: the boys' moral authority is not called into question as they portray themselves/are portrayed as victims.
- This overlaps with the lack of solidarity with other hierarchies, another problem in the form of division or 'balkanisation', as Brown unhelpfully calls it.
- Through this division, or lack of accounting for difference with/through race, blackness and whiteness are completely shored up internally and externally, producing new exclusions.

Reading the circuitous production of moral emotions should never return us to a relativisation or individualisation of 'levels' of raced, gendered or classed injustice. Rather it might read how feeling, in this case, the sense of injustice itself, is riskily implicated in, and not outside the shoring up of identity in all its nameable forms (Kitching, 2009a).

This is very dangerous territory for race and social justice analyses if not read using a decentred subject. As we generate evidence in the interaction, Jonathan suggests that teachers are just racist: *racism, of course, needs to be directly named and not subsumed into a more generalised form of exclusion, or 'just another wound or injustice'*. Yet simultaneously, the wound might not be considered as located *within* a particularly devalued social position in this context (working class, black, etc.). Using subjectivation, the wound may be associated with it in the interactions which relationally maintain or reshape self-recognition and context. The moral project of social justice must be constantly deconstructed for its implication in the foreclosure of recognition and by implication, orders of viability. The questions of 'how racist' each school is does not adequately deal with the self-present politics of 'whose wounds count more?' At the same time, a politics of race coalition which attempts to avoid closing down the argument of other 'axes of oppression' might not ontologically escape the fundamental problem we are constantly being returned to: a discrete and knowable, embodied, individual selfhood (Butler, 2008).

Rather than simply reducing 'interculturalism' to minority and majority ethnic bodily integration and anti-racist attitudes, is it possible to ask questions about who is made

viable as a student, and who might be made abject in and through the school/self's project at different times? These are not questions that seek an eternal ethical standard, but are the questions of a more contingent ethical project, always focused on recognition and where, and when, orders of viability might become unacceptable or even intolerable. When handled through the notion of a decentred subject, the introduction of adult/child, teacher/student and moral/immoral binaries into the reading above produces new possibility, and new positions that can be worked from. Without a notion of decentred subjectivity, however, the introduction of other binaries into the analysis risks entirely diluting racialisation.

It does not follow from an argument about the teacher/student, adult/child relations that 'more black teachers' are needed, although it might be important to see what further conditions this call would bring, albeit singular and homogenising. Neither do I suggest that emotions will not/should not be produced in educational encounters, keeping in mind bell hooks' words about how emotional expressions that disrupt institutionalised "models of decorum" can often be silenced (2003, p. 144). What is needed in any troubling of race in school is a confrontation of the very terms of schooling themselves. This includes its moral claims and how moralising provides the subject of injustice with identity terms that may risk his/her foreclosure as lesser. In this multiple, mutual troubling, schools might not be seen as intrinsically white-biased, but iteratively (directly and obliquely) implicated in the ordering of white socio-educational superiority.

'Inventing/invented selves': demolishing deficit, viability as vulnerability

The arguments of more singular anti-racist politics are not diluted, nor are they flattened if we extend racist outcomes to consider the *effects* of the ordering of race with and through other positions. The notions of dilution and relativisation are themselves part of a modernist impulse to hold on to an embodied self (cultural, social, biological traits), removing the self's production of context and through context. When context (space, time, interaction with the self) is removed or assumed, static, deficit can creep in and race can be re-made. Using the decentred subject, what is named and acted from as lack, wound, or paranoia is never intrinsically more loaded to one racialised self in the school/social than another. It is through the reciprocal, productive processes of self-recognition in variously valued contexts that lack is ever nameable, and dangerous allusions to passivity and oppression made. Lack, excitingly, is not self-present, but continues to be named due to the power-laden ordering of viability in the

choreographing of *recognised* contexts and selves. Outcomes such as low achievement, or lack of success are less about an intentional stripping of privilege or a punishment of the system and more (like the meritocratic mutations seen in previous chapters):

a state actively produced, maintained, reiterated, and monitored by a complex and forcible domain of power, and not exclusively the act of a sovereign or the permutation of sovereign power (Butler and Spivak, 2007, pp. 10 - 11).

Plastic, political, contingent, relevant, deconstructive schooling

The notion of a decentred subject and deconstructive practices might prevent the argument of mutual constitutions and productions becoming deracialised. Power/knowledge never leaves the decentred subject, if s/he is read as produced (nameable and recognisable) rather than self-present. Irish-based work for the Council of Europe has put forward the necessity for intercultural learning to be ‘plastic, political and contingent’ (Titley, 2005), a notion that is used and hopefully extended in this work. This critique comes in response to the wider EU (and Irish) adoption of ‘interculturalism’. Titley notes that the notion of intercultural learning is:

weakened by its own overt success, and this over-extension and inflation is responsible for the gap between what many are experiencing and the frameworks and concepts intercultural education offers for engaging around that experience with others in an educational process. Intercultural learning is weakened by a dependence on static ideas of culture; by the ways in which it has colonised such areas as anti-racism and conflict transformation; by the ways in which it has been depoliticised; and by the ways it has come to stand in for evidence-based analysis of young people’s environments and realities (2005, p. 4).

