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Towards reflexive, dynamic and accountable community development practice

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Towards reflexive, dynamic and accountable community development practice

Ph.D. Thesis

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ABSTRACT

Towards reflexive, accountable and dynamic community development practice

Sue Robson

This thesis explores the limits and possibilities for community development practice to maintain dynamism and integrity in a professional context. There is a particular emphasis upon reflexivity and its relevance in processes of accountability towards both communities and state policy. The study was born out of dissonance surrounding the researcher's community development practice mid-way through New Labour's 1997 to 2010 administration. It argues that New Labour's social functionalist approach proved to be problematic for the maintenance the reflexive and personal commitment necessary to the central dynamic of community development work.

Although not specifically designed to consider feminist community development approaches, the questions emerged from the researcher's feminist analysis of contemporary practice and the research itself was designed from this perspective. The design of the methods applied to the empirical research for this study are based upon those used in reflexive and transformative community development practice.

The empirical work involves a case study surrounding the conditions for community development professional practice in North East England in 2007, ten years into New Labour's last administration. This consisted of semi-structured interviews with a sample of twenty-four self-defined community development practitioners. Focus groups were conducted in 2009 to share the findings and to assist the researcher to take the analysis further.

Aiming to generalize from a particular historical moment when the Government seemed to be supportive of community development work, during New Labour's 1997 to 2010

administration, the thesis highlights some inherent tensions within the relationship between the state and the dynamism of community development and illustrates lessons that are widely applicable to its everyday practice.

In conclusion this thesis argues that for community development practice to maintain dynamism and integrity in a state policy context it is vital that its personal dynamic is integral to forming future conceptions of professionalism. Moreover that supporting the personal and relational elements of community development practice requires the creation of liminal spaces where self-determination and the agency can be exercised. For, it is only under these practice conditions that the intersubjective relationships necessary for bilateral and horizontal professional accountability can be nurtured and developed.

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Finally, but certainly not least to my mum and dad. I am so fortunate that mum has been here to the end providing love and support as she always has. My dad has also been with me, in my tenacious spirit and having been the first to encourage and support my enquiring mind.

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1.1 INTRODUCTION

This thesis explores the limits and possibilities for community development practice to maintain dynamism and integrity in a professional context. There is a particular emphasis upon reflexivity and its relevance in processes of accountability towards both communities and state policy.

The study was born out of dissonance surrounding the researcher's community development practice mid-way through New Labour's 1997 to 2010 administration. Prior to the start of the study, conditions for community development had changed in response to new Government policy in areas of economic and social regeneration such as neighbourhood renewal, planning, housing market renewal, Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) and Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) (DETR 1999, DETR, 2002b, ODPM, 2003). The researcher's key concerns surrounded disparity between high levels of Government policy rhetoric about community development and participation; and the reality of increasing limitations upon critical, interpretive practice. The thesis argues that despite appearing to be fully in support of community development processes and practices, New Labour's functionalist approach proved to be problematic for the maintenance of the reflexive and personal commitment necessary to the central dynamic of community development work.

Although not specifically designed to consider feminist community development approaches, the questions emerged from the researcher's feminist analysis of contemporary practice and the research itself was designed from this perspective. The design of the methods applied to the empirical research for this study are based upon those used in reflexive and transformative community development practice. In

the sense that it was carried out alongside continued practice in the community development field, it constitutes practitioner research (Wilkinson 2000, Fox et.al 2007, Kara 2012).

1.2 OVERVIEW OF THE THESIS AND METHODS

This study set out with three key purposes: a) to provide opportunities for community development practitioners with different perspectives to reflect upon their practice in relation to contemporary policy and theory; b) to provide a body of knowledge that contributes to the development of theoretical ideas specifically in relation to the distinctiveness of community development professional practice; and c) to contribute to contemporary debates about community development professional practice. The focus is upon how or indeed, whether, community development practice can be made simultaneously accountable to communities and state policy without losing its dynamism. Aiming to generalize from a particular historical moment when the Government seemed to be supportive of community development work, during New Labour's 1997 to 2010 administration, the thesis highlights some inherent tensions within the relationship between the state, professionalism and the demands of everyday practice.

The thesis will demonstrate that in an experiment attempting to expand and control community development practice, the New Labour Government bypassed critical community development traditions which begin with an assumption of dynamism in favour of a functionalist approach. This approach was exemplified in 'new communitarianism' (Etzioni 1993) and The Third Way (Giddens 1988). The thesis argues that, as the focus intensified upon 'procedures, measurements and centrally defined targets,' New Labour's quest for 'modernising public services,' came to be perceived to be an extension of the previous Conservative Government's approach which focused upon 'new public management' techniques (Cutler 2007).

The empirical work involved a case study surrounding the conditions for community development practice in North East England in 2007, ten years into New Labour's administration. Although set within a particular geographical and historical period, this study seeks to draw lessons that are more widely applicable to community development practice in its relationship with state and community.

Given that community development lacks the solidity of other professional areas and that perceptions are constantly shifting with reference to developments in theory and policy, the researcher realised that this had implications towards the methodology for the thesis in terms of it being difficult to investigate and measure. The approach that emerged from these deliberations is interpretive and reflexive and deploys participatory methods that were informed by the researcher's feminist values and politics and are sympathetic and congruent with those used in a contemporary critical community development context.

As part of the process of scoping and structuring this thesis, the researcher first compiled several reflective case studies of her practice spanning ten years. This provided material for early reflections and began to shape the key questions for the study. The central research question emerged as:

> How can Community Development work sustain the dynamism of professional practice when issues of accountability, trust and reflexivity are appear to be so complex and difficult to pin down?

A sub-question followed:

> How can reflexive community development practice be made accountable and to whom, when accountability is experienced as is so complex in terms of the private and professional self, the user individual and group and the pay-masters/policymakers?

These questions resulted in two main areas of inquiry: the first surrounding professionalism and accountability in community development practice, the second relating to issues of equality, identity and agency from a broad range of practitioner perspectives. Reconceptualising the past and addressing the questions that were born out of the researcher's practice is at the very core of this thesis and throughout the research process, she continued to revisit and reflect upon her own experiences as a community development practitioner.

At the outset, the researcher was conceiving dynamism as a driving, enthusiastic and energising force involved in conveying recognised community development principles such as social justice and equality in practice.[1] She reflected that although dynamism creates all kinds of tensions, opportunities and possibilities, it was possible for practitioners to relate to the policy context without being dynamic, or indeed exercising agency or reflexivity. At this point, the researcher also began to question whether marginality or a subaltern position was a pre-condition of dynamism and reflexivity in practice and the concept of liminality entered the lexicon of the thesis. Ward and Wild suggest that liminality offers a more positive and creative language than marginality. The image of 'threshold,' that is being 'between here and there' has come to be associated with the concept of liminality. This implies that there is a future that could potentially be better than the past (Ward and Wild: 1995:30).

> To define oneself as marginal is to define oneself in relation to someone else's centre, it is to accept another's definition of how things are. In that sense it might be disempowering an in itself alienating. To have one's base on the margins is to have a view of the present and the past, but what about the future?
>
> Ward and Wild: 1995:30

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[1] As they are conveyed in the Community Development National Occupational Standards, first produced in 1995 (FCDL, Federation of Community Development Learning 2015).

Out of these processes of deliberation, reflections and the researcher reframing her own thinking about the shape and direction of the thesis, the research questions evolved as follows:

Key question: How can Community Development work sustain the dynamism of professional practice, when issues of accountability, trust and reflexivity are appear to be so complex and difficult to pin down?

Sub-questions:

a) How can Community Development work sustain the dynamism of professional practice?
  i. What makes a 'dynamic' community development worker?
  ii. What distinguishes Community Development Work from other professions
  iii. How has Urban Policy used and impacted upon Community Development discourse? What are the implications for key practice concepts such as empowerment, participation and community action?

b) Can reflexive Community Development practice be made accountable and to whom?
  i. Who/ what determines the quality of community development work?
  ii. Is there something about a subaltern and a feminist position that encourages reflexivity?
  iii. What is the relevance of liminality to reflexivity and accountability in community development work?

These questions came to provide the structure for examining the literature and a framework forming the questions for the semi-structured interviews (see Appendix 1). The empirical research consisted of semi-structured interviews with a sample of twenty-four self-defined community development practitioners and three small independently facilitated focus groups conducted in 2009, involving ten of the research participants.

The interviews were designed to encourage research participants to critically reflect upon their experiences and practice using similar methods to those established in the supervision of community and youth work practitioners (Tash 1967, Herman 2012). The focus groups were based upon established community and youth work group work methods which highlighted participatory informal educational processes

(Batsleer 2008, Smith 2008) and conceived specifically to share the findings from the interviews, to enable participants to benefit from the emerging insights and to assist the researcher to take the analysis further. The analysis was also developed through various opportunities to disseminate and debate the emerging research findings through conferences and events. For the researcher carrying out this study, her roles as practitioner, activist, researcher along with those in her personal life were inextricably intertwined and she was thus encouraged by the following quote:

> The most admirable thinkers within the scholarly community that you have chosen to join do not split their work from their lives. They seem to take both too seriously to allow too much disassociation, and they want to use each for the enrichment of the other.

> Wright Mills (1959:195)

Nevertheless, such an interweaving of the personal with the political and professional is in itself dynamic and requires reflexivity to make sense of everyday experiences. A reflexive analysis of the researcher's belief systems and assumptions has thus been integral to the methodological approach. Whereas the first version of this thesis was written in the first person, the final submission is mostly from a third person perspective. To enhance reflexivity in her writing, the researchers was intentionally standing aside from her 'self' or making her 'self' strange (Banks 2007:140). In later chapters, where she is drawing upon her own practice to bring particular elements of the findings back to concrete reality, these are written in the first person.

Through reflection upon reading and the researcher's own practice the focus of the thesis shifted during the first 12 months. As the researcher became more aware of the purposes and meanings of community development being historically contested and having the propensity to go off in all kinds of directions (Smith 1994, Miller and Ahmad 1997, Martin 1999, Shaw 2004, 2005), she became less concerned with the broader regeneration context and more interested in how practitioners dealt with its volatility in practice.

1.3   POLICY CONTEXT FOR THE STUDY

Over the period of the Conservative administration (up to 1997), the researcher had been concerned about what she believed to be a decline of critical perspectives within the community development field. In particular, there seemed to be a dearth of young practitioners being informed by critical traditions such as grass-roots activism, social justice movements and Trade Unionism, along with wide acceptance within the field of competency based training for community development practitioners. Then New Labour came to power in 1997 with a strong emphasis upon local partnerships and community development concepts of participation and empowerment and within this context, community development had 'more policy recognition than it has known before' (Ledwith 2005:16-17, Pitchford 2008). Along with many practitioners, because of this, the researcher believed that the election of a Labour Government In 1997 would lead to a sympathetic climate for critical community development practice.

Whereas the community development field had been largely in opposition to the policies pursued by the previous Conservative Government, when New Labour came to power in 1997, in the first instance community development practitioners welcomed working with the state in an experiment in collaboration and support and embracing a particular kind of professionalism (Hoban and Beresford 2001). Yet by the time she started this study, the researcher perceived a looming crisis in community development practice, particularly in relation to narrowing of spaces for work with identity based communities, in which criticality and dynamism is most significant.

The newly formed local decision making structures which could have encompassed more egalitarian ways of working and encouraged reflexive interpretation of policy at a local level, instead imported behaviours and systems that operated to maintain the status quo (McDonald 2003). The researcher's prior academic study had identified

that a neo-liberal ideology was driving the New Labour renaissance and polarising certain groups in order to benefit the economy in particular ways (Raco 2003 and Brownhill 2003). [2] From the perspective of her practice, meanings of community development concepts such as participation and empowerment became misappropriated. The absence of clear lines of communication and accountability between local (LSPs) and regional governance structures (RDAs) also created tensions for community development practitioners in attempting to join-up social and economic regeneration on the ground. [3]

Community development concepts and practice were central to New Labour's modernisation plans for Local Authorities (as defined by the Local Government Bill 1999) and its wider agenda for democratic renewal. Concepts such as 'empowerment,' 'engagement' and 'participation' were integral to their policy claims of devolving decision-making down from Central Government to Local Government and communities. The LSPs, introduced in 2000 to bring together local people, the public sector, voluntary and community organisations and businesses, to improve the design and delivery of local services were the main tools of policy implementation. By 2006, there were over 360 LSPs in England, (OECD 2006).

New Labour produced a raft of statutory obligations, strategies and guidance which had the effect of placing Local Authorities in a leadership role for community development practice (Humphrey et.al. 2008). The Urban Task Force Report (DETR 1999), the Urban White Paper (DETR, 2002b), and the work of the cross-cutting Social Exclusion Unit (set up in 1997) established a new framework for social and economic regeneration. In 2001 the Government launched 'A New Commitment to Neighbourhood Renewal: National Strategy Action Plan,' packaged as a new

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[2] This was a dissertation for a Master of Arts completed in March 2005.
[3] Regional development agencies (RDAs) were nine non-departmental public bodies established for the purpose of development, primarily economic, of England's Government Office regions between 1998 and 2000.

approach to regeneration based upon mainstreaming 'tackling social exclusion' through the delivery of local services (Social Exclusion Unit 2001). Neighbourhood Renewal aimed to 'close the gap' between poor neighbourhoods and the rest of the country (ibid). In 86 eligible areas, LSPs were responsible for developing Neighbourhood Renewal Strategies in order to access special programme funds.

Local Area Agreements (LAAs), between Central Government and a local area working through its LSP, were introduced in 2005 (ODPM 2005a). As they evolved, LAAs contained a common framework of 198 improvement targets (National Indicators or NIs) which Local Authorities were committed to achieving and a delivery plan setting out what each partner is intending to do to achieve those targets. Indicators 1 to 49 measured the outcomes for 'Safer and Stronger Communities' (ODPM 2005b).

The Neighbourhood Renewal package included an allocation of 'Community Empowerment Funds' for 'Community Empowerment Networks' (CENs) of voluntary community sector organisations and local residents for the purpose of participating in LSPs. At first, there was an element of independence in that the guidance stipulated that the leading partners for CENs should be local voluntary sector agencies, accountable directly to Government through their nine regional offices (NRU 2001, NRU 2003b). Later, funding for CENs became part of a 'Safer and Stronger Communities Fund,' administered though LSPs in relation to the priorities and targets in the LAA (ODPM/ Home Office 2005). Voluntary sector leaders for CENs became accountable to Local Authorities via LSPs. At the same time, the Government designated Local Authorities as the as the overall 'place shapers', with elected members as 'the voice of the neighbourhood' (DLCG 2006a:94).

Two pieces of legislation in 2007, the White Paper 'Strong and Prosperous Communities' and the 'Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act,'

impacted on both LSPs and LAAs. Declaring a commitment to reducing 'top down' control from Central Government, the White Paper, 'Strong and Prosperous Communities' promoted a vision of 'revitalised Local Authorities.' LAAs were affirmed as the key delivery mechanism of local governance and their responsibility to include a 'comprehensive engagement strategy' was also extended. The Act made LAAs a statutory requirement and all 'upper-tier' Local Authorities (150 counties, unitary authorities and London boroughs) were required to have an agreement in place for a three year period from 2008. The White Paper stated that it would simplify and 'strengthen accountability to citizens and communities,' introducing a new regime of assessment, intervention, monitoring and support in the form of Comprehensive Area Assessments (CAA) (DLCG 2006a:116). The legislation also combined the modernisation agendas in the NHS and Local Authorities. The 2007 Act introduced a new 'Duty to Involve' (part 7, section 138). This related to all 'Best Value authorities; making it mandatory for Local Authorities and LSPs to 'ensure that local citizens are informed, consulted and involved in discussions about local services' (ibid).[4]

In 2002, the Government announced that all LSPs would develop a 'Learning Plan' to support the implementation of Neighbourhood Renewal Strategies with the intention of challenging cultural barriers to implementation (ODPM 2002). 'The Learning Curve' (2002), claimed to be 'designed to equip everyone involved in neighbourhood renewal with the skills and knowledge they need' (ODPM 2002: 4). Inferring influence from critical community development traditions, the Government's guidance quoted Paulo Freire, a leading advocate of 'critical pedagogy' (Freire 1970) and a key thinker informing a dynamic educational framework for community development interventions.

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[4] Best Value authorities were - Local authorities; National Parks authorities; the Broads Authority; police and fires authorities, the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority; a Waste Disposal Authority, Joint Waste Authority, an Integrated Transport Authority, Transport for London; the London Development Agency, but not police authorities.

> The need to think creatively and critically empowers the individual and ultimately the community.

<div align="right">NRU 2002:5</div>

This reference to Freire suggested that there could be halcyon days for critical community development approaches. However, New Labour swiftly departed from its emancipatory rhetoric. A year later, the requirement for learning plans was replaced by performance management frameworks (NRU 2003a) as the vehicle for 'learning and development in partnership,' thus marking a turn towards centralisation and bureaucratic accountability. A statement from the NRU was followed by a steer through Government Offices to prioritise the achievement of delivery targets over and above partnership working and evaluation[5]. In the terms of Jürgen Habermas, this prioritised technical interests over practical and emancipatory interests (1972, 2001). [6] Habermas, identifies three constituencies of knowledge: technical interests, to acquire technical control over the natural world (science and technology); practical interest, understanding human behaviour and interpreting social practices (hermeneutics); emancipatory interests, to show people how they are oppressed, how their interests have become repressed or distorted and what life will look like when that have confronted their oppressions and changed their conditions to a more rational society (ibid). As New Labour's focus upon instrumental measurements and centrally defined targets intensified, it is widely argued that New Public Management, a concept associated with New Right reforms, was central to its approach (Cutler 2007, Newman 2000, Banks and Orton 2005, Fairbrother et al. 2011, Banks 2013).

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[5] This was in a 'Briefing on Performance Management Systems for Local Strategic Partnerships' (October 2003) from Joe Montgomery, the Head of the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit.
[6] Jürgen Habermas (1972, 2001), a leading critical theorist from the Frankfurt School questioned the very basis of why knowledge was produced (Webb 2003:118).

Yet, as Habermas argues, 'scientific or instrumental knowledge' is not particularly valuable in giving direction to social action (Webb 2003:118).

Until 2006, The Civil Renewal Unit (part of the Home Office) was responsible for promoting community development approaches to foster active citizenship within local governance structures (CRU 2003). The three 'key ingredients' to civil renewal were stated as; 'active citizens;' 'strengthened communities;' and 'partnership with public bodies' (CRU 2003). The Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) was formed in 2006 encompassing the Civil Renewal Unit and Neighbourhood Renewal Unit (formerly Office of the Deputy Prime-minister).

In 2002, the Government had commissioned the Community Development Foundation (CDF) to review Government guidance on community involvement in the context of urban policy.[7] The resulting report 'Searching for Solid Foundations,' identified that despite the prominence of community involvement in New Labour policy, community development was 'unstable and … poorly and haphazardly resourced' in terms of practice, professional training and higher education (Channon 2003:7). The report called for a national review of community development and capacity building at a local level and 'better co-ordination of input from different agencies' (Ibid: 91). The concept of 'capacity building' was important to New Labour in relation to the engagement of communities in partnerships with the public sector.

The term 'capacity building' first appeared in the UK policy lexicon in the 1990s, Smith argues that it had 'technicist' orientations and was long way from critical approaches that characterised much of the community development practices of 1970s (1996, 2006:6). Skinner, in a guide published by CDF outlines a model of

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[7] The Community Development Foundation (CDF) is a national institute or centre for community development, established for the purpose of supporting practice and to advise Government and Local Authorities on policy - http://cdf.org.uk/

capacity building that involves the public sector making changes, 'so that they can engage more effectively with communities' (2006:1). However Craig (2007:335), suggests that the term capacity building is built upon a 'deficit' model of communities that obscures structural causes of poverty and inequality and was used by New Labour, to describe:

> 'Top-down' interventions where local communities are required to engage in programmes with predetermined goals – such as the privatization of public services within a context of tight fiscal control – as a condition for receiving funding…

> Craig (2007:335)

A further report commissioned by the newly formed DCLG in 2006, 'The Community Development Challenge' included a recommendation for a 'consistent and rounded definition of what community development is and what its outcomes are,' stating that this should be 'reflected in the relevant national occupational standards' (DCLG, 2006b:5). Also, the definition should include, 'advising and informing public authorities' and 'assisting them to work in genuine partnership with them' (ibid). Then in a move that pushed community development accountability upwards towards Government, it was harnessed by New Labour to work towards the common framework of national indicators.

> The community development field should plan and evaluate its work in terms of outcomes as well as processes. And, should champion indicators of stronger communities and associated issues which are in Government and Local Government performance management instruments such as Local Area Agreements.

> DCLG 2006: 5

The evaluation and funding of community development thus became implicitly linked with Government instruments and targets (Sender et.al. 2010). In two surveys carried out by the Community Development Foundation, centralisation and instrumentalism were shown to divert the focus away from face to face community development work (Glen et al 2004, Sender et al 2010).

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1.4 THE RESEARCHER'S INTERESTS AND MOTIVATIONS FOR THE STUDY

The researcher's community development perspective falls within its critical traditions and feminist approaches are central to her practice. The personal elements of community development are rooted in her earliest practice experiences. Upon embarking upon this thesis, it was the centrality of these elements she believed were under threat from the mechanistic approaches of New Labour.

The introduction of 'learning plans' for LSPs became a defining moment for this thesis. At the time, the researcher was employed in a voluntary organization (known as 'Voices'), established to develop a 'vigorous and coordinated approach to community development' (Sunderland Voluntary and Community Sector Partnership, 2002). Having had modest beginnings as an independent voluntary sector forum, Voices expanded rapidly in 2002 with the advent of Community Empowerment Funds and other Government funding. Working alongside other community development practitioners, part of the researcher's role at 'Voices' involved developing learning plans using participatory action research methods. Although she was passionate about the possibilities for critical practice in strategic settings, the application of community development approaches at this level proved highly challenging, requiring tenacity in the face of constantly changing boundaries. The researcher's reflections are included here to situate the thesis in relation to her own practice concerns and to introduce some theoretical concepts that shaped its development. Although to some extent what follows is tangential, this brief case study encapsulates the researcher's own experience of applying critical and interpretive community development methods within a New Labour policy context. This thesis emerged from unravelling the wider meanings of the enduring tensions and their implications to the future of community development work practice. Accordingly, for Borzak, experiential learning involves a

'direct encounter with the phenomena being studied rather than merely thinking about the encounter' (1981:9, cited in Smith 2001, 2010).

The action approach devised within 'Voices' was designed to engage 'different sectors in learning and sharing' and to impact 'upon dominant cultures and barriers to change' (Voices 2002:2). Action research has an explicit emancipatory agenda and an emphasis upon participation and 'democratising the research process' (Denscombe 1998). It is noted for its congruence with professional community development practice, in particular, its informal education methods, potential for transforming practice, addressing power imbalances and encouraging critical interpretation and new meanings (Sawbridge and Spence 1990, Issitt and Spence 1995). The development of action research was influenced by Critical Theory with its roots in the work of the Frankfurt School, (Smith 2001, Webb 2003).The early critical theorists were concerned about positivist world views being accepted as a benchmark for thinking about and acting in society (Webb 2003:118). Of relevance to the thesis of dynamism in community development practice, they argued that normative and critical questions 'about the direction in which society was going' were being replaced by 'technical and instrumental ones' and based upon a predetermined end point (Webb 2003:118).

Through the vehicle of the learning plan action research, the researcher and her colleagues were experimenting with new ways of working and alternative conceptions of 'power.' Their approach was consonant with community development's commitment to equality and social justice, also integral to feminist politics. As noted by Butcher, self-evidently, 'power and its utilisations are core to the concept of empowerment in community development practice' (2007a:21). Concepts of power are widely contested and Butcher identifies two competing models of 'power over' and 'power with' (ibid). The former involves coercion, constraint, domination and is underpinned by authority, whereas the latter is conceived as 'finding common

ground' when there are conflicting interests and values` thus requiring 'concerted dialogue' among parties to become clearer about how others perceive things and then reframing the problem 'in a way that substantially reduces the conflict' (2007a: 22).

Although aware of limitations upon women's participation in partnership settings (e.g. Riseborough, 1998, May 1997, Appleton 1999), in carrying out the action research within the context of 'Voices', the researcher was surprised to discover senior male officers indicating that they lacked confidence. This particularly surrounded them not wanting to be seen to ask critical questions or to admit their lack of understanding. From the perspective of Schön, these attitudes could be interpreted as arrogance, 'I presume to know and I must claim to do so regardless of my uncertainty' (1983:300), yet these male officers voiced feelings of insecurity and fear.