A notion of the boys as *inventing subjects* locates politics around contingency and improvisation, and beyond the vulnerability of identity and predictable curricula. The boys’ tactics, particularly those of swapping jackets, are hugely loaded with meaning, and can be read as constrained action: produced and producing. As subjects that emerge at the nexus of race, school, boyhood, studenthood, equality and innumerable other binaries, an *invention* is produced. Jonathan and Steve become possible at this nexus as *inventing, improvising subjects*, working out a point about race and school. Crucially again, as subjectivated, they themselves are re-invented and recuperated: morality tales creep back in and are propelled in discourse to close down the ‘loud girls’.

An analysis of racism beyond individual prejudices is provoked by this configuration of context and selves, long before the boys have ever been ‘introduced to’ or ‘taught about’ the notion of institutionalised racism. They may/may not be working from a

sketchy model which uses of a combination of individual acts (I'd say 50% of the teachers are racist") and independently ordered structural forces ("lots really, but to describe it"). But it is certainly sophisticated, and *it is learning*. The boys emerge in particularly configured psychic, material and behavioural spaces that may or may not be included, valued or deemed useful if the school's viability necessarily prioritises economic-academic utility over critical social inventions. At the moment, perhaps like Theresa's practice in the previous chapter, the meanings made by Jonathan and Steve might be invisible to the official school. Should 'their stories' be automatically made overt for political purposes? If they are made overt some point, can we first make sure to ask deeper questions about recognition and viability? Augmenting and basing itself on Youdell's (2006a) call for a performative politics of education and Gillborn's call for praxis (1995, 2004), I foreground a questioning around global-state-school exigencies in school/social policy and practice. This would:

- Use and move beyond the vulnerable, unstable self: shared and relational subjectivities;
- Deconstruct how context is crucial to how pedagogy and institutions are configured and how schooled contexts and selves are invented and iterated (Hall, 2008).

All the while, the unknown and unknowable are occurring or possible: both a constraint on making a 'conscious', 'overt' political stance, and a possibility. Deconstructing and producing shared overt norms is a dangerous necessity. But it is exciting in that danger: "we cannot do without (norms)... we do not have to assume their form is given or fixed" (Butler, 2004, p. 207). Butler's notion of becoming Other has already been referred to in the ethics discussion in Chapter 5. Not to be equated with consuming the Other (though this may happen), examining each other's viability is essentially about attempting to recognise shared vulnerability and asking "what are the contingently ethical alternatives to what has congealed here?"

Providing guidelines vs. deconstructing icons of the now

A convergence of discourses, itself subject to contingencies, led to a situation where a green jacket experiment was workable and worked. Drawing on some of the tools worked out in preceding ethnographic chapters, I regard the boys' experimenting as inventing/invented subjectivity. This is perhaps a politics of relevance (Ginwright, 2007), but not fundamental self-interest. I do not outline what specific practices should be undertaken, as this would return us to privileging universality and foreclosure over

contingency. Neither do I move too far beyond the walls of the school, as this thesis is precocious enough as it stands. However, I sketch ideas and draw loosely on different chapters to put forward a notion of *the curriculum, institutional and inter-institutional procedures writ large as the interactive production of self, other selves and contexts*.

We might take up the green jacket experiment, but not make it iconic, as it is only an example made possible in the 'now'. We might consider how it interrogates not just race, but the foundations of the institution. This requires drawing both on the institutional insights of the sociology of education and the pedagogical insights of educational sociology (sociology of learning).

The madness of a decentred subject: re-placing politics within schools, redrawing school-self-other borders

Those who suggest in a post-Civil Rights era that education policies carry racial meaning are often regarded as incoherent. They may even be called insane (Schultz et al., 2005, Gillborn, 2004). Foucault excavated the relationship between expulsions to 'madness' in various societies, and how this functioned to sustain and justify certain social formations. In the same way, one can understand the radical sociology of race in education as always potentially positioned on policy and school practice planes as incoherent and unfounded. 'We' might invent from and be invented by this positioning. A rendering of critiques of race as insane might be an effect of the ways in which 'what we know about race' from an oppositional 'era' has been liberally institutionalised, separated from the social and systemic conditions it was wrought from, packaged, individualised and depoliticised. In as much as there is a slippage between a signifier of race (e.g. phenotype) and its signified (e.g. Jonathan, Steve), an overtly performative, inventing politics might currently be unthinkable, even insane⁷⁸. But such a politics immediately interrupts and challenges us to think about the exigencies, demands and boundaries set via school. What might happen if Steve were to, co-opting the 'plastic scumbag' tactic of Chapter 5, suggest there was a non-original race category? What if he were to radically disrupt race knowledges and school norms by making his face and hands up to match Jonathan's skin colour, as one way of disrupting skin-based race and racism as he wore the green jacket? Would he be applauded for exposing the radical constitutiveness of raced recognition, and incite multiple debates and questions? A few predictable possibilities might be:

⁷⁸ Although, readings of power/knowledge might not be 'that mad'. Power-as-distributed and reciprocal has already been worked through pilot school leadership structures in Chicago (Spillane, 2009) and analyses of mathematics pedagogy in Ireland (Corcoran, 2009).