> An insecurity exists, you're afraid to show when you don't know – this is to do with how partnership is presented…Partners don't question…there is a need for individual confidence to challenge and ask questions.
>
> City of Sunderland Partnership (CoSP), 2003a:18

These feelings related to the formal way that the partnership meetings were conducted and an implicit culture that was averse to critical questioning. The researcher experienced partnership meetings as a blend of Council and business styles, corresponding with what Cockburn conceived as a male dominated model of corporate management (1977: 7). Critical theorists understand that learning requires spaces for open discussions, free from the 'coercive exercise of power and ideology' (Habermas 2001:7). Habermas conceives this as an 'ideal speech situation' (ibid). From a feminist perspective these are spaces where participants are comfortable to share their experiences and be open about what they know and do not know (Ward and Wild 1995). The pursuit of knowledge through open and free dialogue, can bring a 'fusion of perspectives and open 'new horizons' (McCarl Neilsen 1998:30).

However, the researcher and her colleagues realised that for any meaningful exchange of learning to happen, boundary spaces would need to be created to overcome identified barriers to learning.

> Feminist work is emancipatory in that it identifies obstacles to the kind of equality necessary for dialogue. Our agenda for knowledge construction, then, includes removing the structural features and barriers that limit open free dialogue.
>
> McCarl Neilsen 1990: 30

As part of the learning plan action research process, a series of focus group workshops were organised, in neutral venues involving participants from all levels of the partnership. Ways of working were agreed among participants to engender an egalitarian group work process.

> Facilitation of the focus groups was designed to support and encourage dialogue, reflection and action and to ensure power flowed within the focus groups, rather than remaining with individuals with pre-existing knowledge.
>
> CoSP 2003b:2

A corresponding study of network governance within the context of modernizing public services suggests that spaces on the borderlands of professions were potential sites of resistance and transformation where 'patterns of relationships and hierarchies of knowledge could be reshaped (Newman 2005, 730). However, the concept of applying critical methods to learning in public and commercial organisations was not new. In 1924, Mary Parker Follett turned her attention from developing local community organisations to the 'state of management and administration in industry and public institutions' ('Creative Experience,' in Smith 2002:4). Although not widely acknowledged, Parker Follett developed a circular theory of power and advocated that 'power with' 'is what democracy should mean in politics or industry' (1924:187 in Smith 2002). Parker Follett's earlier work, 'The New state' (1918) was around the 'promotion of local networks and democratic forms' and

a model of what she conceives as 'coactive power, the enrichment and advancement of every human soul' (Parker Follett 1924: xi-xiii).

Within the LSP, community development approaches for their 'transforming potential for the partnership itself' and bringing about 'organisational and cultural change' (CoSP, 2003:12). In recognition, a 'non-deficit' model of capacity building was adopted, encompassing a more coactive model of power and accountability.

> A process which enables individuals, communities and organisation to work together to create the conditions in which the members can participate and be accountable in social, economic and political decision-making processes. The process will address issues of inequality and encourage organisations and individuals to think differently.
>
> CoSP (2004a)

The action research model conceived and piloted by 'Voices' also received endorsement from the Government's Neighbourhood Renewal Unit (CoSP, 2002a:3: CBSG 2004) and as a result the researcher worked alongside a Neighbourhood Renewal Advisor (NRA) to develop a regional skills and knowledge network for 'neighbourhood renewal' practitioners that came to be known as SK4U or 'skills and knowledge for you'. 8 SK4U initially developed information sharing arrangements and bi-lateral peer support (Knight and Robson 2005). Action learning sets were facilitated to provide a structure to support critical and interpretive learning processes. Action learning derives from the work of Reg Revans (1983) and Argyris et.al. (1985) and provides a 'conceptual framework based upon critical reflection, consciousness and reframing' (Lewis and Williams 1994).

The network also identified Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle as a performance management framework for LSPs (Kolb 1984). As noted by Batsleer (2008),

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[8] NRAs were commissioned by The Neighbourhood Renewal Unit (NRU) to develop LSPs and ensure they were 'up to the challenges that they face' (GONE 2002).

experiential learning in community development practice draws from the writings of American pragmatists such as John Dewey (1938) and Kurt Lewin (1935, 1948, 1951).[9] Here, understanding and knowledge are believed to be the results of cyclic learning processes, rather than arising from 'direct induction to received ideas' (Lewis and Williams, 1994:6). For Dewey, experiential learning is a reflexive process, potentially resulting in cognitive reconstruction, such as overcoming personal biases (ibid). For Batsleer, experiential learning 'is an educational tradition capable of inspiring passionate adherence' and is central to critical community development practices, offering support for 'going to the roots' reflection on both 'difficult and positive' life experiences (2008:56). The following evaluative comment suggests that such processes and methods worked to embed learning and knowledge into the practitioner networks.

> A sustainable network is developing to contain the skills, knowledge and experience in the region – no matter who comes in and out and whether funding sources or policy changes.

> Participant SK4U, September 2004

In Walker's study of Sunderland Community Empowerment Network (CEN), also developed by Voices, he draws upon the concept of the network as a 'liminal space,' that encompasses: informal dialogue, collective learning, power and knowledge sharing and high levels of trust (Walker 2004:4).

> All types of knowledge are upheld as equally valid as more and more people search and use the network's knowledge the more common definition naturally surfaces according to the emerging dialogue.

> Walker 2004:10

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[9] John Dewey was a philosopher, psychologist, and educational reformer Kurt Lewin, a social psychologist.

Walker's research interests include 'communities of practice' as conceived by Jean Lave and Etiene Wenger.[10] Wenger conceives 'communities of practice' as being 'formed by people who engage in collective learning in a shared domain of endeavour' (Wenger circa 2007 in Smith 2003, 2009). Although not specifically informed by the thinking of Lave and Wenger, SK4U and the 'Community Empowerment Network' reflected characteristics of communities, such as shared identity and interests and the forming of relationships that assist leaning and sharing (op. cit.). Although it is argued that the concept of 'communities of practice' became re-appropriated and commodified as a managerialist tool (Cox 2005), of significance to the development of this thesis is the concept of 'situatedness' (Lave and Wenger 1991). 'Situatedness' goes beyond experiential learning as conceived by Kolb as it involves, in an approach reminiscent of Freire's educational methodology, participation and generating meanings (Smith 2003, 2009). Data and information only take on relevance through points of contact and 'learning is in the relationships between people,' belonging 'to the conversations of which they are part' (McDermott in Murphy 1999:16), suggesting that it is *the relationship* between participants that transmits the learning and that meanings are generated through intersubjective interpretation.

As noted by Cox, a limitation of communities of practice is their 'tendency to inherit hierarchical relations from the wider organization and society' (2005:535). In the learning plan action research, meanings constructed in a participatory context were appropriated by more powerful partners and consistent with the findings of a study to evaluate the national implementation of 'The Learning Curve', the culture of the LSP Board proved to be intransigent. [11]

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[10] Jean Lave's background was in social anthropology and Etiene Wenger was at the time working for the Institute of Learning in California (in Smith 2003, 2009).
[11] Conducted Joseph Rowntree Foundation www.jrf.org.uk

> It was clear in some notable cases that the approach to learning, networking and support was conditioned by the attitude of senior figures within the partnership – either on the staff or on the board. This could reflect the wider political environment in which an individual partnership works.

> MacDonald, 2003:8

As noted by Finch, once research reaches the public domain it 'can be used in ways quite different' from originally intended (1994:176). Conforming to the aforementioned steer through Government, the learning plan was published as the 'Local Strategic Partnership Performance Improvement Action Plan' (CoSP 2004f). It incorporated a subtle shifting of community development purposes towards the Government's agenda of localism and centralisation (CBSG 2004:1 and 3) and was swiftly followed by a shift in funding for community development from the voluntary to the statutory sector. For the researcher, these developments were experienced as deleterious to the critical and interpretive practice established over two years through the action research. Although the Neighbourhood Renewal policy context, in the first instance seemed open to the critical and emancipatory approaches that fashioned the action research, as it emerged, there was never any assurances that the findings would not be co-opted by technical interests. Later, upon reflecting up these experiences, it occurred to the researcher that maybe such assurances never exist.

Having experimented with methods based upon equality, collaboration and coactive power to challenge more customary approaches to partnership working, key concepts of reflective practice, personal agency and liminal space came to form the bedrock of the researcher's thinking about the concept of dynamism in relation to this thesis. Subsequently, she left Voices and took up freelance practice and directed her passion and vocation towards her studies, commenting that she 'wanted to get started' to have a focus for her 'vocation during a period when I was losing a job that I was very passionate about' (Ph.D. Annual review, 1.1.2006). As noted by Issitt and Spence, bridging the borderlands between academic research and practice promotes

'shared and integrated perspectives' (2005:21). The researcher for this thesis occupied the position of what Ward and Wild (1995:32) conceive as 'boundary dweller.'

> The liminal person is neither one thing nor another and both; that is liminality's central ambiguity. Boundaries separate one thing and another and they provide a meeting place for both… [This] is not so much about separation, as about the relationship between limitation and potentiality.
>
> Ward and Wild, 1995:126

Not being subjected to the constraints of any one organisation or institution provided a level of freedom for the researcher to explore the limitations and potential of her research and practice through the framework of studying for this thesis.

1.5 THE EMERGING CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

As highlighted, this thesis was derived from concerns rooted in the researcher's practice experience, particularly concerns about the conditions for critical and reflexive community development practice within the contemporary Government policy context. A central concern is how established community development values and principles such as equality, social justice, participation and empowerment (Federation of Community Development Learning 2009) are conveyed through everyday professional practice. Within this, particular attention is placed upon the nature of relationships between practitioners and participants of community development processes. The early process of scoping, reflection and framing the research questions revealed concepts that were at the time unfamiliar to the researcher such as: dynamism, reflexivity and liminality. Through the lens of these new concepts and some early reading around them, the researcher came to reframe her thinking surrounding more familiar concepts such as: community development, professionalism and accountability.

Whilst acknowledging its wide range of conflicting purposes and traditions, the term 'community development,' used in this study encompasses the whole spectrum of perspectives and variations on terminology emerging from the literature (Rothman 1968, 1974, Banks 2011, Martin 2003). Whilst drawing upon broader concepts such as 'community practice' (Butcher et. al. 1993), 'social development work' (Hoggett et.al. 2009) and in particular 'critical community practice' as defined by Banks et al (2007), all of which apply to a broad range of professional settings with a 'community' focus, this thesis is concerned with exploring community development as a distinctive profession. [12] The researcher's background is in community and youth work and the literature review, analysis and discussion draws upon this broader theory and practice context. This is particularly where there are parallels and interconnections across youth work, informal critical education and critical perspectives in community development (e.g. Jeffs and Smith 2002, Batsleer 2008, 2013, Herman 2012).

The early review of the literature identified three distinctive features of contemporary community development addressed by theory. The first is its positioning between state, civil society and the market (Miller and Ahmad 1997, Martin 1999, Shaw 2004). In this thesis, this positioning relates to the concept of liminality and to the centrality of critical professional agency within boundary spaces between these institutions. Second was the wide spectrum between how state and practitioners think about community development indicating that there are no strong public expectations to draw upon (Smith 1994). So there are at once endless possibilities for interpretation and for energetic and creative agency but also for conflicts and tensions surrounding power and accountability. Third, given the wide spectrum of perceptions between controlling and transforming community development functions (Martin 1999, Shaw 2005), a key tenet of professional

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[12] Such as policing, regeneration or neighbourhood work, social work or planning etc. (Banks et. al 2013:10)

practice is that it is contestable and its purposes should be contested (Shaw 2005). Therefore, dialogical and reflexive processes must be integral and cyclical elements of critical community development practice, requiring dynamism to continually regenerate the required motivation and energy.

As the researcher reflected upon the tensions and possibilities for community development practice and how she would deal with its liquidity in the research process, rather than using a fixed definition of dynamism, she began to locate it at the transforming end of a spectrum of community development perspectives. This led to her conceiving a model and some defining characteristics which provided a lens to explore the concept of dynamism through her empirical research. Figure 1.1 illustrates the concept of dynamism as being situated at the point where the three circles intersect.
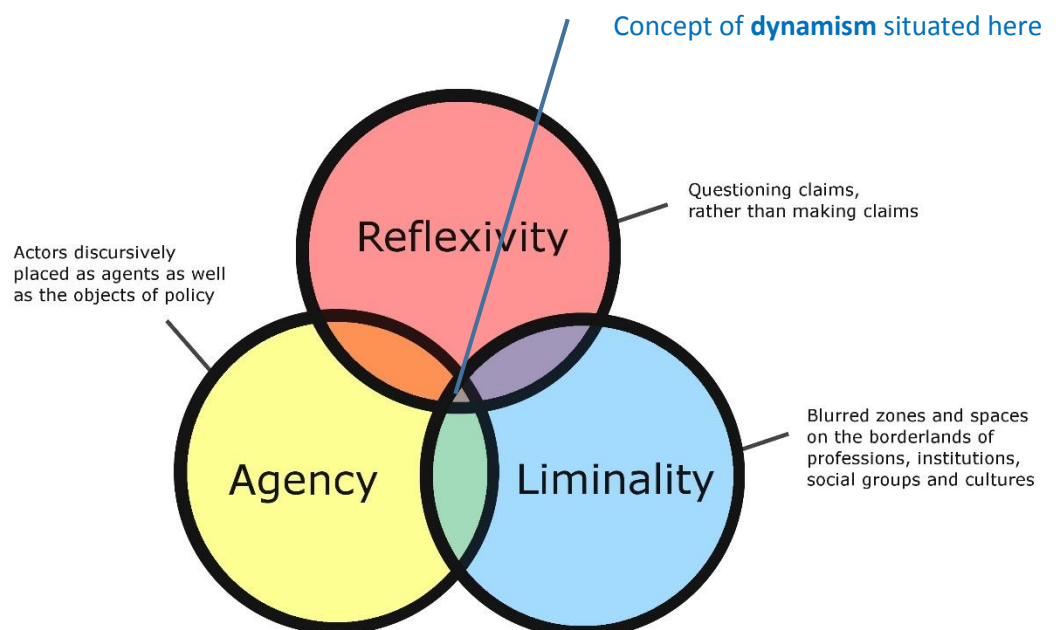
Figure 1.1 Conception of three intersecting components of community development dynamism

In Figure 1.1, 'reflexivity' is conceived as practitioners as individuals and in groups with each other and with communities, exercising agency by questioning policy claims, thus adding validity to positivist and technical methods through the encouragement of divergent perspectives (e.g. Winter 2003). The concept of 'agency' is informed by Shaw's concept of community development practitioners are 'agents of creative dialectic' whereby people are simultaneously constructed as active subjects and objects of policy and policy initiatives themselves can provide the opportunity critical engagement (2005:7). Agency is considered in relation to practitioners, individuals and community groups working in liminal spaces. 'Liminality,' from the Latin word 'līmen,' meaning 'a threshold,' is conceived as the boundary spaces where practitioners can most effectively operate as critical agents. The concept of liminality encompasses physical and social boundaries and periods of transition where normal limits to thought, self-understanding, and behaviour are relaxed and can lead to new perspectives (Ruby 1980, Ward and Wild 1995, Turner 1969). Liminal states are conceived as places of chaos that are 'indefinable' and 'transitional' and at once 'creative,' 'powerful and 'dangerous' (Douglas 1978:2 in Ward and Wild 1995: 28-29). Yet, by implication creating policy that makes community development practice accountable to state policy suggests counteracting the liminal condition, creating a tension that is of central concern in this thesis.

The focus of this thesis is upon dynamism and integrity in relation to community development accountability in state policy terms. As the researcher first approached this study, the changing conditions for community development practice under New Labour were compounding already complex lines of accountability between practitioners and communities, policymakers and fund holders. Moreover, situating community development accountability within its recognised core principles of social justice and equality requires an integral personal commitment from the practitioner and it was this particular aspect of accountability that she perceived was not

supported by her experience of New Labour's emerging mechanistic and technical approach. Banks simply defines the condition of being accountable thus:

> To be liable to be called upon to give an account of what one has done or not done. The account may include some descriptions, explanations, excuses or justifications.

<div align="right">2004:15</div>

For Banks, accountability to service users is the 'essence of professional practice,' whether it relates to doctors, lawyers or social practitioners (Banks 2004:150). For those in the social professions, such as community and youth work who often work directly or indirectly for public bodies and are publicly accountable for the effectiveness of their services, professional and public accountability are intrinsically linked (Banks 2004). In the social professions, accountability is also bound up with core values along with respecting their 'freedom of choice, promoting their welfare and challenging discrimination and oppression' (p150). Thus it follows that accountability is important across all community development perspectives and traditions, although there may be variations in the power balance towards state policy or communities depending up on the ideological position. However, a vertical concept of accountability is implied where practitioner are accountable upwards to employers and policy maker and downwards to communities and service users. Whereas the researcher's conception of three intersecting components of community development dynamism (illustrated in figure 1.1), would require a model of accountability encompassing what Parker Follett (1924) understood as a coactive model of power, where practitioners with communities are also accountable towards each other, or with each other along horizontal lines.

The functionalist model adopted by New Labour, implied that they were seeking a consensual society where everyone was signing up for the same thing. Yet, it is widely argued that pluralistic and consensual community development models fail to

acknowledge conflict and power relationships between groups (Lovett et. al. 1979, Ledwith and Asgill, 2000, Ledwith 2005, Miller and Ahmad 1997). Critical models of community development start from the basis that different groups have different and competing interests, therefore tensions and conflict are at the core of community development accountability and it is never straightforward. In a critical community development model, the whole concept of accountability is problematic and full of contradictions. The researcher's reflections upon the initial scoping exercise and early reading implied the concepts of reflexivity and liminality to have central significance towards dealing with these inherent contradictory and conflictual conditions in practice. The research came to conceive dynamism rather like a dynamo or turbine, as a regenerative energy supply for remaining tenacious, creative and reflexive amid difficult, volatile and turbulent practice conditions.

The researcher came to perceive the concept of reflexivity in community development accountability and research as adding validity to positivistic methods through questioning, interpretation and dialogue (Hall 2003, Winter 2003, Issitt and Spence 2005). The thesis of reflexivity suggests that positivistic claims that individuals can use 'single words to label external reality' is misleading because using 'language is not a private act where an individual can represent [their] perceptions' (Winter (2003:14). Winter argues that, 'language structures our consciousness and the same time our relationship with others' and that 'our working lives are a never ending sequence of judgements' grasping what it is we perceive 'at least partly through language' (ibid). Whereas the concept of 'situatedness' suggests that creating meaning of data and information requires a relationship between people, the thesis of reflexivity suggests that language only take on meaning though our relationship with others (McDermott in Murphy 1999). The thesis of reflexivity makes modest claims in relation to truth and is based upon a process of dialogue concerned with possible interpretations arising from various personal experiences,

rather than expressing certainty (Winter 2003:14, Melrose 2003), Accordingly, the thesis of reflexivity is highly significant with reference to dealing with the unstable conditions of community development practice and central to process of creating meaning through intersubjective interpretation and dialogue.

The word critical derives from the Greek 'kriticos' or critic, meaning 'to make sense of, to analyse to question' (Chaffee 1998 in Butcher, 2007b:59). It follows that critical approaches to community development seek to identify the structural causes of social problems, inspired by a vision of social justice and are fundamentally committed to bringing about transformational change through collective community action (Miller and Ahmed 1997, Martin 1999, Smith 1996, 2006, Ledwith 2005). Critical perspectives are implicit about their political purposes and historically have been highly effective in pursuing personal interests. (Smith 1996, 2006 and Martin 1999, Ledwith 2005). The expansion of 'critical consciousness' or 'consciousness that is understood to have the power to transform reality' (Taylor 1993: 52), is a central tenet of critical community development approaches.

Contemporary critical community development perspectives have been influenced by liberatory thinkers in Marxist tradition such as Freire and Gramsci (Smith 1994, Ledwith and Askgill 2000, Ledwith 2005). The concept of 'critical consciousness' is associated with both Gramsci's and Freire's writings (Gramsci 1971:350, Freire, 1970: 72). Freire's concept of 'Conscientization' was intended to break a culture of 'Magical' or 'Naïve Consciousness' defined as a passive and unquestioning acceptance of discrimination, or limited insight into individual problems that does not make connections to systems in society (Freire 1973:14, Ledwith 1997, Ledwith 2000).

For Ledwith, Gramsci's insights into the 'complexity of power relationships in society' have much to offer critical perspectives in community development (2005:113). Of

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central significance to critical perspectives in community development and towards how this thesis evolved and developed are the concepts of 'hegemony' and 'counter hegemony as they were conceived by Gramsci. The concept of 'hegemony' encompasses the ways in which 'an entire system of values, attitudes, beliefs and morality' permeates throughout society with the effect of maintaining the 'status quo in power relations' (Burke 1999, 2005:4, Butcher 2007a). The prevailing 'philosophy, culture and morality' of the ruling class becomes internalised into the consciousness of the population to such an extent that it becomes 'common sense' and is believed to be the 'natural order of things' (Boggs 1976: 39 in Burke 1999, 2005). Thus hegemony does not operate through coercion but by consent and requires the 'collective will of the people' for dominant attitudes are formalised and accepted (Ledwith 2005: 121). For Collins, in a contemporary hegemonic system, dominant ideologies are manufactured through sites such as 'school curricula, religious teachings, community cultures, family histories and the media' (2000:284). Gramsci also conceived that counter hegemonic movements can challenge social conventions, not by erasing existing social conventions perpetuated by the dominant group but by rearticulating and reinterpreting them (Ben-Zion 2009:10-11).

In Gramscian terms, critical consciousness does not erupt spontaneously, 'false consciousness' requires an external stimulus 'to demystify the prevailing hegemony' (in Ledwith 2009:p686). Ledwith captures this phenomenon in the concept of 'a critical incident' (ibid).   Ledwith reflects upon the meaning of 'critical incident' in terms of her own life. As a young teacher Ledwith witnessed what she came to understand as hegemonic forces playing out in the classroom and in turn, constructing the personal lives of individuals (2009:685). This experience and that of working with traumatised Vietnamese refugees, led her to study for a master's degree in community development in Edinburgh where her tutor Peter Mayo's passion about the thinking of Gramsci and Freire profoundly impacted upon her

(ibid). Ledwith explains that as she was touched at an intellectual and emotional level upon engaging with the teachings of Freire and Gramsci, experiencing a 'powerful epistemological-ontological shift' that changed her understanding of the 'insidious nature of power' (2009:685). As a result of this critical incident, Ledwith 'moved closer to a synthesis of action and reflection, of theory and practice' that gave her 'a glimpse of the potential of praxis to identify the forces of power and disempowerment' Ledwith (2009:685). This is relevant here insofar as this thesis developed, the researcher came to recognise the significance of 'critical incidents' as times when dynamism and reflexivity come together to transcend the inherent contradictions of accountability in practice.

The researcher's critical incident arrived in 1986, at the time she was feeling powerless to change her violent and controlling domestic situation. The feminist community development practitioners she worked with as a volunteer in a local youth club at first struck her as being in a different personal and professional class to herself, until the day she went to work with visible bruising. In response to her opening up about what had happened, the area youth worker shared her own experiences of domestic violence. Through small deeds, this worker and other showed her support and human kindness which gave her courage to bring about necessary changes in her personal life. She immediately came to identify with her colleagues in a different way, not as professional that she was subordinate to, but as women who shared similar struggles to herself. With their encouragement she went on to study community and youth work at the then Sunderland Polytechnic.

Thus began a long journey of reflection upon sociological theory in relation to community development practice that would span the next twenty-eight years, including the work for this thesis. Liberationary theorists such as Freire (1970. 1973), hooks (1981, 2000, 2003) and Hill Collins (1990, 2000) with their tenets of critical consciousness raising and solidarity building have long been significant

influences upon the researcher's community development practice and learning, her motivations reflected in these words:

> My hope emerges from those places of struggle where I witness individuals positively transforming their lives and the world around them… nothing can keep an open mind from seeking after knowledge and finding a way to know.
>
> hooks 2003: xiv

The concept of professionalism in relation to community development an area of much contestation, with issues surrounding its personal and relational elements being key sites of tensions and conflict (e.g. Specht 1978, T. Smith 1980, Twelvetrees 1991, Mayo 1998 in Shaw 2004, Banks 2004, Popple 1995, Shaw 2004, Shaw 2005, Ledwith 2005). According to Banks, whether community work can be 'legitimately regarded as a profession,' depends on 'what view is taken of the nature of a profession' (2004:15). What is notable in the two examples above is that critical and dynamic community development practice involves a personal commitment and requires boundary spaces for bilateral identifications and intersubjective relationships to develop. In the absence of the freedom to articulate these central elements of practice, community development professionalism would be devoid of humanity.

1.6 HOW THE THESIS IS STRUCTURED

The thesis first reviews and analyses the literature surrounding community development practice, dynamism and accountability from a range of traditions and perspectives. This includes a historical and contemporary exploration of the possibilities and limitations for reflexive, accountable and dynamic community development practice in relation to a range of political ideologies and whoever has control of the state. As a result of the central significance to the context for this thesis one whole chapter is devoted to New Labour and the discourse of community development. The literature review and resulting analysis parallels and contrasts the development of sociological research epistemologies, methodologies with community

development concepts and practice perspectives. These are particularly considered in relation to how they influenced the methodology for this thesis and were subsequently applied to conducting the empirical research. The empirical research journey is considered in detail, including how the data was collated analysed and coded. The thesis then blends a qualitative and quantitative analysis of the research findings with key theoretical and practice issues and concepts identified in the analysis of the literature. Although the findings are situated within the context of New Labour's administration, the analysis of the interview data identifies some general issues about how community development relates to state policy that are explored further in the conclusion. In congruence with its conceptual focus, the final chapters are written reflexively. That is not separating the findings from the final analysis, rather attempting to suffuse them into a dialogical discussion from which readers can form their own interpretations.

> The thesis of reflexivity, insists upon modest claims, making judgments depends upon examples from various personal experiences, not on a representative samples of universally agreed categories. These examples will be analysed but no analysis will be final or complete, because the enquiry will take the form of questioning claims rather than making claims. The result of the enquiry will thus take the form of a dialogue between writers and readers concerning possible interpretations of experience.

Winter, 2003:14

The thesis concludes with a reflexive and interpretive discussion on the future implications of the learning from this thesis for community development practice, policy and theory. The following is a brief summary of the concepts, debates and arguments contained in each of the chapters.

Chapter 2 explores the literature relating to a spectrum of emancipatory and controlling community development perspectives, examining each for its inherent tensions and contradictions, in relation to the exercise of reflexivity, dynamism and agency. This chapter highlights the contestable conditions and a resultant volatility

are inherent and central to distinguishing community development from other professions. It argues that it is critical and liberatory traditions that have sought to illuminate and work with the resultant tensions and conflicts. In doing so, it is these traditions that have protected and created spaces open for creative, dynamic and engaged community participation and activism. The chapter starts by reviewing the competing ideologies have influenced the analysis of inequality and the preferred solutions by different Governments, including the role and purpose of community development practice at different junctures. It then examines contemporary conceptions of community development as a boundary professional and the potential for practices rooted in enlivening and expanding democratic participation in state policy, beginning to highlight some inherent tensions.

Chapter 3 contextualises the thesis with the intention of coupling reflexivity and accountability with reference to the question of professionalism. To this end, it explores contemporary literature surrounding the concept of professionalism in relation to community development practice. Its particular focus is the concept of dynamism in relation to concepts and arguments surrounding community development professionalism in a state policy context. It argues that because dynamism in practice involves the intersubjective, there is a necessary personal dynamic within the professional and some core elements of practice that make it distinctive whatever tradition it inhabits. Consequently, any attempts to contain the personal within a professional framework compromise the very essence of community development practice.

Through an exploration of ideological and theoretical influences that shaped Government policy from 1997 to 2010, Chapter 4 argues that New Labour attempted to bypass certain community development perspectives and traditions in favour of its new philosophy of 'Third Way' and a functionalist model of society informed by the work of the sociologist Anthony Giddens (1998). These conditions implied a new

conception of community development professionalism. However, in its efforts to shift the perspectives and actions of practitioners there were questions about the personal, emotional and relational elements that this researcher has argued are fundamental to the nature of community development practice, whichever tradition it inhabits. This chapter assesses the impact of New Labour's discourse in relation to key aspects of dynamic community development practice identified in earlier chapters, particularly in relation to tension surrounding issues such as language, power and accountability. Within this analysis, it questions how far the perception of the community development field and the perceptions of the state were contested and if so, what were the implications of the New Labour Government having the power of funding to shape what happened? Could it have been different?

Chapter 5 chronicles the empirical research journey. It first discusses the practical, theoretical and philosophical perspectives and traditions that influenced the development of this thesis. Then, revisiting the research intentions set out in the original research proposal (12.12.04), the researcher reflects upon how her intentions altered in relation to her emerging learning and within a volatile and ever changing policy context for community development practice and research. This chapter then discusses the scope and limitations of participation in the research process including issues of ethics and power, how they were addressed by the researcher and sometimes, ways they could have been handled differently. The implications of the researcher's connectedness to the research in relation to the development of the methodology and issues of validity and the salience of the findings outside of the North East are discussed throughout this chapter.

Drawing upon the testimonies of 24 practitioners and managers in the North East of England, chapter 6 attempts to identify the core elements of community development practice whichever tradition it inhabits. It argues that the conflation of the personal and the professional in community development practice is

inherent to dynamism and the reflexive use of the self of the practitioner is integral to critical and transformational learning. The chapter first explores research participants' perspectives on the purposes of community development practice, highlighting any commonalities, anomalies and contestations. It then examines how research participants conveyed their practice principles according to their influences and motivations and in relation to the organisational contexts they were operating in. Here, particular attention is placed upon the quality of the relationship between practitioners and participants within community development processes.

Chapter 7 explores the impact of New Labour policy upon community development discourse, in relation to core elements of community development practice. It argues that the ensuing managerialism and instrumentalism marginalised necessary aspects of the self and identity from community development processes. In identifying factors and influences impacting upon the quality and management of community development practice, it is clear that the quality of management systems during the time of New Labour was crucial to the interpretation of policy and systems of accountability.

Chapter 8 concludes this thesis, with a reflective interpretation of what the researcher perceives are the implications of this enquiry within the current political context and for the future of community development practice. It argues that for community development practice to maintain dynamism and integrity in a state policy context it is vital that its personal dynamic is integral to formal conceptions of professionalism. Supporting the personal and relational elements of community development practice requires liminal spaces on the boundaries of communities, organisations and policy making where self-determination and the agentic capacities of the practitioner can be exercised. It is only under these practice conditions that the intersubjective relationships necessary for bilateral and horizontal accountability can be nurtured

and developed. In congruence with the thesis of reflexivity, the intention is not to attempt to come up with a fixed definition of professionalism or for the analysis to be final or complete, but to promote wider interpretations and dialogue within the community development field about the possibilities of community development practice to maintain its dynamism and integrity, whilst being accountable towards communities *and* state policies.

2. THE CONCEPT OF DYNAMISM IN HISTORICAL AND CONTEMPORARY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PERSPECTIVES

2.1 GOVERNMENT IDEOLOGY, THE STATE AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PRACTICE

A historical analysis highlights two competing community development strands of pluralist and radical/ socialist evolving from benevolent paternalism and collective community action (Baldock 1980, Popple 2000). Autonomous collective action is often traced back to the peasants' revolt of the 16th and 17th century (Hebditch 1976). Examples in the early 20th century include the mass tenants' strikes organised by the Glasgow Women's Housing Group in 1915 and the National Unemployed Workers Movement cumulating in the General Strike of 1926 (Ledwith (2005). Benevolent paternalism is witnessed in liberal and philanthropic social welfare movements of the 19th Century, emerging as a response to rapid urbanisation and later conservative efforts to manage colonial independence (Mayo 1975, Baldock 1980, Hamner and Rose 1980, Dominelli 1990). For Shaw, although not wanting to 'fix practice rather than subjecting it to critical scrutiny,' these overlapping but often conflicting strands remain relevant to understanding the spectrum of controlling and empowering community development functions (2004:27). For Miller and Ahmad community development is 'a vehicle to satisfy a number of contradictory approaches that span the political spectrum' (1997:270). Unlike areas concerned with specific services where the 'outcomes are more easily defined and evaluated, 'community development slithers around in a set of contested and ill-defined concepts that are vulnerable to the shifting sands of politics' (Miller in Shaw 2004:43).

Beyond these two dominant forces, contemporary analysis of community development models identifies three broad and competing perspectives (Rothman

1968, 1974, Banks 2011, Martin 2003, Popple 1995, 2000, Miller and Ahmad 1997).

These are identified by Rothman as: 'locality development', a consensus model that seeks to achieve change by the identification of common interests, typified in the work of settlement houses and 'colonial' community development work; a 'social planning' model witnessed in urban renewal and large public bureaucracies with a focus upon resource allocation, co-ordination of social services and emphasising rational problem solving and technical methods; and 'social action,' which seeks institutional change and the re-distribution of power, such as civil rights groups and social movements. Banks also identifies three 'overlapping approaches to community work' reflecting a wide range of ideologies functions and methods that broadly correspond with those identified by Rothman (2011:166-7). The first, that Banks defined as 'community development,' aims to 'promote self-help and citizen participation' and is underpinned by 'liberal democratic, communitarian influences' or 'conservative/ consensus seeking' ideologies (ibid). The second, a 'community services and planning,' based in liberal/ reformist or 'conservative/ consensus seeking' ideologies for developing community orientated policies, services and organisations (ibid). The third, a 'community action/ community organising' based in structural conflict theories such as Marxism and anti-oppressive movement for 'campaigning for community interests and policies' (ibid).

A consensual model evident during the post war period when all political parties agreed upon an economic model consisting of full employment supported by a welfare state (Mayo 1975, Baldock 1980, Hamner and Rose 1980, Dominelli 1990). [13] For Leaper (1968), this translated in the 1950s to a consensual thesis of change in community work assuming unity between people and the state and relied upon

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[13] HMSO (1942), William Beveridge, Social Insurance and Allied Services, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, London.

technical resources and services being placed in communities for the purpose of encouraging initiative and self-help (in Hamner and Rose 1980). Contemporary critical or radical approaches emerged from the 1960s onwards and are witnessed in Marxist, feminist and anti-racist perspectives that seek to identify the structural causes of social problems and challenge existing power relationships (Lovett et. al. 1979, Ledwith and Asgill, 2000, Ledwith 2005, Miller and Ahmad 1997). A pluralistic model, involving the participation of communities in partnerships to improve the responsiveness of services to local need that became evident from the 1970s onwards (Lovett et. al. 1979, Hamner and Rose 1980, Green 1992, Taylor 1995b, Miller and Ahmad 1997). This chapter now examines how each of these ideological traditions have shaped conceptions of the purposes and direction of community development practice, according to their respective analysis of equality and poverty.

2.1.1   Consensus or conservative community development perspectives

It is widely argued that In a period when the British Government was coming under increasing pressure to relinquish its hold and dominion over colonies, community development techniques were used to ensure the growth of British democratic institutions; integrating the colonies into capitalist economic systems and preventing the growth of communism (Mayo 1975, Dominelli 1990, Popple 2000, Shaw 2004, Tegegn 1997). From the outset the model of contemporary community development mainstreamed by the British state was located in the contradictory tensions of colonialism and democracy (Mayo 1975, Shaw 2004). The term community development was first used by the British Government in its 1948 report, 'The Encouragement of Initiative in African Society' (Jones 1981, Shaw 2004), conceived by the Colonial Office as:

> A movement designed to promote better living for the whole
> community with active participation and, if possible, on the initiative of
> the community, but if this initiative is not forthcoming spontaneously,
> by the use of techniques for arousing and stimulating it.

By the 1950s, the British state had adopted the concept of community development as a means of supporting new political, economic and social expectations, including an implicit assumption of it being the responsibility of citizens to help those failing to 'buy into society' (Popple 1995, Shaw 2004). The new community development workers returning to Britain from the colonies in the 1950s applied the consensual model to new housing estates created out of slum clearance. Many took up posts in education institutions and major charities and went on to become very influential in the development of contemporary community work.

The political consensus established after World War II was based upon confidence in the national and international economy and an expectation of low unemployment due to expanded trade, relying upon full employment through deficit spending to increase employment and stimulate business activity (Knight 1993:21-2).[14] However, during the 1960s, poverty was 'rediscovered' in Britain and in the USA and the 'War on Poverty' sought eradicate it through a combination of 'self-help and institutional efficiency' (Shaw 2004:20, Loney 1983). Influenced by the USA, in 1968 the British Government launched an anti-poverty initiative, the Community Development Projects (CDPs), investing five million pounds in twelve projects across Britain (Loney 1983). Inherent in the CDPs was a 'social pathology' model (Bridges 1975, Hamner and Rose 1980, Dominelli 1990, Green 1992, Green and Chapman 1992, Taylor 1995a). The 'official consensus' from Government was that individuals and families needed to change 'to integrate deviant and disadvantaged groups into the mainstream' (Loney 1983, Shaw 2004. 19).

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[14] The model of deficit spending here is 'Keynsian deficit financing' and based upon the policies of British economist John Maynard Keynes whose thinking evolved in the context of a crisis in capitalism during the Great Depression in the 1930s (Keynes 1933

The initiation of the CDPs by the Home Office took place during a period when an aggregative model of democracy was dominant. In the post war period, Joseph Schumpeter's seminal work 'Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy,' (1947) had been influential in claiming that the classical model of popular sovereignty had become inadequate and that a new understanding of democracy was needed. Whereas a classical model was based upon a belief that the 'common good' and the 'unified will of the people is the supreme authority of the state,' Schumpeter argued for an understanding of democracy proposed based upon an aggregation of preferences achieved through a competitive electoral process of bargaining and voting (in Espejo 2011:3-4). In an aggregative model of democracy participation in decision making is discouraged as stability and order in the system is more like to arise from compromise, than from 'mobilising people towards an illusionary concept of the common good' (Mouffe 2000a:2). Instead, an aggregative model accepts plurality of interests and values but disposes of the notions of 'common good' and 'general will,' assuming that individuals are motivated by self-interest and that political parties should constitute themselves around these (Mouffe (2000a 2000b). It is argued that in an aggregative model, the 'normative dimension' is removed from political democracy and it is conceived from a purely instrumental standpoint (ibid).

The Government's analysis of 'social deprivation' in the official consensus in the CDPs of was likened to 'an inherited disease' passed on from one generation to another' (Green 1992: 165, Dominelli 1990). 'Cultural' transmission of poverty theories emanated from the USA in the 1950s, involving notions of 'learned helplessness' being generated through child rearing and socialisation within the family. One of the main exponents was the Oscar Lewis author of 'The Culture of Poverty Thesis' based upon an anthropological case study of five families in Mexico (Walker 1999, Lewis 1959, 1966). Although this thesis attracted wide scientific criticism, it proved attractive to policy makers and was central to informing the USA

'War on Poverty.' (Walker 1999). A seminal critique of the cultural transmission of poverty thesis is Barbara Wootton's, 'Social Science and Social Pathology (1959). Reviewing research findings on both sides of the Atlantic, Wootton discredited popular theories about generational social failure claiming they were based upon 'little solid factual evidence' (Wootton 1959:301). In the same juncture, the sociological critique of C. Wright Mills (1959) claimed that in a social pathology model, private troubles are public issues but are not recognised as such. On the one hand because people do not usually define them as such and on the other because 'they can slip past structure to focus upon isolated situations' (Wright Mills, 1959:2, Wright Mills 1967:534 cited in Smith 1999, 2009). Although Wootton's concerns were with the impact of social work theory upon practice, her message translates to community development practitioners, urging them to 'question and think critically' (Johnson 2008:4-7).

To deal with urban decay in the late 1960s and 1970s, CDPs were founded by the state upon a consensual model of change and a positivist model of research that would enable social scientists to inform rational policy decisions within an aggregative model of democracy (Green 1992). The Government did not anticipate the critical and interpretive approach that emerged from combining research and activism with political critique in the context of 1960s social, political and intellectual radicalism and the rise of the New Left (Hamner and Rose 1980, Green 1990, Bondi and Peake 1988). CDP action teams were established in Local Authorities with corresponding research teams in polytechnics and universities in which sociological understanding of the state and its processes was increasingly coming under the influence of New Left thinking. Most workers within CDPs rejected the consensual origins of the programme in which they were engaged, instead developing a structural (Marxist) analysis of the relationship between labour and capital, claiming

that poverty and inequality are necessary to the advancement of capitalism (Green and Chapman 1992, Taylor 1995a).

The CDP teams had access to Home Office publishing resources and produced a series of accessible research reports illustrating their analysis and findings (Smith 2006).[15] However, as the Home Office increasingly lost control of CDPs to local activists, it began to distance itself from the unwelcome findings of the reports (Loney 1983, Shaw 2004). Despite the apparent success of the New Left building a critical mass of activism and evidence surrounding a structural analysis of poverty, already by the early 1970s political reaction was becoming increasingly organised around an ideology that became identified with the 'New Right'. The 'culture of poverty' thesis was popularised by Sir Keith Joseph, Conservative minister for Social Services, through a number of speeches (1972-74) blaming single parents for generating and transmitting poverty (Dominelli 1990:20). Joseph became known as one of the main architects of the decline of the post-war consensus and the creation of free-market Conservatism that came to be known as 'Thatcherism.' Emotive language of disease and contamination is also evident in the protestations of American New Right commentator Charles Murray, who declared the 'War on Poverty' had made it profitable for the poor to behave in ways that were 'morally and socially destructive,' (Lister 1999, Prideaux 2010:294). Murray's protestations about an 'immoral and unruly underclass' were to grip the imagination of policy makers on both sides of the Atlantic during the 1980s and influenced the welfare reforms of the Thatcher era (Prideaux 2010:294).

Although the CDP reports were used to inform the direction of industry and housing campaigns and may have influenced the 1974 Labour victory, both Conservative and

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[15] Some of the CDP reports and publications are listed at www.infed.org/community/b-comwrk.htm [last accessed 30.9.15].

Labour Governments came to reject the structural analysis of poverty in their policy making (Hamner and Rose 1980:81, Green 1992:161, Knight 1993:51). As a result of the 1972 global oil 'shock,' Britain was in economic crisis and in 1976 the Labour Government was 'forced to accept' a multi-billion pound loan from the International Monetary Fund and cut five thousand million pounds from public expenditure over two years (Lovett et.al. 1979:18, Green and Chapman 1992). The 'force of structuralist critique' of the CDPs 'did little to enable community workers to prepare for what was coming - or to prepare for it' (Shaw 2004:22, Ledwith 2005, Lees and Mayo 1984).

By the end of the 1970s, power was becoming more centralised and community activism less significant. Amid an intensifying political and economic crisis, activists who had been part of small but significant advances by political movements in influencing state policy became demoralised by being 'forced back into more conservative forms of community work' (Lovett et.al. 1979:20). In the face of the closure of facilities, rising costs and large scale redundancies, political decision making was simultaneously receding from the grass-roots and Local Authorities (Lovett et.al. 1979:20).

The 1980s heralded far-reaching changes in British social and economic policy, with New Right interest intent upon shrinking the state in favour of market forces. Community workers who had been in opposition to the control of Local Government in the 1970s, by the 1980s were defending Local Authorities against the impact of cuts imposed upon them by Central Government (Taylor 1995b).

The 1979 Conservative Government under Thatcher had an agenda that those engaged in working-class activism in the 1970s could have hardly imagined (Green 1992, Taylor 1995b, Brownhill and Darke 1998). Faced with a fiscal crisis and public discontent, Thatcher declared public expenditure to be 'at the heart of Britain's

difficulties' (Timmins 1996:371 in Prideaux 2010:295). Spending on social welfare was perceived to be at the expense of capital investment for profit and the managerial principles and methods of private business were applied to Local Authorities through a process that involved privatisation of public services, dismantling of the welfare state and breaking down the power of the organised labour market followed (Knight 1993). During this period the welfare state was subjected to a 'systematic process of institutional and ideological restructuring,' to support a free market economy 'rooted in a politics of individualism' (Shaw 2004: p2, Ledwith 2005: p14).

> Notions of collective social responsibility, which had formed the
> bedrock for the post-war welfare state, gave way to a competitive
> culture driven by consumerism.

Ledwith 2005:15

It is argued that these changes were achieved by sewing the New Right rhetoric of the 'welfare scrounger' into the minds of people and dividing the poor into the 'deserving and undeserving' (Shaw 2004: 2, Ledwith 2005: 14). Exponents of new right philosophy such as Murray are said to have helped to establish the hegemony of New Right thinking by providing justification for the Government to remove welfare from the poor as an alternative to cutting taxes (Walker 1999, Prideaux 2010).

The model of community development promoted by the state during the 1980s was based upon historical tradition of voluntarism and self-help and was utilised to compensate for cuts in welfare spending by divesting responsibility to the community (Dominelli 1990, Green 1992, Miller and Ahmad 1997). Yet, far reaching political and economic changes from the mid-1970s onwards were impacting upon British society and community life was becoming impossible. Lovett et. al. (1979:20) argue that a whole range of social institutions and daily practices established since the 1920s were undermined or eliminated and replaced by 'a commercial leisure industry, an

undemocratic state, bureaucracy and rapid commercialisation.' British working-class people became increasingly treated as consumers rather than political agents, 'a mass market for commerce and profit making,' (1979:20). The reliance of capitalism upon the mobility of labour and capital in the search to maximise profit brought destructive processes of industrial change and made 'tightly integrated community life impossible' (1979:20). By the 1980s although the standard of living rose, the gap between rich and poor widened, revealing deepening social divisions (Knight 1993, Millar and Ahmad 1997, Imrie and Raco 2003a).[16]

For Miller and Ahmad, conservative community development perspectives are based upon individual and collective self-help, the 'values of traditional family unit' and 'notions of solidarity based upon mythical past' (1997:270). Shaw argues that implicit in conservative models of 'self-help' is a 'supremely ideological process' which blurs the boundary between social structure and individual agency (2004:15). This serves to integrate 'those denied insider status into the logic of the existing social order' by seeing themselves as 'responsible for their own circumstances' (ibid). For Shaw (2004), whereas in the social democratic structure prior to the 1980s, community development complemented the welfare state and was at best 'marginal to the mainstream,' in a restructured managerial and marketised state it became at its best a substitute for welfare services and at worst a 'form of surveillance.' Local Authorities increasingly employed community development practitioners with funding from special programmes (Dominelli 1990, Green 1992). Dominelli (1990) argues that this was to demonstrate concern with the effects of poverty and to gain information about how people in 'deprived communities' coped so that they could then develop policies to save on welfare. Rose (1999) argues that communities became zones to be 'investigated, mapped, classified, documented and interpreted,'

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[16] Disposable incomes increased by 25% in the 1980s (According to Social Trends 1990, cited in B. Knight 1993).

representing the state reaching out to extend governance into local community spaces (in Taylor, 2007:5).

Green argues that under Thatcher's administration, the positivist model of the scientific rational expert informing policy was rejected and policy-making became entirely based upon political ideology (1992:172). In support of Green's argument is the discernible influence of Murray upon Thatcherite welfare policies (Macintyre 1993). Although lacking in any significant academic following, Murray first came to Britain in 1987 sponsored by the Sunday Times and News International Group. Murray met with Thatcher's Policy Unit, the Department of Health and Social Security, the Treasury Unit and in 1989 with Thatcher herself. Upon visiting Britain in 1993, Murray declared himself as 'a visitor from the plague area, come to see if the disease is spreading' (Murray 1996:25 in Prideaux 2010: 296), Murray's two essays construct a concept of a British 'underclass' that was to underlie cuts in welfare to those who did not conform with conservative ideals of behaviour (Murray 1990, 1994 in Lister 1999).

Murray's deliberations conjured up 'evocative stereotypes' that for Ledwith are familiar in consensus models of change (2005:14). Although the notion of the underclass encompassed those who were unemployed, living on welfare, involved in crime and generally believed to be dysfunctional, the dominant narrative suggests that single mothers in particular were portrayed as responsible for spawning such traits. Murray's 1993 visit coincided with a 'moral panic' about single mothers, such as high profile Government ministers speeches portraying them as 'benefit-driven' and 'undeserving' (Chambers 2001:147).[17] This was amid media profiling surrounding the murder of toddler James Bulger, also involving single mothers (ibid). Murray's solution to a 'deepening crisis' in the UK, was to ensure the 'childbearing

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[17] John Redwood (Secretary of state for Wales) and Peter Lilley (UK Secretary of state)

entails economic penalties' for a single women (Murray (1994)1999:128). In 1995, in an 'angry tirade,' Redwood argued that lone parents should be denied state support until they first tried to give their children up for adoption (Horton 2010), sentiments again echoed by the media. The 'underclass' remains a key term in the 'British political, academic and media lexicon,' this is partly attributed to Murray's essays (Lister 1999:2).