- Not only might Steve's jacket finally be noticed, it might be a minor offence by comparison: he could be accused of being racist, of not taking race-issues seriously, and could be punished by the school;
- Perhaps it would be a double punishment: first, for 'being racist' and second, symbolically, for not acting his race-place;
- Steve might also be risking his place in school discourse in terms of appropriate behaviour in multiple ways. He could become unintelligible as a white-Irish (male, working class?) student;
- 'His whiteness' might suggest that *he could disrupt skin colour, but not Jonathan.*

This place seems dangerous for multiple constitutive reasons. But it might be a place where, instead of rushing to prohibition, schools could look to what has been produced and where it has come from. Indeed, the deconstructive questions 'why is the raced body, as it is recognised and divided, so important?', 'why are we prohibiting this?' and 'why is this considered dangerous, and for whom?' might provide some possibilities. But *crucially, it never fully provides answers.* In re-locating politics in and through schools and not outside of its assumed borders, answers are not fully sought. Only questions about 'what is happening now?' and tentative local policy shifts and productions are considered. This is based upon a decentred subject: notions of borders, recognition and viability, and not on school/self-progression. The self is never fully present in this work, and this is where an elaboration on ethics must return. Some ideas on inventing anti-racisms, concepts of curriculum and pedagogy as well as socio-cultural interpretations of learning are presented below.

From anti-racist prohibition to examining the meanings of school, race and racism

The school's developing anti-racist tool (of measuring exclusion based on discrete races) might in fact render Steve as racist, or at least, insensitive to the 'race issue'. His actions might immediately be placed somewhere in dominant good/bad anti-racist views of the world, where his actions are framed as 'bad', in the same category as what are commonly accepted as overtly racist remarks. Given that male blackness has been congealing and is positioned in certain ways in this school (e.g. as failing, anti-school or as at risk), this binding and rebinding is of huge concern. We can know racism, because we know races; by punishing racism, the school can reward the concept of a fixed race, and predictable practices based on these races. In this sense, the school can evidence its

commitment to ‘anti-racism’ by finding ‘policy-based evidence’. The prohibition of gender policing or racist speech within, e.g. staff room chat (like the chat around Laura in Chapter 8) might silence a critical troubling of wider gender and race categorisations constitutive of recognition through these stories in the first place, effecting ‘discrimination’ as a politics which confirms rather than questions difference, furthering securing whiteness and masculinity through the permeable translations of school-society.

An important practice in interrogating anti-racist prohibition might be to confront the non-performativity that Ahmed (2004) writes about in relation to declarations of whiteness and liberal anti-racist management in institutions like universities. To interrupt racism by a universal ban will have different formative/emergent effects in one context than another. The interruption must be made relative to the particular formation of the object in that context. Why did the object emerge in that way? As the learning tools of Chapter 6 might suggest, as decentred subjects, Jonathan and Steve might have shifted to a new space of emergence, without any direct intervention, e.g., being taught about racism or institutionalised racism. ‘Learning about racism’, for students and teachers, might work more at the level of spatially and temporally shifting selves and contexts rather than ‘progressively’ internalising statemented curricula and policy.

Meaning-making is central: Wenger’s (1998) concepts of reification and participation may be useful here, and have been applied extremely usefully to learning practice. Pedagogy and curriculum is understood in this sociocultural literature as reified cultural media, which can be drawn upon and transformed by participants who move from being peripheral to central. As stated in Chapter 6, the work of Barbara Rogoff makes clear that practising culture *is* learning and *is* action (Vásquez, 2006). Thus students’ classed, raced and gendered practices, when positioned on school/subcultural matrices, are variously formal and informal learning and curricula: social and educational scripts that they variously negotiate, replay and contest.

Asking alternative questions: re/drawing policy, curriculum and learner borders

Curriculum has long been conceptualised not as content, but as a dynamic process of global-state-local meaning-making, contestations and appropriations (Trant, 2007, Gleeson, 2004, Holloway and Valentine, 2000). Yet qualitative evidence suggests that Irish teachers might conceive of knowledge as ‘bodies of facts’, which necessitates a particular pedagogical style: teacher-student knowledge transmission (O’Boyle, 2004). As this notion of curriculum-as-content requires an expert to ‘deliver’, the notion of

curriculum-as-statemented-content always already requires a hierarchical teacher-student relationship. ‘Add and stir’ approaches to teaching about inequality in school can, after Macintosh (2007) effect a closing down of assumed identity categories (of gender-sexuality, race, etc) in this vein. While the move that I had imagined for Steve might be seen as ‘dramatic’, it is facile to suggest that, e.g. the drama curriculum provides the perfect grounds for performative politics. There are no perfect, intrinsically more authentic, or more progressive curricular or school contexts for this work⁷⁹.

Merely encasing Steve and Jonathan’s disruptions within one particular curricular form, such as drama for example, can lead to separations, stagnation and again, perceiving radical social justice work as madness or non-viable. Deleuze and Guattari’s (2004) words are useful here in outlining how madness becomes known in the separations that occur when production is stopped, or when certain divisions make madness knowable:

(Production) must not be viewed as a goal or an end in itself, nor must it be confused with an infinite perpetuation of itself. Putting an end to the process or prolonging it indefinitely... is what creates the artificial schizophrenic found in mental institutions... produced as an entirely separate and independent entity (2004, p. 5, my parentheses).

This is a recall for content of relevance to students that is spoken as loudly in parts of John Dewey’s theories as it does in Ginwright’s (2007) reading of hip-hop rallies as educative. Space for drawing and exposing the degrees of separation between race and school might be iteratively produced and invented across all given structures and features of schooling *in the present*, even when furnishing resources to this end seems mad, unintelligible, unusable, or unviable. As already argued in Chapter 6, jettisoning the assumptions of ‘progression’ around school, learning and curriculum might further contribute to troubling implicitly practiced notions of cultural deficit articulated in modernist schooling.

Reframing pedagogy: what are the borders of the now?

Moore (2004) notes Bourdieu’s conceptualisation of the power inherent in pedagogy: “all pedagogic action is, objectively, symbolic violence insofar as it is the imposition of a cultural arbitrary by an arbitrary power” (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977, p. 5)”. Arguments of symbolic violence of racism through schooling (e.g. Gillborn, 2008,

⁷⁹ Barrett-Fox (2007) provides an example of how dramatic work on the ‘tunnel of oppression’⁷⁹ simply becomes ‘the tunnel of reification’ as it is emptied of everyday exclusion. This approach, she argues, ignores the structural nature of oppression by using only personal, individual examples of extreme cases of oppression that do not to allow participants to identify with either oppressor or oppressed; uses examples of oppression that ignore or erase radical differences that might alienate participants from victims of oppression; and makes an emotional appeal to participants, mostly members of dominant groups, that requires no critical self-analysis or personal change after participation.

Bryan, 2007) may sometimes risk failing to recognise how symbolic violence, as a process, *happens constantly in all processes of knowledge production: dividing and ordering all objects*, including selves, curricula, pedagogical interactions and White/Black, Jew/Arab etc. orderings. Symbolic violence is a notion that, if used as a political tool, is again vulnerable to white identity politics. The key question might be ‘which forms of violence make the subject unviable, unlivable or risk destroying it to make it unrecognisable?’

George Simmel argued one hundred years ago that the human being is a bordering creature (Kemple, 2007). Border pedagogies, which examine how the student self negotiates various spaces of emergence with/through contexts and other selves, may have some useful aspects which could be incorporated here if combined with mobile notions of constant production, division, and intolerable exclusion and violence. Analyses have already been done which provides ideas on how two seemingly separate objects: pleasure and pedagogy, might intersect in Irish youth’s highly skilled use of new media technology, where available, *as texts* around, e.g. passive viewing, fan culture, click-fetishism etc. (Brereton and O’Connor, 2007)⁸⁰. Other examples include:

- Phillips’ (1998) recommendation of border pedagogy as a way of interrogating versions of the past in history as a way of imagining futures in the now; this could be broadened beyond the history curriculum per se. The notion of school as inclusive and progressive itself could form a key feature of civic, social and political education. Yet the current draft *Politics and Society Syllabus* bears little mention of politicising the formation of local school contexts, risking a separation of politics from students’ selves and contexts, in particular the requirements of other Senior Cycle subjects (NCCA, 2009b).
- The notion of interrogating boundary setting around knowledge, norm and identity, and constantly seeking alternative has been explicitly outlined in early childhood education. Glenda MacNaughton’s work, for example, troubles “primarily Piagetian inspired theories that see categorisation and chromatism as normal developmental phenomena rather than politically learnt ones” (2005, p. 174).

⁸⁰ Negotiations of the domestic self through technology are particularly relevant in light of Ireland’s rapid uptake of mobile phones and game consoles (O’Brien, 2009, Commission for Communications Regulation, 2008). Furthermore, the use of artificial intelligence is a key topic for school debates around cognitive science and the notion of *a priori* or entirely necessary human consciousness.

In this sense, new borders can be contingently formed and interrupted/deconstructed when and where it is necessary. Formal content and pedagogy might be augmented with a more overtly invented content and pedagogies, which look to what exigencies developed the situation (such as the green jacket experiment). This deconstruction extends the here and now, within and beyond the school walls: bringing other places into the 'now', e.g.:

- Haroldstown Community School or other comparative/non-comparative sites nationally and globally;
- The symbolic object of Irish state policy;
- Past school experiences elsewhere which re-emerge in the now.

Such invented work might challenge the recuperative dilemmas that arise, e.g. the notion of mixing embodied cultural traits for official 'intercultural' and 'mixed ability' purposes in Chapters 5 and 6.

Teacher recognition, viability and vulnerability

I have wondered about my own intervention on practice in Dromray since I formally talked about the concepts of institutional racism and intercultural curriculum with the school staff in two sessions in late 2008. Given that institutional racism is described in national intercultural education guidelines (NCCA, 2005), it is a distinct possibility that it would be easily adopted as a feature of anti-racist policy-practice in the school. Indeed, a policy to combat institutional racism was being drafted in the school at the time of writing. Thus an 'outcome' could lead to (and justify) new anti-racist practices.