2.1.3 Critical community development perspectives

In the literature, critical approaches are defined by consciousness raising, collective action, seeking to identify the root causes of social problems, and are inspired by a vision of equality and social justice (Dominelli 1990, 1995, Miller and Ahmed 1997, Smith 1994, 2006, Shaw 2004, 2005, Ledwith 2005, Batsleer 2008). For Ledwith, such approaches are recognised as engendering 'political consciousness that unites people in collective action beyond the boundaries of neighbourhood to engage in structural change' (2005:21) and for Miller and Ahmad, 'making tangible gains in revealing social processes' (1997: 270).

From the 1970s onwards, liberatory influences in the Marxist tradition such as the English translations of Gramsci and Freire are evident in contemporary critical community development approaches (Smith 1994, Ledwith and Askgill 2000, Ledwith 2005).[18] These two thinkers complement each other in a powerful way, Freire because of his consideration of the 'political nature of education;' and Gramsci's consideration of the 'educational nature of politics' (Allman 1988:92 in Ledwith 2009:686). The centralising of the personal in the dynamic in community development is rooted in the concept of 'critical consciousness' associated with both Gramsci's and Freire's writings (Gramsci 1971:350, Freire, 1970: 72). Both promote

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[18] In particular Pedagogy of the Oppressed (Freire 1972) and Gramsci's Prison notebooks (selection translated in 1971)

emancipatory education based upon horizontal and reciprocal relationships between 'teacher' and 'pupil' (Butcher 2007b). This reciprocity forms the basis for mutual identifications and developing intersubjective relationships in practice that, it is argued in this thesis are central to dynamism in community development practice.

For Freire, education can never be neutral: its purpose is either to 'liberate or domesticate' (in Ledwith, 2005: 53). It either creates 'critical autonomous thinkers' or 'renders people as passive and unquestioning' (ibid). Freire calls for critical educators to 'act in solidarity to transform the ideologies and structures of oppression' and 'subordination' (ibid). Dialogue, 'relating to each other in a way which is mutual, reciprocal, trusting and co-operative' and praxis, the 'dynamic between action and reflection' are integral to the process of developing critically thinking active citizens (Freire 1973:65). Drawing a group of people together to explore common problems around shared issues is understood as a critical step in the process of moving through 'conscientization' to 'education for liberation' (Ledwith 1997, Ledwith 2000).

It is no accident that contemporary critical community development approaches emerged in the 1960s, a period when a range of events globally and locally began to shake the British political system (Lovett et.al. 1979, Green 1992, Taylor 1995b). On both sides of the Atlantic, social-political movements reflecting 'a new awareness of the limitations of a paternalistic state' demanded a re-distribution of power and control (Green, 1992, Knight 1993). Movements such as student unrest and war protests, rent strikes, claimants unions, Trade Union activities, the Women's Movement and Civil Liberties movements, sought to bring power closer to people and challenged the technical rationality embodied in consensual models of community development (Green 1992).

1968 is widely acknowledged at a 'critical juncture in world history' that was marked by 'revolt, rebellion and reaction throughout the world' (Popple 1995 in Ledwith 2005:11). It was a year when in Britain, anti-racist protests erupted and Black movements grew in the aftermath of Enoch Powell's 'Rivers of Blood' speech (Bridges 1975, Green 1992, Dominelli 1990, Brah 1993).[19] [20] It was feared that emerging social protest movements could undermine formal democratic political processes (Bridges 1975, Taylor 1995a) and the British Government launched the CDPs in anticipation that consensual models of community development might help stabilise unrest in economically blighted communities (Loney 1983). However, such models proved redundant in the climate of the times, and in what emerged we witness the collective force of agentic community development practitioners attempting to reinterpret and work with dominant state ideology and discourse through critical and dynamic practices that questioned formal political authority, including the dominant aggregative model of democracy.

The Community Development Projects and critiques of a structural class conflict model

The critical community development approaches emergent from structural conflict critiques of the CDPs are widely noted (e.g. Hamner and Rose 1980, Loney 1983, Green 1990, Green and Chapman 1992, Bondi and Peake 1988, Taylor 1995a). Marxism emerged as a growing force in seeking a theoretical explanation of the relationship between social and economic change (Hamner and Rose 1980). Inner cities were understood within this as fundamental to capitalism's need for changing land use and for transient populations to provide surplus labour (Hamner and Rose:

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[19] The term 'Black' is used here to refer to a variety of non-white groups and in conjunction the political connotations of the term adopted by the rise of Black activism in solidarity against racism (British Sociological Association, September 1992).
[20] In April 1968, Enoch Powell said that due to immigration in Britain the indigenous white population would not be able to access education and health services and 'neighbourhood changed beyond recognition' (Source Sivanandan 1976: 362)

1980:81, Dominelli 1990:20 Green and Chapman 1992, Taylor 1995a). According to the Marxist structural critique, poverty could not be remedied by modifications to social policy to calm poor neighbourhoods. Its abolition would require far reaching economic and political change. Thus CDPs focused critical attention on private and public centres of organised power (Bridges 1975:379). In the emergent dynamic model of community development practice involving academic research and grass roots action, CDPs joined together tenants groups, Trade Unions and the Labour Movement to campaign for state intervention in industrial policy and economic strategy that considered its impact with reference to social justice (Hamner and Rose 1980:81, Green & Chapman 1972:250).

Through the CDPs, the activism of local working-class women began to combine with the emergent feminism of community development practitioners (Dominelli 2006). However, the central critique of the CDPs by feminist community development workers was that failed to incorporate the personal into the professional. Everyday issues for women, such as play provision and childcare were not considered political priorities and domestic violence was not easily amenable to collective action or addressed by Marxist theorising. It was simply attributed to individual pathology (Remfry 1979, Green and Chapman 1992). Women workers in the CDPs, although sharing a Marxist analysis with their male peers, found themselves marginalized as women. This eventually led them to raise personally based questions about gender and power in the community work field (Hamner and Rose 1980, Dominelli 1990, Chapman and Green 1992, Taylor 1995a). In the same period, academic critiques of Marxism and psychoanalysis emerged from a feminist perspective (e.g. Millet 1969, Spender 1970). Radical educationalists were asking questions about class, gender and racial inequalities in the education system, promoting the analyses of thinkers concerned with experiential education such as Dewey and with liberatory education such as Freire. Meanwhile, a radical gendered critique of cultural studies, drawing

heavily on the work of Gramsci, began to emerge from the influential Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies at Birmingham University that was to impact upon both the academy and the practice field of youth and community work. [21]

Anti-racist critiques of Marxist theory also emerged from the 1970s emphasising the interrelationship between race and class in the light of Black people's experience, particularly at the hands of the British state (Sivanandan 1970, Gilroy 1987, Ohri et.al.1982). Contemporary Black resistance in Britain is informed by experience of struggles against imperialism and colonialism in the Caribbean and Asia. An example is, Jayaben Desai, the strike leader at the Grunwick film-processing factory in North West London, who came from a generation that engaged in and supported the massive Ghandian demonstrations in India against British rule. Many of these women had been beaten by British troops with lathes and often imprisoned and/ or locked up (Parmer 1982: 261). It is widely argued that Trade Unions, the Labour and Women's movements and the community development field whilst accepting the experience of racism in British society, failed to acknowledge its existence within their own movements (Ohri et.al.1982, Parmer 1982, Mama 1984, Amos and Parmar 1984, Braham et. al. 1993) and this has been a continuous concern within community development practice ever since.

The dynamics of gender and race in feminist community development praxis

By proclaiming 'the personal is political,' feminism pursues a praxis that links the home, workplace and community. Acknowledgement of the centrality of personal experience and self-disclosure is central to community development work with women (Millet 1969, Barker 1986, Finch 1982, Freeman 1984, Land 1980, Lewis

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[21] The CCCS paralleled the growth of repressive state structures with 'the deep seated structural crisis of British social formation' and agreed the importance of locating power and domination at a macro level and the determining its effect upon social life in Britain (CCCS 1982).

1986, McIntosh 1981, Pascall 1986, Williams 1989, Wilson 1982, 1983, 1986 in

Popple 2000:37, Ledwith 2009, Batsleer 2013). According to Ledwith (2009), it was

Gramsci's 'reinterpretation of the traditional Marxist concept of hegemony' that

provided feminists with better conceptual understanding of the personal as political.

> Opening our consciousness to the public/private divide and the way
> that domination permeates the most intimate aspects of our being
> through our interactions in civil society, for example, the family,
> community, schools and formal religions which remain key sites of
> male domination.

Ledwith 2009:687

Contemporary feminist community development perspectives emerged from the

demands of the Women's Liberation Movement for the elimination of gender

oppression and for women to have a voice at all levels of decision-making (Dominelli

1990, Ledwith 2009). Although some feminist perspectives are located in

redistributive social justice approaches (e.g. Nancy Fraser 1997), the predominant

narrative of feminism in community development practice is informed by critical and

liberatory perspectives. Methods of consciousness-raising applied by feminist

community development workers with women's groups from the 1970s are paralleled

with 'conscientization' in Freirian pedagogy (Ledwith 1997, Ledwith 2000). Common

to all feminist approaches are: non-hierarchical, egalitarian ways of working,

maintaining women's control over their lives and applying consciousness raising and

networking to the process of transforming gendered relationships in both private and

public spheres (Dominelli 1990). Female-only space is central to this process, it is

recognised for enabling women to transcend unequal gender dynamics and is a

basis for: breaking silences, developing confidence and skills, naming aspects of

oppression, identifying political priorities and pursuing them through collective

community action (hooks 2003, Lowndes 2004, Spence and Stephenson 2007,

Bedford et.al. 2008, Corry and Robson 2010, Robson and Spence 2012).

Feminist organisation and analysis during the 1970s impacted across social institutions and political practices. For example, within masculine dominated social sciences distinct feminist epistemologies were pursued that do not claim superior access to truth, but ascertain that so long as women are denied equal access to structures of knowledge that validate their experience of gendered power relationships, then prevailing, hegemonic knowledge, is at best, partial (Oakley 1981, Stanley 1990, Brayton 1997, Ramazonolgu 1992:217).[22] Working-class and Black women were meanwhile involved in public campaigns and direct action that achieved a level of success in shifting political and economic forces, for example housing conditions, police racism, political prisoners in Northern Ireland, women's right to employment and the formation of women's co-operatives in the clothing industry (Curno et al., 1982, Bryan et al. 1985).

Despite the gains, feminism and the Women's Movement contained their own tensions and conflicts surrounding differences and inequalities, particularly of class, race, and sexuality between women. Central to Black feminist critiques on both sides of the Atlantic is the claim that attempting to unify women's experience of oppression, fails to address power relations and difference between them (e.g. Amos and Parmar 1984, Brah 1993, Carby 1982, Bryan et.al. 1992, Davis 1981, hooks 1982, 2000, Hill Collins 1990, 2000, Mirza 1992, Mohanty 1988, Ramazonoglu 1985, 1992 and 1986 in Stanley 1990).

> Early second-wave feminists had defined 'woman' in relation to 'man' overlooking the ways in which 'race', class and gender intersect. These images are 'key in maintaining inter- locking systems of race, class and gender oppression'
>
> Hill Collins, 1990:68

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[22] For example Oakley (1981) found the scientific objective and impartial approach to interviewing irrelevant in locating the experience of women in childbirth.

By the 1980s, Black feminist discourses on structural inequality also emerged attributing gender, race and class oppression to the combined forces of patriarchy, imperialism and capitalism (Parmer and Mirza 1981, Parmer 1982, Carby 1982, Bryan et.al. 1985, Brah 1988, 1993, Mohanty 1988, Bryan et al 1992, Mirza 1992). Many Black feminists in Britain rejected white middle-class feminism as irrelevant to addressing issues of survival associated with their racist treatment by the British state and they thus developed their own movement (Mama 1984, Bryan et. al. 1992).[23]

For the Black American activist and academic, bell hooks (1993: 150-51), whereas the frameworks of 'white, bourgeois' feminism could not accommodate the 'radical struggle of Black women,' Freire provided the conceptual tools to with which she could 'define her experience of racism on a global level'; this helped her to see herself 'as a subject in resistance' (in Ledwith 2009:691). It is clear that Black feminist influences from the USA such, hooks (1981, 1984, 1993, 2000, 2003), Patricia Hill Collins (1990, 2000) and Angela Davis (1981) came to inform and influence feminist community development thought in the UK (e.g. Dominelli 2006, Ledwith and Springett 2010). A statement of community activism by the 'Combahee River Collective' (1977) gained wide recognition with the feminist movement as highly significant towards the development of the concepts of identity. [24] The statement drew upon Black feminist insights that Black women, because of their personal, social and economic circumstances have always been central to anti-oppressive struggle. The 'Combahee River Collective' argued that the 'most radical politics comes directly out of our own identity as opposed to working to end someone else's oppression' (Weiler 1994:32 in Ledwith and Springett 2010:105).

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[23] For example the Organisation of Women of Asian and African Descent, and spin off groups such as Brixton Black Women's Group
[24] The Combahee River Collective was a Black feminist Lesbian organization active in Boston from 1974 to 1980

> Understanding our identity, and the history that constructed, is key to becoming self-critical, and therefore the basis of engaging critically with what we loosely term 'identity groups'. This in turn is the basis for transcending boundaries of 'race', class, gender, culture, nationhood, in mutual, autonomous alliance.

> Ledwith and Springett, 2010: 105

Despite tensions surrounding issues of identity, difference and power that have characterised the contemporary history of the Women's Movement, the importance of consciousness-raising to the personal-political dynamic has remained central to feminist community development processes (Dominelli 1990, Dominelli 2006, Ledwith and Springett 2010, Robson and Spence 2011). In parallel, although several epistemological approaches emerged from feminist critiques in the social sciences, common to all is the transformation of power relationships and the identification of all research as a political activity (Sawbridge, Spence 1991, Cook, Furnow 1990 Stanley 1990, Anderson 1993).

It is claimed that commitment to the goals of challenging the status quo means that in feminist epistemology research and action cannot be separated (Brayton (1997) However, it is also argued that there is a tendency of academic feminism to collude with the dichotomy between theory and practice, thus inhibiting the creation of a liberatory feminist praxis in the terms that Freire and Gramsci would have conceived it (Hill Collins 2000, hooks 2000:113-14). For Hill Collins (2000) feminist praxis needs to be more relevant to those for whom opposing oppression is an issue of survival rather than an intellectual one.

Whilst the political context in the UK was being reshaped by power of New Right ideology and policy under Thatcherism, the mid-1980s was also a time of 'activism and alliance,' wherein feminist social movements articulated a politics of difference (Ledwith, 2009:688). Greenham Common and Women Against Pit Closures were both supported by networks of local and identity-based support groups, linking

across difference locally globally (ibid). Ward and Wild conceive the 'boundary dwellers' of Greenham Common as being in a liminal state where both power and danger arose from the Camp's indefinable and transitional state (Douglas 1978:2 in Ward and Wild 1995: 28-29, 32). Resonating with Gramsci's concept of counter hegemony, Ward and Wild suggest that:

> Major changes often begin when a small group sets itself apart from and in opposition to the prevailing society; the wider society and then slowly takes on the new values of the original protest group.

<div align="right">Ward and Wild: 1995:10</div>

Nevertheless, there is a sense that the feminist movement drifted from important questions about women's everyday experiences of poverty and inequality under Thatcherism. [25] Bureaucratic and financial requirements of Government funding streams constrained feminist community work practice by putting pressure on organisations to bend their principles in order to attract funding (Riley 1982, Dominelli 1993). Service provision, such as refuges and counselling services tended to maintain funding at the expense of campaign work for policy changes in relation to women's issues (Dominelli 1993, Griffin 1995, Bryan et. al. 1985). This immobilised autonomous feminist research and action in areas such as health priorities for Black and working-class women in favour of middle-class women's interests (Dominelli 1990, Hamner 1998). Whilst feminist community development projects attracted Government and European funding during the 1980s, this was driven by an economic demand for women's labour, and the need to train women for the labour market: it did not encompass a critical or structural analysis of gender equality (Griffen 1995, Braithwaite 2000). Ledwith argues that as neo-liberalism came to

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[25] Between 1979 and 1995, the proportion of lone parent families in Britain rose from 12 to 23 per cent and 80 per cent were dependent upon Income Support, the spending controlled by 'spreading the jam out more thinly between a much larger group of claimants' (Hill 1995:5). During the same period 'child poverty escalated from 14 per cent in 1979 to 34 per cent' 1996/7 (Flaherty et al., 2004: 145 in Ledwith 2009:686).

impact upon the British state, academic feminists and postmodernists were 'pre-occupied with critiquing sociological metanarratives for their masculinist bias' (2009:686). She argues that that this 'led Gramsci to fall out of favour' with feminism, shifting important debates around class and patriarchy towards an emphasis upon cultural identity and difference, thus neglecting to 'integrate the economic nature of gender politics' (ibid). Ledwith ascribes this to a lack of political vigilance (ibid). What was also compromised was the dynamism of feminist praxis, underpinned by an understanding of what was conceived by Gramsci as the 'unity in theory and practice', and by Freire as the necessity of 'action and reflection on the world in order to transform it' (Gramsci 1971: 334-36, Hooks 2000: 113-14).

2.1.3   Pluralistic perspectives and community development practice

The late 1960s witnessed three Government reports that influenced a statutory expansion of community development work within the professional arenas of social work, education and urban development. The Gulbenkian Report, 'Community Work and Social Change,' published in 1968 established community work as a full time profession (Smith 1996, 2006), the Seebohm Report (also 1968) advocated community development as part of the new social services and the Skeffington Report (1969) called for community participation in planning processes. Shaw argues that these developments transformed community development 'from an activity largely on the margins of the voluntary sector into an instrument of policy within the statutory sector' (2004:19). Although the Seebohm Report confirmed its adoption by social work, it has been argued that community work presented itself as a radical alternative to social work with its purpose defined as rooting out the causes of oppression and practitioners resisting what they perceived as 'social controlling functions of the state sponsored caring professions' (Mayo 1975, Ledwith 2005:16).

Pluralist notions of community development were integrated into state policy in the 1970s, as it became increasingly difficult for Government to deal with the competing demands of labour and capital which were breaking the post war political consensus (Lovett et. al. 1979, Hamner and Rose 1980, Green 1992, Taylor 1995b, Miller and Ahmad 1997). In 1977, amid a deepening economic crisis, the Labour Government unveiled its Urban White Paper, 'A Policy for the Inner Cities'. Although, the influence of a structural critique was evident Labour's pre-election strategy and White Paper, it is argued that its intentions for state intervention in industrial change through planning agreements and other means were 'distorted in its translation' (Green 1992:175, Green and Chapman 1992: 250).

While identifying labour market forces as the cause of urban problems, the Labour Government sought to establish partnerships between business and the local state, giving the private sector a major partnership role to regenerate cities (Green 1992, Green and Chapman 1992). It is argued that this paved the way for the full unleashing of labour market dominance when the Conservatives came to power in 1979, enabling funding from the Urban Programme[26] to be easily diverted to Urban Development Corporations (UDCs) (Green 1992, Green and Chapman 1992, Imrie and Thomas 1993, Brownhill and Darke 1998, Imrie and Raco 2003). The succeeding Conservative Government's rationale was that benefits would 'trickle down' to poorer neighbourhoods (Craig and Mayo 1995) just as the World Bank claimed that the benefits of global neo-liberal economic policies would trickle down to 'Third World' countries (Hoogvelt 2001).

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[26] Established by the Social Needs Act, 1969

During the 1970s a series of geographically based strategies[27] against poverty had been introduced resulting in a rise in employment opportunities for community workers. All of these programmes had promised a 'fresh start,' although Green (1992) argues that they had been framed within the same rational research paradigm as official thinking behind the CDPs. This research paradigm, expressed in Inner City Studies employed management consultants to look at the role of Local Authorities and elected members in tackling deprivation (Green 1992). [28] Green (1992) argues that these initiatives put a management approach to regeneration into practice and Lovett et.al. (1979:16) that as a consequence community development was 'elevated to a larger role in urban management' which had the effect of prioritising organisational policy making over grass-roots activism. These initiatives were paralleled with a restructuring of Local Government, which Cockburn (1978) argues was modelled upon a corporate management model based on a male dominated world of business and commerce.

These changes coincided with the publication of 'Current Issues in Community Work,' (Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation 1973), which marked a move away from a consensual model to a pluralistic thesis of conflict resolution through change by consensus (Hamner and Rose 1980). In the development of the second Gulbenkian Report (1973) there had been a split between those perceiving community work to be an educational learning process situated within adult education and those who placed more emphasis upon planning and service delivery (Ledwith 2005, Smith 1996, 2006).[29] The emphasis upon the role of workers in making services and planning more effective was perceived as a movement away from an educational

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[27] e.g. Education Priority Areas, Community Development Projects, Urban Programme, Six Cities Project, Housing Action Areas, Comprehensive Community Planning, Inner Cities Programme
[28] The first of which were in Sunderland and Oldham in 1973
[29] Whereas in Scotland, the approach was different with the Alexander Report (1975) recommending that youth and community service be incorporated into a community education service (Smith 1996, 2006).

activism perspective within community work (Ledwith 2005, Smith 2006). This change in emphasis bypassed the dynamic model of critical practice that had emerged from the CDPs. For Cockburn (1977) state-sponsored community work incorporated radical dissent, 'drawing critical organisations into ineffectual participation in marginal areas of state decision making' (in Barr 1991:125).

Yet the Gulbenkian Report (1973) also recommended that community work be recognised as inherent to the practice of those who provided a community based service and this offered the space within which critical practices might continue on the ground (Ledwith 2005, Smith 1996, 2006). [30] Attempting to understand this period and its contradictions, Miller and Ahmed, suggest that until around 1987, community development as an occupation was confined to 'a relatively marginal, fragmented, but often irritatingly radical group of workers' and there existed 'a degree of connectedness between those employed as community workers and those seeking social transformation via political action in civil society' (1997:269). This implies that despite state intervention in the professionalization and expansion of community development practice and moves towards organisational incorporation, a critical or radical approach remained dominant in practice up until the mid to late 1980s. However, upon the radical restructuring of welfare provision in the late 1980s, community development began to be 'talked up' as a respectable and essential 'process and mechanism for social integration and delivery of public services' and became one of the 'cornerstones of social welfare intervention strategies' (ibid). This systematically began to close down spaces for continuing critical and liberatory practices.

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[30] This included teachers, social practitioners, the clergy, health practitioners, architects, planners and administrators

In tandem with Conservative measures to reduce the role of the 'interfering state,' UDCs were created as part of the Local Government and Planning Act 1980 (Imrie and Thomas 1993:4). They were established as an economic and political mechanism to secure regeneration by bringing land and buildings into effective use by 'encouraging the development of existing and new industry and commerce' (section 136 of the Act in Imrie and Thomas 1993:4). UDCs were non-elected agencies (or QUANGOs), accountable to and controlled by Government, emphasising market led, physical regeneration. They represented a new form of urban governance predicated on entrepreneurial activity and the re-regulation of welfare provision and spending' Harvey 1987 in Raco and Thomas 1993:5).

After the 1987 re-election of the Conservative Government for its third term, amid wide criticism that the benefits of UDCs were failing to 'trickle down' to poorer neighbourhoods, high intervention measures were introduced to manage the effects of poverty and inequality (Knight 1993, Imrie and Raco 2003). Several legislative processes in 1988 changed the role of Local Authorities from a provider of services to an enabler of services and it became incumbent on Local Authorities to engage in partnership approaches to the delivery of services (Knight 1993). [31] These measures brought civil servants into 'areas of high disadvantage' to provide resources for local people and organisations to develop programmes to tackle local needs (Knight 1993). Community development workers were to become key figures in the pluralist notion that conflict needed to be managed to effect consensus in a society were groups have different and competing interests.

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[31] For example the Local Government Act 1988 required local tendering of seven Local Authority services and further legislation on education and housing in 1988 meant that schools could opt out of Local Authority control and tenants could choose their own landlord (Knight 1993).