- I wonder how ultimately fruitful such a line of action would be. The classification of the school as racist/non-racist cites the recognisable discourse of anti-racism and progression;
- I also wondered whether the chat about Laura at the beginning of Chapter 8 might be officially thought of in this school as unprofessional?

It is worth noting how the wave of teacher professional development in the last 15 years has overtly focused on transmitting accumulated bodies of knowledge, giving the impression of a cascading chain of experts in Irish education:

Current professional learning opportunities may combine some of the more negative features of 'knowledge for practice' and 'knowledge in practice' where teachers are being 'talked at' or even when they are engaged more actively as participants, the absence of support at

school/classroom level means learning is not sustained as it lacks appropriate support and context sensitive feedback (Sugrue, 2002, p. 334).

Sugrue (2002) argues that ‘knowledge of practice’ in context is being missed in the above scenario. We might understand both official and unofficial stories, such as those of Laura, as discursively emergent, but selected ‘evidence’ which plays a role in normalising the multiple requirements of teachers’ wider selves in the school spectacle. ‘Teachers’ might be produced and potentially closed down as ‘over’ students: through discourses of professionalism which reinforce and refine institutional requirements (curriculum, standards, learner ability, accountability) but also through gendered, classed, raced pastoral discourses (care, risk) which bridge to and blur with ‘personal’ embodiments (white, middle class, male/female). Pseudo-Christian pastoral discourses of teacherhood regulate and are regulated by ‘rational’ whiteness and sex-gender-sexuality in its almost pseudo-familial, rational/emotional requirement of men as authority figures/role models of compulsory heterosexuality and women as also modelling proper (hetero) femininity as pseudo-mothers, or carers.

Telling unofficial stories of deviance or of non-viability is not the intentional, scapegoating act of a self-knowing subject, but a technology of the teacher’s apparently stable professional-pastoral-personal self: a practice of making meaning and a making of oneself as a viable person in the school (colleague, mate, hetero-girlfriend), regulated by gender and class, and, with Laura in Chapter 8, through discourses of proper (white) student femininity, via hierarchical race. Informal chat is not just ‘letting off steam’: it is a citing of the teacher self and associated categories (e.g. professional/pastoral/personal, man/woman, control/submission), an iteration that keeps multiple norms and governing logics alive (Kitching, 2009a). Lynch (1989) argues that teachers need to constantly challenge the socio-political status of teacherhood itself, rather than making assumptions about their transformative power. What constitutes a ‘good teacher’ is culturally bound and not fixed, even within certain states⁸¹. The principal in Chapter 5 ‘officially’ drew on home circumstances but still was constrained to make meaning from a logic of meritocracy and individual responsibility which separates home and school and makes one privileged over the other.

In a logic of credentialism and ‘being informed’, teacher professional development around anti-racism can, unsurprisingly, quickly become more about the teachers’ own recognition and viability than any particular foundationally inclusive goal (Kitching,

⁸¹ For example, see as Reichel and Arnon’s (2009) work on Jewish and Arabic notions of teacherhood in Israel.

2009b). Yet rather than reacting to this with moral outrage, we can understand it as part of the doubled logic of recognition in the learning society. We can consider the non-performativity of anti-racism, and the essentialising, hierarchising requirement of 'race' that anti-racist prohibition and declarations of whiteness might fail to recognise (Ahmed, 2004). Being 'more professional', suggests gaining professional knowledge which, after Macrae et al. (1997) risks submerging praxis under market mechanisms and the assertion of self-interest. In conceptualising the ongoing significance of institutional racism and 'racist cultures', we can immediately pay attention to the enduring requirements of the viable teacher-subject by investigating the seen and unseen discourses 'teachers' are emergent through in given moments; always in relation to what is knowable and unknown in constituting variously popular, ordinary and deviant 'students'. This is not a means of excusing attitudes; rather it is a critical recognition of wider processes of identity foreclosure that racism is a part of. It is also a means of supporting teachers as they become recognised subjects of a professional community. It calls on teacher education, and it is also a means of casting a wider, or a sometimes-different net around 'who' should become a teacher in Ireland (Leavy, 2005). Finally, it is underpinned by a questioning of the teacher reflection on practice as always retrospectively-oriented and progressive, as opposed to distributed in time (see Conway, 2001).

School recognition and viability in the state's 'more inclusive' project

As stated in the introduction, this thesis is about how schools and selves are maintained and changed in changing times, and what implications this might have for reading institutionalised racism. There were multiple questions asked, and statements made during the ethnography that might have produced unease, because they perhaps dealt with recognition and viability and processes which work inside, outside and through the walls of the school. For example:

- Why is it that the school does not offer the Leaving Certificate Applied?
- Why are classes banded?
- If English language proficiency is the issue, why is it that many students who already use English are in the B Band?

These questions speak to the school's and school staff's relationship to itself, to other schools, and to students and families in ways that examine divisions over partnership and consensus. They suggest differentiation and competition processes may underscore

relationships between the school and the home, or the school and other schools in the educative project.

Irish state and educational policy aspires to integration through partnership (OMI, 2008, NCCA, 2005). As O'Brien and Ó Fathaigh (2007) state:

Effective learning partnerships necessitate that their purpose is transparent. Inevitably, competing interests and conflict will arise with respect to this function. We would argue, however, that this is a natural process and one that would benefit any partnership approach established to promote social inclusion. Specifically, an informed debate about the meaning and purpose of such partnerships has the capacity to strip away the rhetorical usage of such terms as 'disadvantage' and 'social exclusion' and move beyond 'depoliticised clichés' (O'Brien and Ó Fathaigh 2007, p. 599).

The joyful noise around democratic partnership that arose from the 'unprecedented' mid-1990s' Irish National Education Convention might fail to recognise that "partnership too carries overtones of contented consensus that provides protective immunity through pragmatism from the gusting winds of change" (Sugrue, 2004, p. 6). It is the very stagnation of clichés around partnership, interculturalism and anti-racism critiqued earlier that make placing a politics of the iterated present within, outside and through the schools a priority of the *now*: the iterations and changes in 'what' is recognised and how 'it' is made viable.

The bottom line? Not losing the mobility of racist effects beyond sovereign power

Various negotiated policy, as a presupposed condition of the liberal state or the inclusive school, will ask us to come up with the bottom line, to give an object that can be dealt with, whether in 'partnership' or not. The object that arises is 'inequality exists'. The 'finding' that inequality is dynamic can be useful, but in the search for the object-answer, the centrality of the dynamic: its processual nature, is lost. One of the lost dynamics in providing answers for policy can be the project of recognition and viability that the state and school are mutually invested in and produced through. This reminder is always important, but particularly acute when, at the time of writing (May 2009), the financially troubled Irish state is about to implement a withdrawal of work permits for non-EU nationals. An analytics of power needs to understand not only the 'sovereign' implication of this decision, but also how certain families, parents and young people become recognised differently as selves and made less viable in the official state context. But in their re-emergence in a less viable context they might contest and re-emerge, through staying in Ireland: working in the 'black market', having

impacts on school registration, community welfare officer surveillance, etc. We need an analytic that might:

include sovereignty as one of its features but would also be able to talk about the kinds of mobilizations and containments of populations that are not conceptualizable as the acts of a sovereign, and which proceed through different operations of state power (Butler and Spivak, 2007, p. 102).

Much critical work has been done in Ireland which aims to confront the politics of partnership, including those which assume the government's longstanding adoption of a social partnership approach as intrinsically neutral and inclusive (Kirby, 2004). The dominant ideology in Irish educational thought has long been described as consensualism, essentialism and meritocratic individualism (Lynch, 1987). Is it possible for schools and schooled subjects, including teachers and managers, to look to each other and politicise partnership, and not displace politics outside of schools, as might have been the case in Chapter 5? Is it possible to confront the discomfort that is produced in this unsettling of psychic and material space? Why is it that a notion of cultural clash is assumed with those who do not fit, displacing conflict on to 'them', while others re-emerge, positioned as model minorities?

Conclusion: the doubled nature of recognition: racist outcomes and desire

In closing this work, I will mention a few points which consider the sovereignty of the state and the implication of social justice research in drawing and redrawing 'outcomes' around race through education. Butler argues:

It is crucial that, politically, we lay claim to intelligibility and recognisability; and it is crucial, politically, that we maintain a critical and transformative relation to the norms that govern what will and will not count as ... intelligible and recognisable... This latter would also involve a critical relation to the desire for legitimation as such. It is also crucial that we question the assumption that the state should furnish these norms, and that we think critically about what the state has become during these times, or indeed, how it has become a site for the articulation of a fantasy that seeks to deny or overturn what these times have brought us (Butler, 2004, p. 117).

The doubled nature of norms, which I regard as the interactive processes of recognition and viability and of selves and contexts, might be a useful way of conceptualising the economic, social, cultural and political trajectory of issues of race and education as they might come to the fore in Ireland in coming years.

Racist outcomes are viewed here as they are taken up and manipulated: racist effects. For overt political purposes, rather than viewing institutional racism as solely an issue

of outcomes, we could possibly view it as an issue of *the uses* of racist outcomes, following Singh et al.'s (2007) *uses of international education*, which follows McCarthy's (1998) *uses of culture*. In this way, knowledges of racist outcomes, and thus race, can be viewed as immediately involved in processes of further cultural production in circuits of knowability. They can thus be analysed for their political uses, contingent agencies, and potential vulnerabilities. Considering on the one hand that anti-racism policies or programmes are based on certain justifications, and on the other that racial inequality persists, the 'wisdom' of racist effects is that:

- We can iteratively deconstruct the performed internal relation between knowledges of racism and the continued intelligibility of the institution in the wider social arena.

A transcendent moment of recognition, freedom or morality is never reached by using a norm like 'freedom' as an endpoint. Segal (2003) notes⁸²:

An idea of liberal freedom focused on outcome can lead to an inward discipline whereby selves conform to limiting social norms. Normalization results from an instrumental account of freedom, that is, freedom valued primarily as a means to ends external to action (Segal, 2003, p. 448).