For Hamner and Rose (1980) a pluralist analysis of conflict falls between a traditional model of society based upon a common identity of interests, and a Marxist model where 'class is pitted against class in a relentless struggles of competing and antithetical interests,' and it is the 'differential, but not antithetical interests of citizens [that] leads to institutional conflict' (1980:76). There is body of critique surrounding pluralist community development perspectives suggesting that they dissipate power and conflict within communities and divert practice towards peripheral areas of state decision making (Hamner and Rose 1980, Green 1992, Colnutt 1993 Miller and Ahmed 1997, Raco 2003, Morrison 2003b, Imrie and Raco 2003a, Ledwith 2005). It is argued that in a pluralistic model, state policy tends to define 'community' within spatial boundaries and the internal division of powers within communities result in some groups and individuals not being able to influence decisions (Raco 2003, Morrison 2003b). For Ledwith, in a radical analysis, community work is the 'locus of change' within a struggle for transformation; whereas in a pluralistic approach there is a 'multiplicity of competing power bases' that are mediated by the state, and community work can only achieve small scale change, such as improved service delivery (2005:12). Green (1992) argues that a central assumption of the 'common interest' embodied in pluralism conveniently conceals underlying conflicts of interest and avoids questions about the impact of macro political-economic actions upon communities. Correspondingly, for Colnutt (1993) pluralism dissipates the power of communities to obstruct progress that is not in their interests and the more powerful players tend to make the decisions, so in reality even in local decisions community influence is negligible (in Imrie and Raco 2003a). For Millar and Ahmad (1997), in a pluralistic approach, participation in local governance in itself is enough to maintain healthy democratic society; the role of state, including a statutory model of community development practice, is to manage conflict rather than explore its possibilities.

By the early 1990s, in response to the social unrest, the post-Thatcher Conservative Government began to harness community development's discourse of empowerment and participation to develop new ways of managing those marginalised and disempowered by political and economic changes (Millar and Ahmad 1997, Imrie and Raco 2003). In April 1994, the Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) was introduced, combining twenty separate programmes (Rhodesi et.al. 2007). Access to SRB funding required evidence that a range of organisations wished to work in partnership with community groups to deliver regeneration projects (ibid).

It is claimed that SRB was part of a package of measures claiming to make 'Government more responsive to local needs and priorities,' this included a network of nine Government Offices and a new Ministerial Committee intended to 'streamlined arrangements in Whitehall' (Rhodesi et.al. 2007:7). [32] In the early 1970s, a new wave of 'normative' political theory had emerged in with the publication of 'A Theory of Justice' by John Rawls (1971), attributing a 'rampant crisis of legitimacy affecting Western democracies' (Mouffe 2000a:1 2000b:83). SRB partnerships and other associated measures seem to mark the beginning of a discourse of deliberative democracy in British Urban Policy. These local partnership arrangements were adopted as the bedrock of New Labour's scheme to 'modernise' public services upon their election in 1997. It has been argued that a neo-liberal agenda was behind New Labour's renaissance, polarising sectors of the economy and the population and then through a process of 'gentrification', displacing those blamed for causing urban problems (Raco, 2003, Brownhill 2003). These issues and debates will be analysed and discussed in chapter four. The remainder of this chapter explores the possibilities for more dynamic and reflexive models of community development practice that whilst remaining marginal to state policy can

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[32] Including a network of nine Government Offices a new Ministerial Committee intended to 'streamlined arrangements in Whitehall' (Rhodesi et.al. 2007:7).

still influence and shape it, thus remaining accountable to both communities and

state policy.

2.2 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AS A BOUNDARY PROFESSION

Drawing on the work of C. Wright Mills (1970), Shaw argues that community workers should be actively looking for opportunities to 'turn private problems into public issues,' whereas Government policy often does the opposite (2005:6). For example, in policy jargon, unemployment becomes employability' and health inequalities are turned into 'lifestyle choices' (ibid). Shaw (2005:7) conceives a tension between 'community as policy' and 'community as politics.'

> When 'community as politics' confronts 'community as policy', there can be an opportunity for a form of community development which is both relevant to people's real interests and which engages with and may even change policy.

Shaw 2005:6

Despite its tendency to become imbued in state policies and agendas, much of the contemporary literature conceives community development as positioned in the interface between the state, civil society and the market and there is a popular conception of community development as a 'boundary profession' (Popple 1995, Miller and Ahmad 1997, Martin 1999, Miller 2004 and Taylor 2004 in Shaw 2004, Shaw 2004, Ledwith 2005, Ledwith and Springett 2010). It is argued that it is only from this vantage point, on the margins of the state and other professions, can community development practice create and protect spaces for energetic, creative and engaged participation and activism (Shaw 2004, 2005, Ledwith 2005). For Popple (1995), this is not to say that community development should isolate itself from the policy context, rather that it should be critical of Government whilst seizing opportunities within policy to achieve its wider transformational goals (in Shaw 2004: 40). For Shaw, occupying a strategic, or boundary position between the competing demands of the changing needs of the state and broader political interests (from above) and the democratic aspirations from below is an integral

feature of community development practice. Shaw also argues that one of the more respectable purposes for community development practice is making democracy a 'living, breathing thing,' which represents its unique contribution as no other professional is 'charged with these responsibilities' (Shaw 2004:40-1).

Martin suggests that community development has the potential to catalyse the relationship between the state and civil society and make it work by operating 'within the possibilities of the gap between the intentions and outcomes of policy' (1999: 20). For Martin (1999, 2003), whose perspective is in 'popular education' in Scotland, within differing adult education perspectives there are differing conceptions of community, depending upon the ideological position (Martin 2003). In a consensual model there is a notion of the 'whole community,' in a pluralist model, 'disadvantaged'/ dissonant communities;' in a conflict model, communities are 'dissident/dissenting;' and in a free-market or consumption model they are 'competing communities of interest' (Martin 2003:2). As noted by Mayo, the term 'community' is itself is highly contested and has been used ambiguously and 'fought over and appropriated for different uses and interests and to justify different politics, policies and processes' (in Shaw 2004: 19). For Martin, these differing connotations of community are at once 'reactionary and radical' and 'problematic and promising' (2003:1).

Highly significant to perceptions of community development as a boundary profession and the concept of liminality as it relates to this thesis, is Martin's claim that ambiguity and ambivalence can be used to 'create the conceptual and ideological space in which to struggle over' what 'community' means, 'why it matters and whose interests it serves' (Martin 2003: 1). This resonates with Turner's notions of 'communitas' and 'liminoid phenomenon' (Ward and Wild 1995:118). 'Communitas' can be defined as 'experiencing liminality together' and is characterised as a 'spontaneous, inarticulate phenomenon', inherently democratic in nature (Turner

1969, Turner 2012, Felder 2012, Vonnak 2012). Liminoid phenomena tend to be
'idiosyncratic' and are 'plural, fragmentary, and experimental in character,' 'not
cyclical, but continuously generated'; their typology is said to be on the personal-
psychological of the objective-social pole; and their membership 'is temporary or
shifting' (Turner 1974:85, Felder 2012). In her feminist critique of communitarian
communities, Fraser (1999) conceives dialogical social formations and wider
networks in which 'values, practices and meanings are shared, albeit contested' and
'individuals can cross and re-cross the boundaries from 'community' to 'community' in
the course of their daily lives. Fraser's conceptions are congruent with Ward and
Wild's conception of liminal communities that are at once places of 'difference,'
'belonging,' 'boundary' and 'transition' (1995:118). Notions of 'communitas' and
'liminoid phenomenon' and feminist insights, combined with Martin's (2003) claims
about conceptual and ideological space, reveal a concept of communities that are
themselves ambiguous, contested, ever-shifting and volatile, but also dynamic and
full of possibilities.

It is argued that the contestable positioning of community development in relation to
the state requires practitioners to constantly ask difficult questions in relation to the
purpose of their practices to which the answers are also contradictory and
ambiguous (Miller in Shaw 2004, Shaw 2004, 2005, Toomey 2009). Policy initiatives
can provide opportunities for critical engagement where community workers are
'agents of a creative dialectic rather than simply the instruments' or even the victims
of state policy (Shaw 2005: 6). Consistently making 'critical connection between
cause and effect' in practice is a core community development skill and distinguishes
it from 'social care, or social work or therapy' (ibid). Indeed, questioning and offering
alternative interpretations of policy is in itself empowering.

> It is always necessary, therefore, to question the construction of the problem and the ways in which people are positioned within it, so that those we work with have the best opportunity to be treated as active political and social subjects rather than passive objects of policy. Challenging problem definitions and offering alternatives can a very empowering act indeed.

Shaw 2005:4-5

For Shaw it is vital that that community workers sharpen their analytical skills and 'understanding of power in the current global context and how it manifests itself locally', while a legitimate scope of professionalism is to 'reflect the responsibility to conduct a democratic process' (2004:2 and 6).

As discussed in Chapter 1, 'power' and its utilisations are at the core of empowerment in community development practice' (Butcher 2007a:21). Popular conceptions of power are 'power over' and 'power with' (p27). Dweck (1999) identifies a third concept of 'power from within' which contains the possibility of mobilising, 'though one's on personal resource' or collectively with others and to exercise power, without necessarily being at another's expense (in Butcher 2007a:27). Correspondingly, Gaventa also identifies three models of power, with 'power within' referring to 'a sense of self identity, confidence and awareness that is a pre-condition for action and 'power with' to the 'synergy' that can emerge from partnership, collaboration, collective action and alliance building (2006:24). Both Butcher and Gaventa draw upon the important contribution of Steven Lukes (1974), whereby power is a multi-dimensional social factor and power and democracy are paradoxically related. Lukes has a 'three-dimensional' conception of power: a one-dimensional view focusing on behaviour in the making of decisions where there are observable conflicts of interests (such as political participation) and a second about influencing decisions by shaping the agenda. Lukes third dimension embraces Gramsci's thesis of hegemony and relates to how the 'powerful transform the powerless in such a way that the latter behave as the former wish - without coercion

or forcible constraint' and 'by creating a pervasive system of ideology or false consciousness' (in Little 2010:2). Gavanta (2006) uses Lukes' three dimensions to make sense of the interrelationship between different forms of power encountered in different political spaces and settings.

Gaventa combines Lukes' distinctions of 'explicit', 'implicit' and 'hidden' forms of power, with his own distinctions of 'closed,' 'invited' and 'claimed/ creative' spaces, then adding three further distinctions of local, national and international locations, to create a three-dimensional cube (in Hoggett et al, 2009:114). Gaventa likens this to a 'Rubik's Cube,' whereby the 'blocks of the cube can be rotated and any of the blocks and sides can be used as the first point of analysis' (Gaventa 2007:208). 33 Gaventa suggests that this framework begins to access the 'possibility for transformative participatory action in various political spaces.' For Hoggett et al., Gaventa's 'cube' is a tool for 'understanding power structures' and 'developing more progressive strategies for progressive social change' (2009:114). Drawing upon the work of Andrea Cornwall and Lefebvre (1991:24), for Gaventa spaces for participation are not neutral, they are 'a dynamic and humanly constructed means of control and hence domination and power.' Cornwall 2002 and Lefebvre 1991:24 in Gaventa 2006:26)

> Power relations help to shape the boundaries of participative space,
> what is possible within them, who may enter, with which identities,
> discourses or interests.
>
> Gaventa 2006: 26

Gaventa identifies a continuum of spaces including 'closed spaces,' 'invited spaces' and 'claimed/ creative spaces' (2006:26-7). In 'closed spaces,' decisions are made 'behind closed doors' by elites such as bureaucrats, elected members or 'experts,'

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33 Rubik's Cube is a 3-D combination puzzle invented in 1974 by Hungarian sculptor and professor of architecture Ernő Rubik

'without the need for broader consultation or involvement' (p26). 'Invited spaces' are those where people are invited to participate by Governments, supranational agencies or non-Governmental organisations (p27). Finally, 'claimed/ created spaces' or 'organic spaces' are those that have been created by 'less powerful actors' such as social movements or community associations or simply 'natural spaces where people gather to debate, discuss and resist, outside of the institutionalised policy arena' (p27). Gaventa stresses that these a dynamic relationship exists between these spaces and that they are constantly opening and closing in response to 'struggles for legitimacy and resistance, co-option and transformation' (2006:27). Gaventa (2006) argues that it is critical to examine the dynamic of who created the spaces, why they were created, in whose interests and upon whose terms.

Deliberative democracy is based upon the idea that political decisions are reached through 'a process of deliberation by free and equal citizens, as in Habermas's model of the 'ideal speech situation' (Mouffe 2000a:1, Rawls 1971, Cohen 1988, Benhabib 1996, Habermas 1992, 1996 2001:7). For Rawls (1971), a well ordered society functions according to a shared conception of justice and it is this that results in stability and acceptance of democratic institutions (Mouffe 2000a:9). Contrasting, but not diverging from Rawls, for Habermas (1992, 1996), a stable and well-functioning democracy relies upon legitimacy, derived from 'free and unconstrained public deliberation' and democratic institutions representing 'an impartial standpoint expressing equally the interests of all' (Benhabib 1996:68 in Mouffe 2000a: 10, Mouffe 2000a: 10). However, as noted by Hoggett et al., contestations surrounding the 'relationship between Government and the state, or between the state and civil society' have become more entrenched as 'Government' has been supplanted by concepts of 'governance' (2009:15). Gaventa argues that this shift means that authority cuts across 'state and non-state actors' and we must 'broaden our

understanding of arenas in which decisions are made and power is contested.' These are important considerations in relation to the role of New Public Management in a Conservative and then a New Labour state, particularly as it relates to the control of organisations, professionals and 'service users' and how this relates to the internalisation of neo-liberalism and capitalism (Gaventa 2007, Banks 2013).

> Not only is governance in a global world multi-layered, but it consists of a dense web of interconnected policy for a where there is no single locus of authority….policy is shaped though network of state and non-state actors in multiple spaces and arenas of deliberation.

Gaventa, 2007:212

The shaping of community development purposes in relation to neo-liberal interests corresponds with Foucault's concept of 'Governmentality.' For Foucault (1980), power is not achieved through coercive control, but through complex and subtle techniques. He uses the concept of 'Governmentality' to demonstrate how the state 'reconciles its need to govern with the personal liberty, choice and moral autonomy of individuals' (Lever 2011:87). Foucault conceives the 'art of Government' emerged from the mid- 17th century in France (Rabinow 1984:15), whereby in convergence with forming forces to challenge threats from abroad, Governments began developing 'policy' to increase the internal powers of the state (Rabinow, 1997:69). 'Governmentality' led to increased involvement of the state on issues of health, family, education, employment and religion (Rabinow 1997:88).

Converging with the thesis of hegemony, Governmentality theorists argue that state ideology sustains itself through hegemonic forms of power beyond its own institutions, whereby control is exercised through establishing a set of pathological 'norms' against which individuals are measured (Taylor 1997, Billington 2006).

> Whereas coercion is exercised overtly through the armed forces,
> police, courts and prisons, consent is subtly woven through the
> institutions of society – the family, schools the media, political parties,
> religious organisation, cultural, charitable and community groups.

<div align="right">Ledwith on Gramsci 2005:122</div>

The concept of 'governance' obscures the boundaries between Government, civil society and global market forces, resulting in simultaneously contracting and expanding neo-liberal state that is amorphous and hegemonic in character. These considerations have important implications towards community development purposes of widening democracy. Gramsci provides 'a space for thinking about political activism' without waiting for the arrival of the revolutionary moment' and where the 'battle of ideas for organising human life' can potentially be 'fought out in every home, classroom or community group all the time' (Hoggett et al. 2009:16). Gramsci defines this process as 'intellectual and moral reform' (Gramsci, 1971:195). For Gramsci 'counter hegemony' plays and essential role in the process of change and Ledwith argues that this presents a vital role for critical education (2005:122). Parallels can be drawn between Gramsci's concept counter hegemony and that of a 'paradigm shift.'

> What matters is the criticism to which such an ideological context is
> subjected by the first representatives of the new historical phase. This
> criticism makes possible a process of differentiation and change in the
> relative weight that the elements of the old ideologies used to
> possess. What was previously secondary and subordinate, or even
> incidental, is now taken to be primary – becomes the nucleus of a new
> ideological and theoretical complex. The old collective will dissolve
> into its contradictory elements since the subordinate ones develop
> socially, etc.

<div align="right">Gramsci, 1971:195</div>

Traditionally, science conceives a paradigm firstly in terms of 'a worldview' or as a 'concrete puzzle solution,' such as a mathematical expression 'f = ma' (ibid: 12). Correspondingly a 'paradigm shift' is also conceived in two ways, the first being the presence of 'anomalies that cannot be explained by the existing dominant paradigm'

or the 'presence of an alternative paradigm, one that can account for the phenomena' and for any anomalies that the first one could not explain (Kuhn in McCarl Neilsen 1990:12-13). For Kuhn paradigm shifts are most likely to surface from the margins of disciplines (ibid), thus also corresponding with the implication that counter hegemony emerges from subaltern or submerged position in the social order.

For Gramsci every individual, regardless of their culture or background has the capacity for thinking and reasoning and he introduces the concepts of 'organic' and 'traditional' intellectuals (in Ledwith 2005:123). Traditional intellectuals having defected from the dominant classes and becoming committed to social justice, can play an important role as 'catalysts for change' and in 'creating the context for questioning everyday experience' (p124). However, it is organic intellectuals that play the central role in the creation of a just society (p124). They emerge from the working-class and while remaining committed to their cultural roots, playing an integral role in the process of change by posing critical questions and inviting 'new ways of thinking about the world' (p124). Gramsci's concepts of 'organic' and 'traditional' intellectuals speaks to the agentic capacities of community development practitioners to facilitate processes of inter-subjectivity and conscientization and thereby to shape what happens in practice. As Shaw argues, if community development is situated between both professional *and* political practice, then people can develop as active subjects in politics whilst being simultaneously constructed as objects of policy (2005:7)

2.3 CONCLUSION

As noted by Shaw (2004), a historical view of community development is useful in highlighting the inherent tensions arising from the emancipatory and controlling functions of community development practice and the contradictory tensions of colonialism and democracy inherent in statutory interventions. In a contemporary

analysis, consensual of conservative models of community development are shown to reflect a pathological analysis of poverty and inequality. Critical community development perspectives combine political critique and activism in mobilising social movements to challenge inequality and transform unjust systems and structures. Whereas conservative community development approaches have an inherent tendency to perpetuate cultures where individuals and groups blame themselves or each other for their lot, critical approaches start by attempting to break such states of naïve or false consciousness in processes of individual and collective conscientization.

A statutory expansion of community development and increased Government funding favoured service led approaches, thus narrowing the dimensions of community development practice and limiting its scope for transformation. Pluralistic community development perspectives coupled with geographical locus, first bypassed identity politics and then dissipated power and conflict within communities by shifting the focus away from competing antithetical interests towards difference. The literature suggests that pluralism entailed an inherent drift towards relativism by fragmenting rather than consolidating diversity (Nash 1994, Taylor 1995). Under these community development practice conditions, it must have been difficult to facilitate the mutual subjective identifications necessary in processes of conscientization or to mobilise collective critical action in the direction of structural forces of power and influence.

The literature evidences critical community development approaches to be rooted in personal experiences of social injustice and oppression and precisely these elements are the basis for forming mutual identifications and intersubjective relationships in practice. This suggests that the personal, including the self of the community development practitioner is integral to the dynamism of community development and crucial to the process of conscientisation that is necessary for critical political activism. The literature surrounding feminist community development perspectives in

particular, suggests that if these foundations were absent there would be no empowerment or emancipation as these processes have to begin with the self and inter-subjectivity.

What is also apparent in critical community development perspectives and influences is a notion of a 'unity of praxis', entailing a parallel growth in in theory and practice which is necessary to dispel or counter the prevailing hegemony in the creation of alternative social orders or new societies (Gramsci in Ledwith 2005:14). However, the review of contemporary critical community development movements highlights inherent tensions in unifying praxis, particularly surrounding issues of power and inequality along the lines of gender, race and class. Although nowhere is the centrality of personal experience and inter-subjectivity more evident than in community development praxis emanating from the Women's Liberation Movement (WLM), it is defined in the literature by intersectional divisions which are shown to have led to divergence in thinking and action. This included the objectification of Black and working-class women's experience within the feminist movement. From the late 1970s a critical mass of Black feminist critique of the WLM emerged on both sides of the Atlantic (e.g. Combahee River Collective 1977). The ensuing debates informed a shift in emphasis from unity towards diversity, highlighting the centrality of intersubjective connections around particular aspects of our identities and also the commonalities arising from our experiences of different forms of oppression. This is why expressing our *feelings* of powerlessness is critical and female only spaces are an integral in this process.

Regardless of inherent tensions surrounding intersectionality, it is claimed that consciousness raising remained central to feminist community development practice. However, what is witnessed from the 1980s onwards, are feminist priorities drifting away from women's lived experiences of discrimination and oppression, a growing dichotomy between feminist theory and practice and an erosion of the dynamism of

feminist praxis. It is argued that such divergence severely narrows the possibilities for emancipation and transformation (hooks 2000, Hill Collins 2000),

The final part of this chapter has identified a literature that indicates possibilities for dynamic and reflexive models of community development practice that can be at once accountable to communities and state policy. What is highlighted is the significance of conceiving communities as ideological spaces to struggle over meanings through processes of critical questioning, interpretation and reflexivity. Contemporary 'critical' theorists suggests that this requires locating liminal spaces in which to practice and experience exercising power collectively. Located in these circumstance community development practice can claim unique role in legitimising the democracy of the state. Chapter three starts by exploring the capacity of the agentic community development practitioner to shape what happens in practice.

3. PROFESSIONALISM AND THE DYNAMIC OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PRACTICE

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter contextualises the thesis with the intention of coupling reflexivity and accountability with reference to the question of professionalism. To this end, it explores contemporary literature surrounding the concept of professionalism in relation to community development practice. Its particular focus is the concept of dynamism in relation to concepts and arguments surrounding community development professionalism in a state policy context. It argues that because dynamism in practice involves the intersubjective, there is a necessary personal dynamic within the professional and some core elements of practice that make it distinctive whatever tradition it inhabits. Consequently, any attempts to contain the personal within a professional framework compromise the very essence of community development practice. However, there is a force within the discourse that suggests that professionalism is always objective, attempting to control the volatility and uncertainty associated with the intersubjective using the technical, objective language, thus pandering to those whose interests are to achieve policy-related 'outcomes' from practice.

The discussion begins with an analysis of contemporary community development models emerging from its controlling and emancipatory traditions, in relation to how far the agentic capacities of community development practitioners can shape what happens in practice.

3.2 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT MODELS AND PRACTITIONER ROLES

As evidenced in Chapter two, the literature demonstrates that one clear theoretical basis for contemporary community work is absent, and as noted by Popple (2000), there is thus no agreed form of practice. Popple (2000) identifies eight overlapping models of community work practice, reflecting ideologies of conservatism, pluralism and radical/ socialism, ranging from community care and community organisation through to community action and feminist, Black and anti-racist community work (Popple 2000: 56-57). In the model that Popple terms 'community development' there is an emphasis upon 'self-help,' interpreted as education so that groups 'acquire the skills and knowledge required to improve the lives of their members' (Popple 2000:60). Across his models, is an emphasis upon setting up groups, whether they be termed self-help or need based support groups. However it is only at the radical/ community action end of the spectrum where the purpose of these groups is towards emancipation. As discussed by Berner and Phillips:

> Self-help can be part of a movement for empowerment – by, for example, improving the negotiating strength of the poor – but it can also be a mere cost-cutting and socially regressive approach… Self-help can be an excellent tool – and collective (or 'community') self-help can be an effective (if imperfect) way of pooling resources for mutual benefit. It should, however, be the start, not the end, of a coordinated movement to tackle urban poverty.

2005:26-27

Each of Popple's models has a corresponding strategy and worker responsibilities. These range from setting up voluntary services, encouraging self-help or co-ordinating welfare services, where the workers roles are as organiser, volunteer, manager or catalyst, to setting up support groups in response to need and working collectively to challenge inequalities, where the worker roles are activist, enabler, facilitator and again, volunteer (Popple 2000: 56-57). In parallel, each of Banks' three approaches to community work also has corresponding role descriptors. In a

'community services' approach community workers are 'organisers' and/ or a 'planners', in 'community development' they are 'enablers' and/ or 'educators' and in 'community action/ organising' they are' activists' and/or a 'leaders' (2011:167). Although not discrete, some roles have more salience than others within each of the three identified models (ibid). Rothman (1974), using the American terminology of 'community organisation' practice, identifies 15 role descriptors again on a spectrum, ranging from 'enabler' and 'teacher of ethical values', to 'fact gather' and 'analyst' to 'activist' and 'agitator' (in Henderson and Thomas 2002:91). Toomey identifies eight community development practice roles, identified as 'traditional' ('rescuer', 'provider', 'modernizer', 'liberator') and 'alternative' ('catalyst', 'facilitator', 'ally', 'advocate' (2009:181).