The above quote might summarise the possibilities and dangers of democracy itself: selves can conform to limiting social norms, when freedom is understood as external to the now/something for the future. The symbolic object of equality, felt moral emotions and ethics themselves do not stand outside of force relations. They are produced by and are productive of new configurations of the social. The articulation of a normative, democratic framework can only ever be recuperated. Thus when Ladson-Billings and Donnor (2005) remind us of the 'moral activist role' of CRT scholarship, we might equally interrogate the self-authority through which that morality is granted and the radical constitutiveness of individual's and/or groups' felt emotions.

Considering the tools potentially produced by subjectivated selves in this thesis, it is important to recognise that resistance is only possible through power, through involving 'oneself' in the impossibility of self and context production. Rather than suggesting that simultaneously, the desire for recognition can or should be stalled and the order of viability can be simply collapsed, we might look to a politics of possibility in the present, iteratively troubling norms and formations by opening up and drawing upon impossibly innumerable processes of who is made viable, where and when. As Butler argues:

⁸² of Michael Oakeshott's work

One might wonder what use “opening up possibilities” finally is, but no one who has understood what it is to live in the social world as what is “impossible”, illegible, unrealizable, unreal, and illegitimate is likely to pose that question (Butler, 1999, p. viii).

In thinking about opening up possibilities, there are multiple other issues that came up in Dromray that I would like to have analysed, which were foreclosed by the data offered in this work. These include:

- questions of religion as they intersect with race and school;
- close, but rare inter-racial friendships that existed in Dromray;
- the dynamics of sport, masculinities, racialisation and school space: basketball-playing (largely) Filipino and Nigerian basketball playing students and (largely) white-Irish soccer and Gaelic games players;
- ‘shadism’ within and across both European and African-origin ethnic and national groups, as well as a minority of mixed race students;
- forms of overtly racist insults within the school, and explicit intersections of Traveller, sedentary white-Irish and new migrant categories in school.

While these will be and are covered by others, in my work, they must wait. For now, the thesis must be delimited for the purposes of its own temporary recognition.

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Morning Ireland RTÉ Radio 1, 27th April 2007.

Prime Time, RTÉ 1, May 2009.

The Sunday Supplement, Today FM, 1st March, 2009.

Appendix 1

Technical conventions and codes

...

Ellipses are used to denote the editing out of a piece of text from interview transcripts, fieldnotes or quoted material in published work.

“”

Single inverted commas are used sparingly to emphasise the problematisation of a particular concept in the text itself.

“””

Double inverted commas are used when quoting published material, students or teachers in the main body of the text. Quotes of three lines or more are separated from the main text and indented.

Appendix 2

Key acronyms and terms of reference

DES	Department of Education and Science (Ireland)
Ireland	This term is used as a common shorthand to refer to the 26-county Republic of Ireland (or Éire, the official title of this state), as opposed to the entire island of Ireland.
Irish	<p>This term is used in multiple ways and is usually clarified or already clear depending on context. It is used to refer to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Reports, policies, institutions and systems of national relevance produced and located in Ireland (e.g. the education system, schools and policies).2. An identity ‘category’ with contemporary ethno-national and variously religious significance. Irish, unless suggested otherwise, refers to the traditionally sedentary, majority national ethnic group in Ireland living in a post-church, largely culturally Catholic state. Members of the minority Irish Travelling Community are distinguished from those simply termed ‘Irish’ as they are regarded by many as a separate ethnic group:3. Where relevant, those who might not be citizens of or resident in Ireland, but might identify as such (e.g. diasporic peoples originating in Ireland and certain Northern Irish groups)4. When hyphenated with the term ‘white’ (white-Irish), it is largely framed as a dominant, racialised category within contemporary Ireland. ‘White-Irish’ is understood as having variously different formations, values and meanings in narratives and analyses of social class, gender-sexuality, emigration and colonisation.5. Legally resident citizens of Ireland, where stated.
NCCA	National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (Ireland)
OMI	Office of the Minister for Integration (Ireland). Set up in June 2007, this office is occupied by a minister of state, rather than a senior minister. The office was originally occupied by Conor Lenihan TD, and is as of November 2009 occupied by John Curran TD.
Race	Race is an impossibly interpreted term. It can be used to evoke phenotypical differences in human bodies, e.g. typically skin colour, shade, physical stature and other physical features. Depending on speaker and context, it can be used as a social category which is conflated with ethnic, national or religious groups, or different configurations of these groups. In liberal western states, it often is used in a depoliticised way to refer to minority groups (e.g. British Muslims), and not the majority (e.g. white-Irish). In this thesis, ‘race’ is used sociologically to describe the political, social and educational inequalities and privileges associated with and worked through the above bodies and groups in and across nation-states. Elaboration on how race and racialisation are used as intersectional, post-structural analytic constructs is provided in Chapter 1 and towards the end of Chapter 2.

Appendix 3

Student formal interview consent form⁸³

Please read this consent/allow form carefully and if you wish to participate in the interview, please sign your name below.