Reflecting its contestations, for Toomey some community development roles 'serve to empower communities, while others can result in their disempowerment' (2009:181-182). The problematic for Toomey is lack of agreement about which actions 'fall within the definition of community development' with different stakeholders, such as national Government, Local Government and grassroots groups all holding 'very different meanings' (2009:182). Toomey argues that 'what is done in the name of community development is subject to the vision of the self-defined practitioner or practising institution' (ibid).

Contemporary and historical literature identifies several anomalies and transgressions across the controlling and empowering spectrum. For example, there is the disparity between ideological forces and the interests of the community development practitioner. Thus Popple suggests that a feminist practitioner could be employed in a community care agency modelled on a pluralist perspective, yet be practising in a way that challenges issues of gender and power (2000:73). It is also argued that those despatched by the British Government to the colonies 'had a genuine desire to help the people develop education and social structures' in their

own interests(Morris 2001:5). Like the philanthropists and middle-class reformers who went to work in the settlement houses from the 1890s, they were living among the poor to share the benefits of their own education and to deploy their skills for the benefit of the local people whom they believed they 'served' (Popple 2000:10, Morris 2001). Mayo suggests that in the colonies, the successful promotion of popular education and 'newly acquired literacy' strengthened emerging nationalist movements (1975:38 in Shaw 2004:14). In turn Shaw suggests that the agency of individual workers interpreted their role 'in more liberating ways than the Colonial Office' intended (2004: 14). This is paralleled in the 1970s when the intentions of the Home Office were to implement a conservative/ pathological and pluralistic model of community development through the CDPs. As discussed in chapter 2, this was resisted as alliances formed between left thinking researchers, practitioners and community groups. Thus a dynamic community development praxis emerged combining critical theory with grassroots action.

Although the work of the settlement houses is widely conceived in terms of 'benevolent paternalism' within the consensual tradition (Rothman 1968, 1974, Baldock 1980, Popple 2000), nevertheless the individual and collective commitment towards improving social conditions are noteworthy. This is Jane Addams who set up Hull House in Chicago based upon the model of Toynbee Hall.

> I doubt if anywhere on the continent that summer could have been found a group of people more genuinely interested in social development or more sincerely convinced that they had found a clue by which the conditions in crowded cities might be understood and the agencies for social betterment developed.
>
> Addams, 1893:2

As noted by Shaw, Canon Samuel Barnett, credited with founding the Settlement Movement, viewed the degradation of the poor as a consequence rather that a cause of their poverty' (2004:11). This represented an 'ideological breakthrough' in Victorian

welfare circles as he was concerned with how 'structural factors mediated the potential for the individual practice of self-help' (ibid). Although the notion of 'self-help' tends to be equated with conservative traditions and moral reform (e.g. Craig et. al. 1982:12), the model that Jane Addams fashioned upon Toynbee Hall was adapted in aforementioned dynamic approaches combining self-help and collective action shaped by Sylvia Pankhurst with the East London Federation of Suffragettes with women in the early part of the 20th Century. These examples suggest that models are not fixed on the ideological spectrum but transmute depending upon the motivations of the practitioner(s). However, Popple (2000) questions whether a worker can satisfactorily work in an organisation that is at odds with their view of the world.

According to Popple the literature suggests that community work practices are less prescriptive than social work, allowing the practitioner to 'practice in a manner that is closer to their values' (Popple 2000:99): He suggests that the freedom to practice in a particular manner is 'determined by a number of factors such as the financing of the agency and its overall philosophy' (ibid: 99-100). Popple suggests that some community development practitioners would sacrifice larger salaries for greater independence (ibid).

From the 1960s onwards, there is evidence of a 'non-directive approach' to community development practice whereby practitioners were supposed to be value free, neutral agents who 'enabled others to express their values and ideologies untainted by the intrusion of a worker' (Batten and Batten and Salmon 1978 in Shaw 2004: 28). On the other hand, a growth in political awareness among practitioners is also evident as they began to question the possibility of a value free politically neutral activity and resisted models of professionalism based upon technical expertise, monopolies of knowledge, and class relationships (Green 1993, Smith 1996). Inherent and enduring tensions arising from conflicting political allegiances between

community development practitioners and organisations is well documented in 'In and Against the state', written by The London to Edinburgh Weekend Return Group (1979). For example, those employed by the state faced conflicts of accountability in supporting local people to improve the conditions of their lives as this involved campaigning against the state (ibid).

Resonating with Toomey's concept of 'self-definition', for Henderson and Thomas the personal self of the practitioner is a major role determinant and congruent with their 'likes and dislikes' in terms of values, feelings and satisfaction (2002:92). 'The disciplined use of self' in 'transactions with local groups' and knowing how and when to contribute to their 'socio-emotional life' distinguishes community development from other professions (ibid). Smith (1994:67) acknowledges that community workers do not have a strong public understanding of their work to draw upon and thus cannot say, 'I am a community worker,' and expect people to accept it. It is precisely because community development practice has more fluid settings than other professions that practitioners need to work through their purpose and role and these negotiations are integral to establishing a professional relationship (Smith 1994:67-8). As noted by Jeffs and Smith, 'the worker meets the group and primarily focuses attention upon establishing his or her relationship with the collective' (2002:31).

For Batsleer (2008:5) along with others who share informal critical perspectives informed by liberatory traditions, the transaction is simple, the 'primary role' of the practitioner is 'a facilitator of learning.'

> Youth and community work is about dialogue, about conversation. What do youth and community workers do? Listen and talk, make relationships. Enable…people to come to voice. 'Conversation conveys a sense of learning which the practice best enables. The roles of educator and learner are present in informal education…both learner and educator engage in a process of learning from the context of the everyday.
>
> Batsleer 2008:5

For Ledwith, community development workers *are* critical educators and as such, every area of their work should encourage the 'critical questioning of reality' (2005:54). Ledwith (1997) emphasises the 'power of listening in the process of transformation,' in terms of restoring dignity, promoting trust, creating positive energy, encouraging mutual listening and fostering dialogue within the community. In parallel, for Butcher, 'dialogue and deliberation' are acknowledged as integral to the transformational ambitions of critical community practice (2007b:61).   The themes of creating reflective and active citizens are also integral to Smith's work on local education; 'people should be encouraged to be creators, rather than consumers of situations' (Smith 1994: 64).

There are several emerging aspects of specific interest towards conceiving dynamism in relation to community development practice. One is the significance of the personal self and identity of the community development practitioner in relation to their role definition implied by Henderson and Thomas and Toomey (date). Another is the centrality of the intersubjective relationship between the practitioner and [subject] conceived by Batsleer (2008) and others who share critical and liberatory perspectives. Although the former facilitates the learning and the relationship, practitioner and [subject] are both engaged in learning (ibid). In accordance with Lave and Wenger's (1991) concept of 'situatedness,' this has to be so because it is only when a relationship is present that intersubjective interpretation and learning can take place (in McDermott in Murphy 1999).

The range of roles combined with the wide spectrum of conflicting political purposes speaks of a volatile landscape for community development and also means that it overlaps with other professions. These conditions can be taken as problematic or as fundamental and necessary to the dynamism of community development. Drawing upon Bhattacharyya's definition of community development as the 'pursuit of solidarity and agency' (2004:28 in 2009:182-3), Toomey suggests that if all roles are

in the guise of empowering, then they should all be subject to the lens of empowerment and its opposite 'that of disempowerment' (2009:182). This resonates with Shaw's argument, that because community development is contextual and constructed, 'it follows that is it contested, or that it should be' and a continuous critique is a key tenet of community development professional practice and it should 'always a matter of debate and argument' (Shaw 2005:5). Whereas for Toomey self-defined practice and a 'wide spectrum of roles,' leads to practice that cannot be construed as community development at all because the field remains 'unfenced' (2009:182), for Shaw (2005), its volatility distinguishes community development from other professions and practitioners need to develop a 'tolerance for these contradictions and ambiguity.'

> …these blurred zones or borderlands that are central to our lives and hold within them considerable possibility.

Smith 1994: 25

This volatile positioning raises a series of questions surrounding the relationship between the state and community development practice. These include issues of professional identity and difference, the boundaries between community development and other professions, and who controls them. If community development dynamism is reliant upon volatility and the interplay between the personal and professional in intersubjective relationships then what are the implications when the state or other forces attempt to control and contain these crucial elements?.

3.3   CONCEPTS OF PROFESSIONALISM AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PRACTICE

The term 'profession' has been contested to the point where there is 'no agreement over its meaning' and notions of 'professionalism' are constantly evolving according

changing influences over time (Banks 2004:18). 'Profession' is 'often used synonymously with 'occupation' but it also has connotations relating to 'high levels of social status, education, expertise, occupational control of membership, identity as an occupational group and certain kind of self-consciousness about ethics' (Banks 2004:17). 'Social professions' refer to those occupations 'concerned with the care, control, informal education and empowerment of individuals and groups' (Banks 2004:26). In a UK context these include social work and community and youth work Within Banks' definition of social professions 'community work' in particular has a 'democratic framework' and the strongest 'emancipatory strand' (p28). According to Banks (2004:14), professional practice in the social professions encompasses, 'inter-professional working, procedures/ accountability and ethical tensions and dilemmas.' Given the broader context, the ''ethos' of a profession' and 'interrelated issues of culture and identity,' it also encompasses 'attitudes, traditions and ways of working' (ibid:15).

According to Banks, whether community work can be 'legitimately regarded as a profession,' depends on 'what view is taken of the nature of a profession' (Banks 2004:17). Issues surrounding personal and relational elements of community development practice are key sites of tensions in the wide contestation surrounding concepts of professionalism (e.g. Specht 1978, T. Smith 1980, Twelvetrees 1991, Mayo 1998 in Shaw 2004, Banks 2004, Popple 1995, Shaw 2004, Shaw 2005, Ledwith 2005). Debates surrounding the professionalism of community development practice are on the one hand, about needing a more coherent occupational identity to maintain credibility and on the other, resistance towards on the basis of distancing practitioners from those with whom they work (Banks 2004). The development of National Occupational Standards for community work, first published in 1995 was marked by these diverging perspectives (Banks 2002). In the 1980s, there were successful attempts by 'grass-roots' community practitioners to 'fend off' the

development of a 'national institute for community development work,' although Banks argues that this would have provided a stronger professional identity (2010:8). The move to national vocational qualifications (NVQs) as an alternative route to community development qualification was also resisted because it was believed it would jeopardise the relationship between theory and action and open the door to Governmental control (Jones 1989:212-5, cited in Banks 2010:9).

Banks (2004:35) argues that early pioneers in the 'social professions' were moved by a vocation or 'calling to care,' hence the expression of personal, emotional and indeed moral aspects in relation to professionalism. The following is an illustration of the notion of a 'calling to care' from charitable youth work in the mid-nineteenth century:

> Armed with the paraphernalia of their calling - Bibles, tracts, blankets, food and coal tickets, and love - these foot-soldiers of the charitable army went from door to door to combat the evils of poverty, disease, and irreligion. In other words, they sought to reform family life through a moral and physical cleansing of the nation's homes.
>
> Prochaska, 1980: 98, quoted in Jeffs and Smith 2002:31.

Although, as Prochaska (1980) suggests, the early pioneers visiting the poor expressed conservative moral perspectives in their vocation, they were 'deeply troubled and affected by what they saw and experienced' (ibid). Indeed, they were 'prepared to take significant risks' with their own health out of 'concern for what they saw as the debilitating effects of poverty and urbanisation,' thus suggesting motivations that were deeply personal and emotional (ibid). Banks, analysing the concept of vocation in a contemporary study of the social professions, suggests from this that the personal and self of the practitioner is always central to practice regardless of the peculiarities of their moral convictions.

> Where work constitutes a practical ideal of activity that makes a person's work morally inseparable from his or her life and self is subsumed into a community disciplined practice and sound judgement whose activity has meaning and value in itself, not just the outputs or profits.

Banks 2004:166

If, as the literature suggests, 'vocation' is at the heart of contemporary and traditional concepts of the social professions, then it follows that professionalism should be rooted in the inseparability of the personal and the professional. Yet contested and personally held aspects of community development practice, precisely where dynamism is situated, are problematic within dominant conceptions of professionalism.

There is wide contestation and debate surrounding the concept of professionalism in relation to community development with a body of thought associating this with technical characteristics that elude the development of intersubjective relationships in practice (Specht 1978, T. Smith 1980, Twelvetrees 1991, Shaw, 2004, Ledwith 2005). At the core of these debates is the distinction between 'professional' and 'radical' approaches with inferences that the latter are 'non-professional' and that a professional approach is 'non-ideological' (e.g. Twelvetrees 1991). Specht (1978) for example distinguishes between 'passion' and 'responsibility' and community work as a social movement and community work as a profession, the former being driven by passion and ideology and the latter by responsibility and objectivity (in Smith [T.] 1980:214 and Shaw, 2004. 28). Such arguments suggest that professionalism equates with being politically neutral and impartial. For example, Thomas (1983) adopting a pluralistic stance suggests that community work is a professional, but not a political activity and community action is 'an area of activity that is undertaken by campaigners and activists' who are not employed (in Popple 2000:66). T. Smith identifies four clusters of reasons why such dichotomising is problematic (1980:215-

219). These surround understanding, legitimacy, values and the problematic of professionalism in relation to the political nature of community development work.

The first cluster surrounds understanding that the 'professions' are 'exclusive' in nature and thus involve discrete areas of skill and knowledge that 'can and must be taught' (p215). The second cluster is around 'legitimacy' and relates to the question of what authority justifies community work intervention. In most professions this authority would stem from professional judgement measured against professional practice and the judgement of other colleagues (p216). For T. Smith, what establishes the position of community work 'in relation to more established professions' is accountability to local people and community groups (p217), although Banks would argue that accountability to 'service users' is central to all professional practice (2004:150). The third cluster is around values and social control where professions are expected to carry out functions within a 'largely unchallenged consensus of dominant values' and 'attempt to modify deviant or abnormal behaviour towards agreed dominant norms' (p217). For T. Smith, this traditional model of professionalism creates tensions for community workers because it 'denies the collective and structural basis of problems and individualises or pathologises them' (p217). Thus, in the framework proffered by T. Smith, professionalism is associated with objectivity and conservative ideologies, a model that has parallels with debates surrounding 'partial' and 'impartial' ethics in moral philosophy.

For Banks, the term 'ethics' can broadly be used in two different ways, firstly to refer to 'actual norms' or 'morals' that people follow concerning what it 'right or wrong' or 'good or bad' and secondly to the 'study of moral norms' or 'moral philosophy' (2004: 48). Building upon these interpretations, Banks explores ways in which 'professional ethics' can be conceived (see Banks 2004:50 and 61). Although acknowledging the difficulty in providing an overview of the complexity of ethical theories that have developed over many years, she categorises them into two broad approaches,

'impartial, detached' and 'partial, situated' (2004:77). In the former, morality is expressed as 'acting as a rational detached moral agent (unclouded by personal feelings…).' This implies that impartial ethical frameworks are devoid of personal and emotional elements, whereas, partialist approaches emphasise empathy, relationships, attitudes, emotions and motives' (Banks 2004:77) and stress the importance of context and that the 'ethical actor' is 'a person rooted in a web of relationships with their own feelings, dispositions and responsibilities' (Hoggett et al. 2009:27). The salience of 'impartial' and 'partial' ethical frameworks rests in their inherent divergence. However, the reality of practice demands that community development practitioners are simultaneously occupy subjective and objective positions. Accordingly, reflexivity is crucial in relation to dealing with the inherent contradictions and resultant tensions in community development practice, not least of all, the practitioner's personal prejudices and biases.

Concepts of 'impartial, detached' and 'partial, situated' professional ethics have parallels with Gramsci's conceptions of 'feeling-passion' and 'intellectual and moral unity' (Gramsci 1971: 418, O'Shea 2011). Gramsci distinguishes between the 'popular element' that feels but 'does not always know or understand' and the 'intellectual element' that 'knows but does not understand and in particular, does not feel' (ibid). For Gramsci, the 'intellectual error' consists of believing that you can know without understanding and without 'feeling and being impassioned' (ibid). Knowledge means to feel the 'elementary passion of the people,' to understand them within a particular historical situation and connect them 'dialectically' to systems of superiority (ibid). For Gramsci, this only occurs when there a relationship between the 'intellectual' and the people as a force for social change is established (ibid). Accordingly, where the personal and emotional intersubjective connection is absent, the association only exists for instrumental purposes to maintain the existing political

and social order. Gramsci conceives the former as 'organic cohesion' and the latter as 'organic centralism' whereby:

> In the absence of such a nexus the relationship between the intellectuals and the people nation are, or are reduced to relationships of a purely bureaucratic and formal order…

<div align="right">Gramsci 1971:418</div>

In Banks' study of the social professions, practitioners expressed strong motivations in relation to putting values into practice, such as being 'driven' by 'passion' (2007:6). Banks conceives this as the 'language of emotion' and claims that a combination of values, motivation and emotion is a prerequisite for critical and transformational practice (2007:138)

> Anger is the human attribute which has the most possibility of generating the kind of collective resistance which is a necessary precondition of emancipation.

<div align="right">Leonard 1997:162, in Banks 2007:138</div>

In parallel, for Hoggett et al. (2009) in a study of development practitioners, their early life experiences of personal injustice and the compassion and anger that accompanied them underpinned their motivations, values and commitment to their work. For Hoggett et al. 'anger at injustice is connected to a desire to change things' and they use the term 'reparative impulse' that is 'manifest in the desire to help repair damaged communities' or individuals or 'empower those who do not have a voice' (2009:85). The concept of 'reparative impulse' is distinguished from altruism as it is connected to 'notions of group solidarity and anger at injustice' (ibid). Hoggett et al. also draw upon James Jasper's concept of 'moral shocks,' when an unexpected event or piece of information raises such outrage as to propel people into political action, even in the absence of acquaintances in the movement of mediating networks (Jasper 1998:409 in Hoggett et al. 2009:83). Concepts of 'moral shocks' and 'comparative impulses' suggest that transformational practice can be based upon

shared outrage but not necessarily grounded in an intersubjective understanding of inequality and injustice. There is an implied disparity here with Gramsci's concept of a 'critical incident,' whereby breaking a state false or naïve consciousness has to be the imperative (Ledwith 2009: 689).

Returning to debates surrounding community development professionalism, Craig (2005) perceives the problem as being the focus of upon technical professionalism to the 'exclusion of thinking about theory and politics' and neglecting an analysis of how 'the macro' impacts upon 'the micro' (in Shaw 2005: 42). This compares with T. Smith's fourth cluster, whereby the concept of 'professionalism' is problematic for community development as a result of professionalism being traditionally associated with being non-political (1980:218). For T. Smith, professions tend to bring their own body of discrete knowledge to bear in the treatment of problems within predefined goals that anticipate the end-product (p218).This raises a dilemma for community workers as the distinction between ends, means and strategies is not as clear cut as it is in other professions and involves political rather than technical decisions (Smith, T., 1980).

> Indeed it may be the political structure that is the object of community work, since the issues taken up by community work are often those which are systematically excluded from the agenda of political processes.
>
> T. Smith 1980: 219

The implied dichotomy is that technical, conservative or ends led interventions are interpreted as apolitical and therefore professional, whereas critical or radical approaches are overtly political and therefore non-professional. For Hoggett et al., development work occurs in the 'contested spaces between the state and civil society' and there is 'no unambiguous terrain upon which one's principles can be put to work' (2009:27). 'Risk, uncertainty and ambiguity are the development worker's constant companion' and Hoggett et al. argue that impartialist and partialist

approaches are 'equally relevant,' suggesting that this places a further burden upon community development workers to manage the tensions between these approaches in practice. Corresponding with Martin's (2003) claim that ambiguity and ambivalence can be used to create conceptual and ideological spaces in which to struggle over meanings and purposes, Shaw suggests that the spaces between these dichotomised positions holds emancipatory possibilities:

> This distinction liberates us from unhelpful dichotomising by presenting a space within which different purposes (as distinct from processes) can be contested, as the legitimate scope of professionalism.

Shaw 2004: 28

Gramsci's concept of the organic intellectual is a 'person with passion for the people that transcends the dichotomy between knowing and feeling' (in Ledwith 2005:124). For Francis (2001), feminist insights that the personal and professional are 'always mutually embedded' provides a 'critical education space for creative community development' (in Shaw: 2004:27). For Shaw, such insights 'move beyond the dichotomies of macro/ micro analysis and cut across over-determined models of practice which do not take account of the politics of identity and difference' (2004: 27). Shaw argues that community development simply cannot be understood as a set of 'disembodied values and skills,' it depends upon the context, otherwise it is a 'technical process that can be applicable to any purpose' (2004:1). Mayo (1998) distinguishes between 'technical' and 'transformational' approaches and for Shaw this is useful, particularly since the term 'radical' has been appropriated by a neo-liberal agenda (in Shaw, 2004:28).

3.4 PROFESSIONALISM AND THE SELF AND IDENTITY IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PRACTICE

Among the 'numerous accounts of the nature of identity,' Banks suggests that 'professional identity' can be assumed as a sub category and usually refers to

'people's sense of who they are in their work roles' (2004:137). Drawing upon Goffman's seminal work in 'Stigma' (1968), Williams (2000) identifies a threefold distinction of identity, namely, 'social identity,' 'personal identity,' and 'ego or felt identity' (in Banks 2004:137). For Clarke (2008), also drawing upon Goffman's work, 'social identity' is about attributes that a person is deemed to possess in relation to other people and tied in with social categories such as age, race, gender and class (2008:512). 'Personal identity' is about a person's biography, what makes the individual unique within the social (Clarke 2008:513). 'Ego or felt identity' is about individuals subjective sense of they are and how they exist in the world or put simply 'how we feel about our self (ibid). For Banks (2007), although social identity is the most commonly used understanding in professional life, 'ego identity' is also important in making sense of professional identity. In community development practice, personal and relational aspects of identity are shown to be inextricable from professional identity, or practitioners' sense of who they are in their work roles (e.g. Parker Follett 1924, Francis 2001, cited in Shaw 2004:27, Ledwith 2005, Hoggett and Mayo 2007, Hoggett et al. 2009).

For Hoggett et al. (2009) personal identities are intrinsic to professional identities to the point where the two are inseparable (Hoggett et.al. 2009). 'Values are always both personal and political' and the outcome of 'dialectical interplay between the internalisations and identifications which arise from our most intimate relations' and our journey through life (ibid: 70). Early identifications with parents, grandparents, teachers, care workers etc. appear to play a key role in shaping social identities and this is the way individuals 'became,' Black, female, working-class etc. (Hoggett et al 2009:88). Their research also points to 'identificatory processes,' throughout the life-course playing a powerful role in the establishment of values and what they term the 'ego ideal' (Hoggett et.al. 2009:103). Whereas the 'super-ego' threatens internal punishment such as guilt to command obedience, the 'ego ideal' would pursue

honesty as a positive virtue thus representing the 'ethical self' 'as something to be achieved' (ibid). This implies that identities and values are constantly evolving and shaping and this is impacting upon practitioner's individual frameworks for ethical and accountable practice.

For Banks, community practice, as a 'value based activity' gives rise to a number of problems and dilemmas arising from competing interpretations from different cognitive and political interests, thus creating a multitude of tensions and conflict in practice (2013:102-3). Here, Banks is discussing community practice as it relates to work with a community focus across a wide spectrum of professional areas, including that of community development practitioners. She understands that in the reality of practice, there is a world of different and competing interests and that values and principles themselves can conflict, for example the welfare of one set of residents may conflict with the empowerment of another (Banks 2013:103). Hoggett et al. stress the same argument:

> It is world in which differences such as culture, religion and gender easily become the basis for new social divisions, dividing one group against another. In this world simple distinctions between right and wrong become increasingly hard to sustain for what might be just for one group is seen as unjust by another.
>
> Hoggett et al 2009:29

Ledwith and Asgill (2000) identify a 'critical alliance of difference' that needs to be established along horizontal lines to defuse hostilities and promote learning and sharing of experience and knowledge between diverse groups and individuals. Ledwith proposes a three-dimensional model through which to explore the 'intersections of oppressions, thereby identifying potential sites of liberation' (2009:694). These three dimensions are: 'aspects of difference and identity', such as age, 'race', class, gender, sexuality identity, 'disability, ethnicity; 'contexts' such as 'economic, cultural, intellectual, physical, environmental, historical, emotional,

spiritual; and 'levels' local, national, regional and global (Ledwith, 2001, 2005 in Ledwith 2009:694). These dimensions form a 'complex set of interrelationships' which only interweave between axes and 'also intertwine on any one axis'. They are based upon Gramsci's emphases of critical education, history and culture and knowing 'who we are and what has shaped our reality on a multiplicity of dimensions in order to act together for change' (Ledwith 2009:694). So sharing and situating our biographies for the purpose of identifying intersecting aspects of our personal identities, including our experiences and feelings relating to domination and oppression, is at the very heart of critical community development practice.

> The starting point of critical elaboration is knowing what one really is ... as a product of the historical process to date which has deposited in you an infinity of traces, without leaving an inventory.

> Gramsci, 1971:324

The connection between the personal and political within feminist community development perspectives is aligned with Shaw's argument that practitioners need to reassert Wright Mills' 'sociological imagination' by connecting 'micro experience with macro structures and processes' (Shaw 2005:6). For Shaw, seeing 'how the personal is almost always political' is a key community development role and that which distinguishes community development from other social welfare professions.

> Making these connections in practice is surely one of the core skills of community development – what distinguishes it from social care, or social work or therapy. It could be argued that a primary role for community development should be to look actively for opportunities to turn private troubles into public issues rather than what is increasingly the reverse.

> Shaw 2005:6

Feminist community development perspectives emphasise the centrality of self-disclosure in forming intersubjective relationships, in expressions of professional identity, social, personal and ego- or felt- identities are simultaneously and intrinsically interconnected (e.g. Popple 2000:37, Ledwith 2009, Batsleer 2013).

Such all-encompassing mutual and subjective identifications in practice are crucial in stimulating critical incidents to dispel naïve and false consciousness and awaken critical consciousness. In Ledwith's second example of a critical incident, this time from a practitioner's perspective, she reflects upon the reverberating effect of inadvertently letting down her 'professional' guard to a local woman (2009:689). Subsequently their relationship transforms from one based upon power and authority, to one of mutual personal identifications, inter-subjectivity and indeed friendship.

> That afternoon, Carole appeared in my office for the first time. We talked on a personal level for the first time, sharing our feelings, our hopes, our despair, listening from the heart and soul. She told me that the incident that morning was the first time she had seen my calm exterior ruffled, that it broke the ice and made me human in a way that she understood. We parted friends.

<div align="right">Ledwith 2009:689</div>

After months of struggle, this critical incident led to the development of 'critical consciousness on a level which had the potential for releasing the energy for collective change' (ibid). Subsequently a dialogue ensued across professional boundaries involving this local woman with health practitioners, leading to the development of a women's community health project (ibid). What is of upmost significance here in relation to this thesis is that the acknowledgement of the subject overrode the objectifications of dominant conceptions of professionalism. This brings to mind the thinking of bell hooks in relation to Freire's mantra, 'we cannot enter the struggle as objects in order to become subjects' (in hooks 2015:43). For hooks, every liberatory struggle involves a revolutionary process whereby oppressed people assert themselves as subjects: defining their reality, shaping their new identity, naming their history, telling their story' (ibid).

Ledwith draws upon Mo Griffiths' concept of the 'little stories' that link 'voice to narrative making that vital connection between the deeply personal and the

profoundly political' (Griffiths, 2003:81 in Ledwith 2009:694). However, Griffiths

stresses that this is not transformative until it becomes a collective process.

> By taking the particular perspective of an individual seriously; that is, the
> individual as situated in particular circumstances in all their complexity [and
> linking this] to grander concerns like education, social justice and power.

<div align="right">Griffiths, 2003:81 in Ledwith 2009:694</div>

Congruent with the 'identificatory processes,' outlined by Hoggett et.al. (2009:103),

for Ledwith and Springett, identities are not fixed, they change with 'age, experience

and consciousness' and on an 'inner reflexive level, the stories we tell about

ourselves grow in complexity' as individuals grow and develop (2010:106-7). Ledwith

and Springett, argue that a 'critical gaze' reveals that identities and stories are

structured by white western privilege that positions individuals in 'raced, classed and

gendered relationship with each other' (2010:105). Recognising this, Patricia Hill

Collins tries to replace the external definitions 'forwarded by dominant groups' with

her own 'self-defined standpoint' (Hill Collins 1990: xi-xii, in Smith 1997). Like other

African-American women, whose voices have been silenced, the voice Hill Collins

seeks is both 'individual and collective', 'personal and political, culminating in 'one

unique biography with the larger meaning in historical times' (ibid).

For Hill Collins, key to the disruption and ultimate transformation of the 'matrix of

domination' is the empowerment of individuals through a process of consciousness-

raising that situates individual biographies within a historical context and leads to

collective action (Hill Collins 2000:277-288). This corresponds with Wright Mills'

claims in 'The Sociological Imagination, that 'neither the life of an individual nor the

history of a society can be understood without understanding both' (1959:1). In

parallel, for Ledwith and Springett (2010), participatory practice engages in the

process of storytelling as a transformational tool in a way that personal stories

become a collective narrative with transformational potential.

3.5 PROFESSIONALISM, ACCOUNTABILITY AND REFLEXIVITY

T. Smith (1980) suggests that whatever tradition it inhabits, as a profession, community development offers 'hard skills and knowledge', which have partly risen out of and should in turn 'help create the conditions for effective process and pressure' (1980: 225). For Smith (1980), the hard professional skill of building organisations should run alongside a shift in consciousness of people's sense of power and capacity, thus community development practice should always be enquiring whether it is asking questions or conforming. This suggests that community development practice is always in contested territory even when it is presented as uncontested (ibid).

For Toomey (2009) the spaces between where one community development paradigm 'leave off' and another begins are full of ambiguities and contradictions, especially given that practitioners are also people rather than models, and their personal actions are 'full of the tensions of what they have been sent to do and what they feel is right' (2009:183). Accordingly, there is often divergence between the two. Similarly, for Banks community practice 'by its very nature is fraught with ethical challenges' and these challenges become 'ethical dilemmas' when the choice of what to do is between two 'unwelcome alternatives' (2013:99-100). Both Hoggett et.al and Banks draw upon Honig's concept of a 'dilemmatic space' or 'a space where there is no longer any obvious right thing to do' (Hoggett et.al. 2009:30, Honig 1996:259, in Banks 2013).

Although conceding that a world of certainty and principled dogma may be tempting, 'dilemmatic space' is conceived as central to the contested elements of community development practice (Hoggett et al. 2009:30). Four capacities are regarded as necessary for practitioners to operate in a principled way in these dilemmatic spaces: the first is to 'contain uncertainty, ambiguity and complexity; second is 'self-

authorisation,' or the courage to act where 'there is no obvious right thing to do;' third is 'reflexivity', to treat oneself as 'an object of enquiry' thus suspending belief about oneself and 'sustaining a critical approach;' fourth is to be 'passionate and thoughtful,' containing emotions without suppressing them (Hoggett et al. 2009:174). The concept of 'dilemmatic space' and its associated four capacities goes a long way towards a professional framework which encompasses the personal, relational elements and emotional elements of community development everyday practice.

For Hoggett and Mayo, 'professionals bring something to their role in terms of values, identities and emotional capacities which pre-exists their engagement in that role' and identities form out of 'unique biographical circumstances from the formation of class, race and gender' (2007:5). These unique personal circumstances can be a resource to draw upon but can also limit a person's sense of 'what is desirable or possible' (Hoggett et al. 2009:97). In this sense the 'subject always precedes discourse' and 'far from being the bearers of discourse' (such as in New Labour's modernisation project), the professional agent has the capacity to resist it (Hoggett and Mayo 2007:5). As noted by Smith:

> People do not come to conversations on an equal footing. They bring histories and identities which have been deeply inscribed by social forces. The experience of being members of particular classes, cultures or races; and the pressures and expectations which people feel because of their body, gender and sexuality, interact and are work in such exchanges.

> Smith 1997:5

In relation to the concept of the 'ethical self,' Hoggett et.al. (2009) argue that if values are built on 'unworked-through' identifications there is a tendency to over-identify with them and where reflexivity is lacking, such values are 'brittle' and 'strident' rather than 'strong and firm' (2009:104). They suggests that professional reflexivity is required to process identity and identifications in everyday practice.

> If a person lacks reflexivity about the identifications that foster the inner voice then it becomes very difficult to manage a commitment to the real 'other.'

<div align="right">Hoggett et al. 2009:70</div>

As stated, for Hoggett et.al. (2009), reflexivity or treating oneself as 'an object of enquiry,' is one of the capacities regarded as necessary for principled practice in dilemmatic space (2009:174). For Shaw, because of its 'regressive and reactionary potential' and its contestable positioning in relation to the state, professional reflexivity is required to provide a critical distance in order to continuously problematise community development practice and to subject it to scrutiny (Shaw 2005:2, 2011).

Butcher uses the metaphor of 'permanent white-water' (from Vaill, 1996), to describe the 'ever more rapid, discontinuous and far-reaching patterns of change' surrounding the 'community practitioner' where we are running all with time no time to reflect (2007:59 and 2013:77-78). These conditions arose out of and are integral to the rapidly changing social and political conditions of post-industrial society and fragmentation (Vaill, 1996). For Butcher, to be able to negotiate these circumstances, practitioners need to undertake continual experiential and reflexive learning that occurs 'in and through the engagement with lived day-to-day problems and issues' (2013:79). Butcher draws upon Kolb's 'Learning Cycle' to define this process (Kolb 2007 in Butcher 2013:80). In Kolb's model, the learning process begins with 'concrete' lived experience: then 'consciously reflecting what occurred,' thirdly making sense of the experience by relating new information and creating new meaning ('abstract conceptualisation'); and then finally 'active experimentation,' (ibid) to take action that test out the newly constructed meaning.

For Kolb, reflection is 'influenced by our expectations and meaning structures' (Ibid). Dixon introduces the concept of 'personal meaning structures,' comprising 'beliefs about ourselves and other people,' our understanding of 'communities, organisations

and policy systems within which we work' and our attitudes, 'ways of feeling and thinking' etc. (Dixon 1999 in Butcher 2013:81). For Butcher, these 'personal meaning structures' are always an 'interpretation' and a 'mental construction' and as such 'contestable' and open to 'revision' (p82). The 'depth of our reflection' is dependent upon how the emotional content is dealt with (Boud 1985, in Butcher 2013:87). For Butcher, Schön's concept of 'reflection in action' is highly significant to community practitioners where the situation is 'ill-defined,' 'uncertain,' 'messy', 'ambiguous' and involves dialogue and adjustment from 'a number of actors' (Butcher 2013:88).

> The artistry of the professional resides in the ability to handle such indeterminacy and differs markedly from a model of practice predicated upon pre-planned implementation of established rules and formulas. To the practitioner learning whose goal is to empower others to work with their communities to develop their preferences, to 'reflect in action' is a vital skill.
>
> Butcher 2013:88

There are parallels here with what Banks terms 'ethics work,' which involves 'framing and reframing situations and also cognitive and emotional work surrounding 'choices of roles performance of professional identities and ethical reasoning' (Banks 2012, pp 204-5 in Banks 2013:102). This also resonates with the concept of 'critical consciousness,' involving the capacity to reason and logic, alongside 'acknowledging and respecting feelings,' in particular, emotions arising from experiences of oppression (Butcher 2007b:60). Or put another way, drawing upon Dewey (1986 [1910]),

> Critical thinking 'entails the intellectual and emotional strength to go beyond the known, without 'falling to pieces'
>
> Butcher 2007b:60 and p72

In parallel with Dewey's 'going beyond the known,' Banks introduces a notion of 'becoming' in relation to the perpetual reflexive capacities required by critical practice.

> Critical practitioners are always in a state of 'becoming' – developing their awareness, ideas, analysis and capacities through their conversations and actions in collaboration with others.

<div align="right">Banks 2007:134</div>

Donald Schön, in his seminal text 'The Reflective Practitioner,' is widely acknowledged for his contribution towards bringing 'reflection to the centre of understanding what professionals do' (Smith 2001, 2011:19). Schön challenges a positivist approach to technical rationality by validating practices through concepts of 'knowing in action' and 'reflection in and on action' (Burgess and Herrmann 2010:90). Schön, it is claimed offers an 'alternative epistemology of practice 'in which, the knowledge inherent in practice is to be understood as artful doing' (Usher et.al. 1997:143 in Smith 2001, 2011:19). His notions of 'reflection-in-action', and 'reflection-on-action' are central to this (Smith 2001, 2011:19).

'Reflection-in-action' is sometimes described as 'thinking on our feet' and involves 'looking to our experiences, connecting with our feelings,' 'attending to our theories' and building new understandings as the situation is unfolding to inform our actions (ibid).

> The practitioner allows himself to experience surprise, puzzlement, or confusion in a situation which he finds uncertain or unique. He reflects on the phenomenon before him, and on the prior understandings which have been implicit in his behaviour. He carries out an experiment which serves to generate both a new understanding of the phenomenon and a change in the situation.

<div align="right">Schön 1983: 68 in Smith 2001, 2011:19</div>

'Reflection-on-action' comes after the 'encounter' and involves spend time (individually or collectively) exploring 'why we acted as we did, what was happening in a group' and developing sets of questions and ideas about practice and actions (Smith 2001, 2011:9). Also of importance in Schön's 'reflective action;' model is the encouragement of accountability from both practitioners and service users through

negotiation, collaboration and experimentation (Burgess and Herrmann 2010:90). Although not a solution in itself, 'reflective action' constructs a model of 'reflective enquiry' that may 'yield the possibility of a solution to experiment with through action and further reflection' (ibid).

The concept of reflexivity takes the introspective distinction entailed in reflection, not just examining how the practitioner's thoughts and feelings shape the interaction at the time, but how their 'underlying assumptions' and interests shape interaction before they react (Darling 1998). Darling deploys Jay Rothman's conception of reflexivity as it relates to his work in conflict resolution (Rothman 1997 in Darling 1998:1).

> Reflexivity is an interactive process that takes into consideration the relationship between self, other and context. Reflexivity expands the frame to include an examination of the underlying assumptions and priorities that shape interaction within a given time, place and situation (like a conflict). Being reflexive requires that parties examine their priorities before they react.
>
> Darling 1998:1

For Rothman this involves, involves asking 'Why this situation is so important to me? Why do I care so much?' 'What have I done to contribute to the problem?' and 'What might be done in order to contribute to its resolution' (Rothman, 1997: in Darling 1998:1). Correspondingly, this is how Butcher understands the distinction between reflexivity and reflection.

> It adds an additional dimension to reflection, it entails and ability to examine one's own thoughts and thought processes, to contextualise them (become aware of the context under which they have been shaped and under which they are deployed) and develop a capacity to modify them as a result of such inspection.
>
> 2007b:72

In parallel, for Banks (2007), although the terms 'reflection' and 'reflexivity' are sometimes used interchangeably, the latter includes this further dimension, drawing

upon Fook (2005:10), locating our own perspective in the discourse' and for Bolton (2005:10) 'making aspects of the self strange' (in Banks 2007:140).

Whereas for Issitt and Spence (2005), traditional research approaches tend to fix information because this is more amenable to the process of policy making which require something set in time and place to give validity, in the thesis of reflexivity, the analysis can never be 'final or complete,' because the enquiry takes the form of 'questioning claims rather than making claims' and constitutes a 'dialogue' in relation to possible 'interpretations of experience' (Winter 2003:14). In parallel, for Hall (2003:30) reflexivity is not an antithesis to positivism, rather it provides 'an enhancing adjunct to positivistic methods by warranting claims to evidence' (2003: 30). The process of questioning claims itself produces a 'dimension of validity' and statements are grounded in reflexive interpretative judgments rather than external facts and can thereby be modified (Hall 2003:37). These claims are highly significant towards this thesis as they relate to its purpose of identifying effective mechanisms for making reflexive and dynamic community development practice professionally accountable to state policy.

3.6   CONCLUSION

The literature surrounding contemporary community development models suggests that regardless of the ideological or organisational context, the agentic capacities of the practitioner can shape what happens in practice. This suggests that models, methods, practitioner roles are thus not necessarily fixed within the controlling and emancipatory spectrum of community development perspectives. Indeed they are be open to negotiation and interpretation and there is room for manoeuvre, anomalies and transgressions. So for example, a technical practitioner role could be empowering as long as that is what is required by those participating in community

development processes in a given context. What is critical here is that practitioner roles are negotiated and not imposed upon communities as herein lies the disempowering potential of community development practice. What is also absolutely crucial in terms of maintaining the dynamism of community development practice is constantly and endlessly subjecting of the role and purposes of community development practice to reflexive critical questioning (Shaw 2004, 2005). As suggested by Popple (200), the bottom line is that where there is no room for negotiation, community development practitioners could chose to leave their employment rather than entirely compromise their practice principles. However, what is evident from the resistance to the pathological model in the CDP was that it was concerted and collective, thus requiring high levels of trust and accountability. This was not just towards grass roots communities and state towards policy (witnessed in many CDPs reports to the Home Office) but also horizontally between community development practitioners and across professional boundaries to make alliances with within academic institutions.

Core to efforts to establish community development as a distinct profession are attempts to either inhibit, contain or remove the personal, emotional and relational elements from its practices. Yet these are precisely where the dynamism of community development is situated. Another central problematic is the assumption that only critical perspectives are political and that professionalism equates with being impartial and apolitical. Non-critical and technicist approaches to professionalism render community development practice as political in a different way insofar as they mean that practitioners become servants of policies. Practices created within such managerial structures and political ideologies define what is the 'right course of action' to take without reference to the knowledge that arises from practice processes. They also establish a different political relationship between the

worker, the employer and members of the community subject to intervention by shifting power relationships under the ruse of 'neutrality'.

Within critical community development traditions and approaches where the characteristics of dynamism, including reflexivity are the strongest. The political intentions of critical approaches are open and transparent. Moreover, their existence is precisely how the political intentions of *all* forms of community development practice and those of the state remain exposed and subject to scrutiny. In relation to the intentions of this thesis, professional accountability has to encompass making public the self, identities, identifications, prejudices and biases of the practitioner through processes of conscientization and reflexivity. This is precisely how relationships based upon inter-subjectivity and trust are established, how states of false and naïve consciousness are broken and critical consciousness awakened.

The thesis of reflexivity, particularly its self-conscious, introspective and deliberative elements, lends itself entirely towards established critical community development processes of consciousness raising and solidarity building though conversation and dialogue. Reflexivity speaks to the volatile and turbulent conditions of community development practice. It also heightens the potential for transformation by locating submerged voices and situating them within a collective narrative with broader political and historical meaning and through this process, mobilises collective action (Hill Collins 1990, 2000).

In terms of community development accountability, at one level reflexivity provides a framework for the personal commitment necessary to uphold its core principles of equality and social justice, and at another it brings a unique dimension to policy making, involving the interpretation and reinterpretation of a multitude of subjective experiences in relation to its shaping and implementation. This not only has the potential to add a validity to policy making but also legitimised the role and purpose

of community development practice as it relates to state policy. In turn, this stands a

legitimate and unique purpose for community development as a distinct profession.

4. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DISCOURSE, ACCOUNTABILITY AND THE NEW LABOUR STATE

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Through an exploration of ideological and theoretical influences that shaped Government policy from 1997 to 2010, this chapter argues that New Labour attempted to bypass certain community development perspectives and traditions in favour of its new philosophy of 'Third Way' and a functionalist model of society informed by the work of the sociologist Anthony Giddens (1998). These conditions implied a new conception of community development professionalism. However, in its efforts to shift the perspectives and actions of practitioners there were questions about the personal, emotional and relational elements that this researcher has argued are fundamental to the nature of community development practice, whichever tradition it inhabits.

This chapter assesses the impact of New Labour's discourse in relation to key aspects of dynamic community development practice identified in earlier chapters, particularly in relation to tension surrounding issues such as language, power and accountability. Within this analysis, it questions how far the perception of the community development field and the perceptions of the state were contested and if so, what were the implications of the New Labour Government having the power of funding to shape what happened? Could it have been different?

4.2 NEW LABOUR, THE THIRD WAY AND COMMUNITARIANISM

The Third Way emerged as a political position that attempted to reconcile right-wing and left-wing politics amid widespread re-evaluation of their position by those at the centre Left of the political spectrum (Norberto and Allan 1997, Lewis and Surrender 2004). The approach was intended to create a more cohesive society that was

also fiscally responsible in terms of global and financial capitalism. Whereas community development purposes had always been volatile in relation to the political and economic ideologies of Government, New Labour promised something new. Third Way politics of social cohesion involved an attempt to incorporate problematic social groups, defined as 'excluded', into mainstream society. This seemed to correspond with the long tradition of community development workers trying to reach and improve the lives of marginalised social groups, including the poor and the disaffected. So initially, although there was critical comment upon New Labour's ideology emerging from the literature, even those practitioners with critical perspectives seemingly believed that the new politics validated the role of community and community development practice, thus offering more space in which to manoeuvre. Then a slippage between established community development praxis and New Labour's approach began to emerge.

Ending 18 years of Conservative administration, New Labour came to power in 1997. 'Deepening social divisions between neighbourhoods and urban decline over a twenty-year period' was stated as the impetus for New Labour's urban policy (DWP 2001:7). Poverty was attributed to past policies and programmes and the challenges of creating an inclusive society were said to have failed because 'they have focussed in addressing the symptoms of poverty' (ibid). New Labour's radical rhetoric was to tackle the 'root causes' of poverty (DWP 2001:118), yet the term 'poverty' was soon supplanted by the broader concept of 'social exclusion.'

> Tackling the roots of social exclusion – in particular discrimination,
> inequality and lack of opportunity – is an essential part of the vision of
> a successful and prosperous society.

DWP 2003:6

It has been argued that despite its sympathetic rhetoric, New Labour distanced itself from philosophical and historical commitments to wealth redistribution, no longer

basing its policies on class relations, but on conservative ideologies about relationships between the state and the family according to the philosophies and principles of communitarianism (Byrne 2005, Burns 2006). Communitarianism locates community and civil society 'as the interface between people and the local state' (Byrne 2005, Burns 2006:372). The approach was situated in functionalist views that treats social divisions as endemic to capitalism and is concerned with how societies achieve social order without excessive coercion. The emphasis is upon 'co-operation and harmonious cohesion,' requiring each individual to fulfil their function in social organisation (Lister 2010:116). Although a radical policy rhetoric may have at first appealed to those from critical community development traditions, the concept of 'social exclusion' was problematic from the outset.

Criticisms of the Third Way approach arise from various quarters, including policy analysts and community development practitioners. Questions about poverty, equality and social justice are at the core these debates (Riseborough 1997, Brownhill and Darke 1998, Atkinson 2003, Driver 2004, Morrison 2003b, Brownhill 2003, Shaw 2004, Burns 2006, Taylor 2007). It was argued that New Labour inhabited the language of radicalism to co-opt community development practitioners into a neo-liberal agenda (in Shaw, 2004:28). The suggestion being that this was to get rid of the contestations and contradictions and to mainstream a new concept of community development professionalism that was ultimately an extension of New Right ideals.

> While Government talks about 'history repeating itself' in families and between generations, the history that has really been repeated here is that of a flawed discourse.

> Welshman, 2012

New Labour's emphasis was not upon transforming society or the economy but fitting people into the prevailing social and economic order. Here the Prime Minister, Tony

Blair was defining the Third Way in relation to the Government's harsh line of crime and disorder, suggesting that there was no room for alternative discourses.

> We are all tough on crime, tough on the causes of crime. The debate between 'liberals' and 'hardliners' is over.
>
> Tony Blair, 22 April 1999 (Chicago) 34

As argued by Lister (2010), the idea of the Third way utilised a Durkheimian model where those who were defined as 'excluded' were either to be 'helped' to be brought inside or punished for refusing to participate. The language of 'new communitarianism' and 'Third Way' grafted a caring discourse onto the harshness of competitive economic individualism.