What we will talk about today

- What words you would use to talk about yourself and what words others would use
- The changes that have taken place in your life both in school and outside school
- How you feel about school and the way school is organised
- What it means to be normal in school and in your life

Read this before signing:

By signing this form, I am saying that I **know that**

1. The information will be confidentially (privately) recorded on **tape**.
2. If Karl writes something I say, he will **change my name** so people can't tell I said it.
3. It will be used **only for this study**.
4. I can stop the interview at any time.
5. I can decide not to be in this study at all and no one will have a problem with that.
6. I can choose **not to answer any questions** I wish or don't understand.
7. I can **ask questions whenever I want** about the study.
8. I can ask questions whenever I want about **what Karl is doing/asking**.

Signed: _____

Interviewer: Karl Kitching

Date: _____

⁸³ The form was read to students aloud, discussed and signed individually at interview. Interviews with students were conducted in friendship groups of two, three but no more than four. Students were always encouraged to pause for some minutes to read/listen to the form being read out before signing. Complexities around local confidentiality were acknowledged beyond the above text.

Appendix 4

Parent/guardian consent form for student interviews (signed outside school)⁸⁴

RESEARCH EXPLANATION SHEET

Dear parent/guardian

I am Karl Kitching. I am studying the lives of children from different countries, or ethnic backgrounds, in (Dromray) Community School.

I will be interviewing/talking to students in the school in groups this year. We will talk about their lives in school, how they feel about school, their classes and their friends. They will be interviewed in a small group, often with friends they choose.

I am not a schoolteacher and I do not work for the school, or for the Department of Education. This study is for my own academic study with the Institute of Education in London.

The interviews will be recorded on tape. When I am writing this study, the students' names will not be used. Students can refuse to answer any question, leave the study at any time, or ask for more information.

If you are happy for your son/daughter to take part, please sign the slip and your son/daughter may return it to me.

Yours sincerely

Karl Kitching

PHONE: -----

I allow my son/daughter to take part in interviews with Karl Kitching.

Student name:-----

Signed (mother/father/guardian):-----

Date: ____/____/200_

⁸⁴ Consent forms were not given to students unless they could confirm that they could translate the form where necessary.

Appendix 5

Informed Consent Form: Teaching Staff

Information about the study

- This study aims to examine the experiences of various racial/ethnic groups⁸⁵ in the education system using school/community/family perspectives.
- The main focus of this is on the success of various social groups within the school system. This includes how successful they are perceived to be and how successful they perceive themselves to be.
- The study is about education in a socially changing Ireland and about students' academic identities in particular. It is important to stress this as, while I have expertise in the language area, this study is less about language issues and more about general education/social issues.
- This plans to examine community, student-teacher, student-student, parent-teacher, parent-child and home-school-community dimensions both at primary and post-primary level.
- The study takes place over the 2007/2008 school year: this length is viewed as important in research in terms of accessing the community in an in-depth manner.
- All research carries with it some possible risks as well as benefits. While it is unlikely, it is possible that a question may make you feel uncomfortable for various reasons. However, you will have the option to "pass" on any specific question that you do not wish to answer.

Use of the Study

The findings will be used (completely anonymously)

- to inform my own teaching of pre-service and in-service teachers
- to inform the schools and participants about the diverse perspectives considered in the study
- in the interests of achieving my own PhD
- publishing articles in academic journals and books nationally/internationally to contribute to understanding the issues in the wider field of educational research
- to be given at conferences to inform and progress policy and resourcing

If you have any more questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Contact details

Mobile:

Office: 01 884 2244

E-mail: Karl.Kitching@spd.dcu.ie

Post: St. Patrick's College of Education, Drumcondra, Dublin 9.

⁸⁵ These terms were further qualified before the interview commenced.

Appendix 6

Teacher formal interview consent form (signed at interview)

Please feel free to ask any questions before, during or after the interview.

Consent

By signing this consent form, I understand that the information will be confidentially and anonymously recorded and used only for the purposes of this study. I have been informed of the interview topics and I am aware that I can stop the interview at any time and can choose not to answer any questions I wish. I know that should I wish to withdraw from this study/interview at any time, there will be no consequences for not participating. Finally, I am aware that I can ask questions about the nature of the study at any time.

Name(s): _____

Role (s): _____

Date: _____

Language Proficiency of Non-National Pupils (NN 1)

School Roll No. _____

No	Name of Pupil	DOB	Enrolment Date In School	Country of Origin	Year of arrival in Ireland	Class in which enrolled now	English Language Level *	Length of time this pupil has received language support (from grant assistance or teacher post) in this or any school in Ireland*
1								
2								
3								
4								
5								
6								
7								
8								
9								
10								
11								
12								
13								
14								
15								

** Indicates length of time (eg From Sept 02)

* Indicates the level of language competence of each child using one of the following codes:

- 1. Very poor comprehension of English and very limited spoken English
- 2. Understands some English and can speak English sufficiently well for basic communication
- 3. Has competent communication skills in English

Principal's Signature: _____

Appendix 7

Primary School Language Support Resource Request Information
and Forms (c. 2001, see overleaf)