The 1990s had witnessed the rise in communitarianism in Britain as a means of addressing social problems arising from the free the market and the need for the state to demonstrate fiscal responsibility, with communities been promoted as the means of providing welfare and reducing moral decline (Taylor in Henderson and Salmon 1998). The 'new communitarianism' (Etzioni 1993), fitted with the ideas of the third way because it also deployed caring and mutuality that linked with socialist traditions without disturbing neo-liberal economics and without involving class politics. In 1995, 'Demos', an independent think tank and research institute, that influenced the policies of Blair's Government and considered to be centre of Third Way ideas, provided a platform for the American sociologist and founder of the 'communitarian movement,' Amitai Etzioni (Henderson and Salmon 1998). Etzioni's seminal book, 'Spirit of Community' was published in Britain in the same year and through many articles and media coverage, there was a surge of interest in communitarianism (Henderson and Salmon 1998:21).

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[34] At a speech to the Economic Club of Chicago

For Ledwith a 'subtle change' was that under the auspices of the Third Way, New Labour promoted a neo-liberal political philosophy of the free market economy, minimal Government and moral authoritarianism, but located the 'community and civil society as the interface between people and the state' (2005:15). Drawing upon Gramsci's concept of hegemony, she argues that harnessing civil society to a particular set of ideas is a 'more powerful force than state coercion' and far from being a 'collective, spirited expression of citizenship as rights and responsibilities,' it is the site where the 'dominant view of the ruling class infiltrates people's thinking by ideological persuasion' (2005:22)

For those who supported it, communitarianism seemed to have something to offer community development in terms of its focus upon 'community.' Henry Tam who became Head of the Civil Renewal Unit, claimed that communitarianism provided an alternative to 'individualistic and authoritarian' forms of Government through creating an 'inclusive form of community life' (in Burns 2006: 372).[35] Indeed, communitarian values of 'reciprocity, solidarity, good neighbourliness and mutuality' are difficult for community development practitioners to take issue with. However, it was widely argued that communitarian's moralistic approach was problematic, by resorting to a consensual model it avoided conflict and diverted attention away from the causes to the symptoms of social problems (Henderson and Salmon 1998:23 and 27, Wilson 1995, Taylor 1997, Arthur 2000, Shaw 2004, Ledwith 2005). Robson argues that by mobilising a communitarian discourse, New Labour were attempting to dampen and supress power struggles arising from conflicting community interests in relation to what was essentially their free market economic approach (2000:132 in Ledwith 2005:23). Ledwith conceives communitarianism as 'reactionary politics in the

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[35] Tam was responsible for delivering the cross-Government 'Together We Can' action plan (Home Office 2005),

guise of progressive politics' (2005:23). Rather than communities being sites of 'social change,' we were all 'stakeholders' in a civil society that is re-packaged to conform to Government policies and agendas (ibid).

New Labour policy explanations for social exclusion remained focused upon deprived neighbourhoods, with poverty and deprivation being perceived as 'complex and multidimensional problems' (DWP 2003:6). 'The Indices of Multiple Deprivation,' created as a means of identifying and measuring the dimensions of the problem. 36 Although encompassing a broad set of indicators was not dissimilar to the positivist approach adopted by the state in the 1960s. Burton and O'Toole 1993 argue that in such a model, those who are included (with jobs and nuclear families) and those who are excluded (single parents and the unemployed and indeed the sick and the homeless) are constructed into two groups that are in binary opposition with each other. Assessing the problems faced by the 'socially excluded' is reduced to a positivistic technical exercise to determine how each multiple of deprivation relates to another. A structural analysis of distinct variances in disadvantage is absent (ibid). This corresponds with critiques of positivistic dichotomising in the social sciences whereby the status quo is maintained by constructing certain groups as 'other' (hooks 1984, Stanley and Wise 1983, Gelsthorpe 1992. Mohanty 1988). Responsibility for decline is placed upon 'communities' with limited power and resources to address external contributory factors (e.g. Atkinson 2003). Positivist approaches to policy making are equated with a model of professionalism that elides structural inequalities, seeking to integrate individuals into the existing social order and reinforcing a sense of naïve consciousness, whereby individuals see themselves in

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36 The indices of deprivation were calculated at ward level to pinpoint deprivation and using the following measures - environment and housing, Overcrowding, Higher than average family size, Persistent unemployment, Children in trouble, Children requiring free school meals and access to services.

their community context as responsible for their own problems (Wootton 1959, in Johnson 2008, Wright Mills 1959, Shaw 2004).

The concept of social inclusion assumes inequalities can be remedied by entry into the labour market whereas a structural analysis would suggest social divisions are politically, economically and socially constructed (Haraway 1995, May 1997, Mohanty 1997, Hoogvelt 2001). 'Social exclusion' was tackled by New Labour through special funds such as Neighbourhood Renewal Fund and New Deal for Communities, initiatives that formed part of broader Government socio-economic policy and 'Welfare to Work' strategies contained in UK National Action Plan on Social Exclusion (DWP 2003). The demise of nuclear family structures and women's 'limited careers or earning power to support children' were attributed as contributory factors to child poverty (DWP 2003:9). Women's marginalisation in the labour market was problematised on the basis of their deviation from the traditional nuclear family, evidencing a lack of structural analysis in New Labour policy making and instead demonstrating the moralistic principles of communitarianism. [37]

'The National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal' highlighted economic 'disadvantage' in relation to 'age, gender, sexuality, religion, disability or race,' but suggests these divisions could be remedied through participation in policy decision-making and better access to services (SEU 2001:118). The persistence of low income and deprivation in particular geographical areas, rather being contextualised within a wider economic and political context was attributed to that old adage, the 'intergenerational transmission of poverty' (DWP 2003:13), thus echoing the social pathological model policy making that had been popular in 1960s.

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[37] Concern with women's poverty related entirely to their caring role (DWP 2003:9-10). New Labour's early Green Paper on welfare reform (1997) was criticised by academics for ignoring other forms of work, 'most notably care work undertaken in the home, still mainly by women' (Hill 1998:27).

Seemingly ignoring a body of critique relating to Charles Murray's notion of the 'underclass,' New Labour policy making embraced similar stereotypical assumptions about 'a section of British society who chose not to work, live a life of crime and produce inadequately socialised and illegitimate children' (Prideaux 2010:293). As a case in point, Charles Murray's preoccupation with single motherhood and marriage is reflected New Labour's traditional notions of gender and the family. 'Bad' mothers and single parents remained to be seen as a contributory factor to poverty and social malaise in relation to the transmission of poverty within the domestic sphere of the family, as did young men in relation to public concerns about crime and urban disorder (Slipman 1999, Lister 1999, Brownhill 2003).

Prideaux argues that a 'tacit acceptance' of the right wing protestation of Murray is 'painfully apparent' in the premise behind New Labour's policies, such as 'New Deal for Lone Parents' (Home Office 1998: in Prideaux 2010:300). From when New Labour came to power in autumn 1997, it could be argued that there was a seamless flow of neo-liberal welfare policy that simply followed the path of the Conservative administration. New Labour implemented a cut proposed by the previous Government to remove special additional social security benefits to lone parents (Hill 1998). This welfare assault was defended by Social Security Secretary Harriet Harman on the basis that the resources were being used more productively by providing assistance for finding work under the initiative, 'New Deal for Lone Parents' (ibid). Yet this paved the way for the Coalition Government in 2010 to make it compulsory for all lone parents on benefit to seek work once their children reached school age (Tickle 2010).[38] Corresponding with their thesis of social inclusion, New Labour seemed to accept the implication that 'being paid to look after other people's children is to be positively encouraged, while staying at home to look after one's own

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[38] New Labour planned to make it compulsory once children reached 7 years old.

is not' (Hill 1998:26-7). As argued by Juliet Mitchell in the 1970s women's entry into the workforce is insufficient to emancipate them since 'gains are compensated by losses elsewhere' (in Ledwith 2009:687).

Communitarianism, with its emphasis upon 'reciprocity and mutuality' and a model of 'community' where once an individual's needs are met, they have 'a responsibility to meet the needs of others through the institutions of civil society', embraces Murray's right wing protestations (Etzioni 1993:143-6, Khane 1996, Ledwith 2005:22). Having been pessimistic about the capacity of Government-engineered programmes designed to alleviate poverty, in the first of his essays on the UK 'underclass,' Murray expressed a belief that the only solution was 'authentic self-Government by local communities' (Green 1999: 20).

> The alternative I advocate is to have the Central Government stop trying to be clever and instead get out of the way, giving poor communities (and affluent communities, too) a massive dose of self-Government, with vastly greater responsibility for the operation of the institutions that affect their lives—including the criminal justice, educational, housing and benefit systems in their localities…
>
> Murray (1990)1999:51-2

In 1990 Murray suggested that decentralisation of control over public systems necessary for 'authentic self-Government' could be achieved without any changes to existing levels of public expenditure. These ideas chime perfectly with the logic behind New Labour's Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy which entailed tackling of social exclusion through mainstream service delivery, at no extra cost to the state and engaging communities in peripheral areas of local decision making around health, crime, employment, housing and education (SEU 2001).

The value base of social welfare in the United States to which Murray's protestations were wedded is said to be derived from Elizabethan Poor Law of 1601 and based upon its central premises of categorising the poor as 'deserving' or 'undeserving' and

divesting responsibility onto the local community to deal with their poor (Jimenez 2009). Deakin argues that neighbourhood autonomy achieved through the imposition of an 'artificial homogeneity of values' amounted to 'barely concealed authoritarianism' (Deakin, 1990, 1999:79). For Deakin, the measures proposed by Murray could lead back to the conditions of The Poor Law (ibid): the welfare of the poor left to the discretion of the community with involvement of the local state as a last resort (ibid). These were predictions that were realised upon the demise of New Labour, as evidenced for example in the growth of foodbanks as a response to austerity and welfare reform under subsequent Coalition (2010-2015) and Conservative Governments (2015-) (Lambie 2011, O'Hara 2014).

Although the language of the Third Way emphasised 'modernising public services', as the focus intensified upon 'procedures, measurements and centrally defined targets,' it is widely argued that New Public Management (NPM) was central to this process (Cutler 2007, Newman 2000, Banks and Orton 2005, Fairbrother et al. 2011:35, Banks 2013:9).

> A commitment to NPM was present from the first Blair administration…This commitment has continued. Tony Blair established a 'Delivery Unit' in the Cabinet Office. The other principal architect of New Labour, Gordon Brown, operated, from the Treasury, a series of Public Sector Agreements (henceforth PSAs) which linked public funding to 'targets for improving services' thus 'shifting the focus decisively from inputs to the outcomes that matter' (Modernising Government, p. 37).

Cutler 2007

NPM emerged in the 1980s aimed at modernising and making the public sector more efficient through techniques associated with private business management (Hood 1991). In the UK, its origins are with the Thatcher Government's promise to reform public services and cut spending following the Labour Government's 'Winter of Discontent' (1978–79) (Hay 1996, Osborne and McLaughlin, 2002). The then NPM programme involved various New Right reforms such as internal markets,

privatisation, systems for consumer feedback and 'a different conception of public accountability' (Clarke et al., 2000) Although there was divergence between the models of NPM adopted by Conservative and New Labour Governments, such as New Labour's discourses of modernisation and improvement; and social inclusion and diversity (although not equality), moral authoritarianism and fiscal control were at the basis of both (Fairbrother et. al. 2011:34).

Much of New Labour's managerialism and fiscal control was associated with their conception of 'best value'. The Local Government Act 1999 (c. 27) placed a formal requirement upon Local Government and other public bodies to deliver efficient, effective and economic services and to ensure that public services were responsive, of high quality and tailored to local need. The 'Duty to Involve' introduced as part of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act, 2007, placed a legal duty on all 'best value authorities' to 'inform, consult and involve local people in decision making to this end.

The 'modernisation' of Local Government was a priority within a broader project of modernising public services (Banks and Orton 2005: 98). Under the auspices of a unified and consistent Third Way approach termed 'joined up Government,' New Labour attempted to deal with problems associated with 'agency specialism and fragmentation' by introducing a 'battery of instruments to ensure accountability and control' (Fairbrother et. al. 2011:34). NPM implies 'low trust in public services and professionals…whose activities needed to be more closely costed' (Hood, 1995: 94, Chadwick and Levitt 1995). It is argued that this leads directly to a technical conceptualisation of the meaning of professionalism, based on an 'ethics of distrust' whereby public sector professionals are required 'to work in within fairly tight guidelines, closely monitored and towards pre-defined goals' set by Government policy (Banks 2004:59-60, Chadwick and Levitt 1995:57). For Banks, the ethical concerns of NPM are about regulating the conduct of professionals and 'service

users,' resulting in what she conceives as an 'ethics boom' by way of developing of 'ethical standards, codes and regulatory systems for controlling and disciplining professionals' (2013:1-3). 'The ethical' here translates into conforming to social norms and regulations. Resistance and radical action can be no longer part of its terms of reference (Banks 2013). This resonates with T. Smith's third cluster of critiques of professionalism around values and social control that individualise problems by denying their 'collective and structural basis' (2008:217). Within such technical and ethical professional frameworks there is no room for the integration of relational and emotional aspects of practice, including the expressions of personal identity necessary for the development of intersubjective relationships needed to ignite 'critical incidents'. Ultimately, New Labour attempted to suppress the expression of identity politics altogether.

Banks and Orton (2005) identify three problematic trends that were central to informing New Labour's modernization process. The first was the 'democratic deficit', or the declining percentage of the population voting at elections. New Labour's methods of addressing the deficit included the creation of cabinet structures in Local Authorities and devolving aspects of planning and decision making to a local level through area committees. The second problematic trend was the 'crisis of implementation', referring to an increasing difficulty in meeting rising demands for high quality and cost-effective services. New Labour's response was programmes based upon consumerist market principles and NPM techniques such as 'best value', performance management and target setting, alongside the widespread use of forums for Local Authorities to consult with local people (Banks and Orton 2005). Shaw identifies a resultant and inherent tension between the 'centralising logic of managerialism and the decentralising strategy of governance' (2004:24 in Banks and Orton 2005). The third problematic trend was an increasing recognition of the complexity of inter-related or 'wicked' social issues such as poverty, social exclusion

and crime. This led to a policy emphasis on partnership working between agencies and sectors at all levels, such as the development of LSPs (Banks and Orton 2005: 99).

LSPs were an amalgamation of two models of democracy; an aggregative model whereby instrumental and financial accountability rested with the Local Authority and a deliberative model, involving the participation of local people via 'Community Empowerment Networks' (CENs). The presence of community representatives within policy-making arenas such as LSPs and the 'constant emergence of prescriptive policy initiatives from Central Government' created a set of new tensions between community development practitioners and Local Authority elected members (Banks and Orton (2005). To add to the tensions, it became practice for CENs to elect their representatives to the LSP (Carrahar et.al. 2008). So, rather than expanding a deliberative model of democracy CENs came to imitate a traditional aggregative model but without the checks and balances. As Berner and Phillips (2005) suggest, this supported a neo-liberal agenda by reinforcing micro structures of power and inequalities within communities. As noted by Ledwith, 'forces of exploitation and discrimination permeate communities and if we overlook this we fail to see the role of community development in the process of change for social justice' (2005:24).

Initially, critical community development practitioners believed that they could inhabit the spaces created through developing community-orientated policy and work interpretively within them, only to find themselves eventually colliding with their problematic trends. As it emerged, channelling democratic engagement through state manufactured forums such as CENs and LSPs resulted in narrowing political participation because it diverted energy towards centralising systems, whilst excluding possibilities for fundamental dissent and disagreement within them. New Labour's apparent lack of trust in critical community development processes may have precisely stemmed from their roots in the personal and identity politics that the

Government was trying to curtail. Attempts to contain the possibilities for divergence and conflict could have been precisely what led to a tightening of systems of management and accountability.

Returning to conceptions of democracy, for Mouffe, a deliberative theory of democracy, although not denying pluralism and the 'necessity to make room for many different conceptions of the good,' affirms the notion of a moral consensus (2000a:2). Although there are variances in the approaches of Rawls and Habermas and their followers, it is argued that both approaches are rooted in the premise of rational consensus and an idea of democratic political decisions being reached 'through a process of deliberation among free and equal citizens' (Mouffe 2000a:1). The model of deliberative democracy adopted by New Labour is based upon the ideal of a rational consensus and equality of power between citizens, which does not reflect the reality of indeterminacy and difference (Mouffe 2000a, Espejo 2011). It also closed down opportunities to imagine and think creatively about the type of political and social order we should strive for (Espejo 2011).

In renouncing the need to seek a pre-determined goal, Espejo conceives 'people as a process' rather than an aggregation and a 'source of democratic legitimacy that moors state institutions and is compatible with surprise and innovation' (2011:3, 13). Her model fosters 'creative freedom' whilst 'recognising the need to search for relatively stable state institutions' (ibid: 13). Corresponding with the thesis of reflexivity, Espejo seemingly recognises that individuals are products of the social world, but corresponding with Hall, one that is structured as a 'series of contradictions and a continuous process of change' (Hall 2003: 37). Espejo's ideal of the democratic state involves some institutional obligations and constraints but it also encompasses a 'fleeting community of hopes, expectations, memories and fraternal feelings and is periodically subject to drastic and unexpected changes' (2011:13). These divergent sets of expectations are related through a process of 'becoming,'

which can be a basis for democratic legitimisation because it is at once flexible and realist and recognises the 'dangers involved in both change and stability' (ibid:13-14). Such ideals and conceptions, resonate with Dewey's notion of 'going beyond the known' and of 'becoming' as it relates to the perpetual and endless reflexive capacities required by critical practice (Butcher 2007b:60 and p72, Banks 2007:134). Espejo's concept of 'people as a process' also complement conceptions of 'communitas' and 'liminoid phenomenon' (experiencing liminality together), particularly their idiosyncratic, experimental, temporal and dynamic characteristics and their inherently democratic nature (Turner 1969, 1974, 2012, Felder 2012, Vonnak 2012, Ward and Wild 1995:118).

Corresponding with Espejo's claims, For Mouffe (2000a, 2000b), deliberative democracy merely replaces instrumental rationality with communicative rationality, whilst precluding the very question of 'what are the conditions of existence of the democratic subject' and the 'crucial role, played by passions and emotions in securing allegiance to democratic values' (2000a:10). Mouffe argues that in a deliberative model the conception of a subject is abstracted from 'social and power relations, language, culture and the whole set of practices that make agency possible' (2000b:95, Volkmer 2014).

> If we accept that relations of power are constitutive of the social, then the main question of democratic politics is not how to eliminate power but how to constitute forms of power that are compatible with democratic values.
>
> Mouffe, 2013:202

Mouffe's conception of agonistic pluralism accepts difference and power inequalities are integral to politics because democracy is essentially an eternal power struggle (Mouffe 1996, 2000a, 2000b, 2013, Jamoul 2006:32). Mouffe's distinction between, 'the political' and 'politics,' speaks to the tension between 'community as policy' and 'community as politics' exemplified by Shaw (Mouffe 2000:15, Shaw 2005:7). For

Mouffe conceives 'the political' as the 'dimension of antagonism inherent in human relationships' and 'politics' as an 'ensemble of practices, discourses and institutions which seek to establish a certain order and organise human co-existence (ibid). The conditions of 'politics' are 'always potentially conflictual' because they are affected by 'the political' (ibid). Within Mouffe's conception of agonistic pluralism, the antagonistic dimension cannot be eliminated, only channelled towards a more adversarial model of democracy whereby, although compromises are possible, 'they should only been seen as temporary respites in an ongoing confrontation' (ibid: 15-16).

New Labour's efforts to broaden participatory democracy, whilst seemingly resistant to opening up critical spaces must have presented the Government with an inherent series of contradictions. In particular, its methods for 'inclusion' and participation excluded those features that would enable such inclusion and participation to be meaningful – particularly opportunities for dissent, critical questioning, and the recognition of different subjectivities and understanding in identities aligned with structures of power and inequality. Thus disenfranchisement mounted in response to policies designed to widen enfranchisement. Yet Espejo's conception of people as a process, and Mouffe's of agonistic pluralism, could have offered alternative models for democratic practice that addressed these inherent tensions and contradictions.

4.3   NEW LABOUR AND THE DISCOURSE OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Despite a growing body of criticism of New Labour's approach, by the mid-2000s the occupation and practice of community development had become less radical because the opportunity to mainstream it as a professional occupation under New Labour had been perceived as 'a moment to be seized' (Banks 2010: 11). However, the model for professional acceptance that emerged was technical and community development practitioners had to be prepared to follow the rules to maintain their position (ibid). Meanwhile it is claimed that growing managerialism in public services

involved efforts to 'displace or subordinate claims of professionalism' among community development practitioners (?) (Clarke et.al. 2000:9 in Banks 2002:39). The power of managerialism in practice was resulting in 'declining professional autonomy' and a threat to core values such as anti-oppressive/ discriminatory practice and the 'diminishing importance of relationships and processes' in the community development field (Banks 2004:43-4). Fremeaux (2005) argues that within this, through the managerial use of National Indicators, 'community' became equated in policy and practice with 'social exclusion' and as such became both the problem and the solution in a process that elided internal and external questions of power and difference.

For Miller and Ahmad, despite it contests and contradictions, the community development field, including academics, policy makers and practitioners, had long held together as an occupation by 'using a common currency of language' (1997:271). However, it is argued that under New Labour, the state became concerned with 'shaping appropriate individual and community conduct, regulation and control' while at the same time hijacking a 'language of resistance' and transforming it into 'an expert discourse and professional vocation' (Raco 2003 and Rose, 1999 in Taylor 2007). The moral responsibility dimensions of communitarianism allowed some conflation with concepts and language that came out of critical community development traditions. Meanings and boundaries of concepts such as 'empowerment' and 'participation' had already been determined by the most powerful partners before community representatives entered the arena of partnership that gave practical expression to the ideals of 'joined up' Government (e.g. Atkinson 2003, Shaw 2004, Ledwith 2005, Taylor 2007). Atkinson (2003) argues that the language imbued in 'partnership' framed how people learned to think and behave in such settings.

Drawing upon Dale Spender's 'Man Made Language' (1990), Butcher (2007a) uses the concept of 'discourse' to explore the relationship between language and power. For Butcher, language works to embrace a model of power that is without coercion but serving to 'constrain how people interpret their experience of the world' (2007: 24).

> Language provides a very powerful tool through which people can make their world comprehensible and meaningful; it provides a means of ordering things and events. But it not only provides constructs and frameworks of meaning, and a syntax and vocabulary through which evaluations and judgements can be made …it also provides a means of communicating with others, and thereby acting on and manipulating their world.
>
> Butcher 2007a:24-5

In New Labour policy rhetoric, radical language was being 'incorporated into communitarianism' not in acceptance of revolutionary ideas but to 'draw it closer to the dominant democratic order' (Ledwith 2005: 23 citing Robson 2000). For Shaw, a 'synthesising' approach incorporated the 'rhetoric of social solidarity' whilst extending neo-liberalism (2011:132).

> Language has been a critical weapon in the modernisation arsenal, and a hybrid discourse has been systematically created to harness progressive social sentiments to aggressive economic objectives as if they were natural allies…
>
> Shaw 2011: 132

Martin argues that capacity building for active citizenship needs to include the 'communal capacity to say no' (1999:20). For Craig, 'cut and thrust with the state' should be a measure of a healthy democracy (in Shaw 2004: 40), For Shaw, people need to learn to engage and 'where necessary to dissent' (2011:128). Yet, the literature identifies 'capacity building' as an approach that served the dominant policy ideals because of power relations and dependency issues upon policy within the community development field (Atkinson 1999, Shaw 2005, Smith 1996, 2006.). Craig

(2004) argues that an emphasis upon technical skills training was at the exclusion of thinking about the theory and politics of community development practice at a micro and macro level (in Shaw 2004:42). A technical approach corresponds with what Schön conceives as a 'positive epistemology of practice,' which he claims is means of interrupting 'reflective action,' excluding service users and maintaining 'professional elitism' (in Burgess and Herrmann 2010:90). This was certainly apparent in the way that LSPs came to be conducted. As noted by Issitt and Spence (2005), in partnership structures, relationships that were once organic become mechanical and formalised. The everyday personal, relational and reflective elements involved in interpreting and re-interpreting the meanings of the 'evidence' to inform local strategy and action and the potential for crossing over professional and hierarchical boundaries in the process are compromised (ibid).

New Labour valued community development for its contribution to 'active citizenship' and the involvement of communities in local governance (CRU 2003). Yet it is widely argued that 'participation' within a New Labour context closed debate and dialogue, in favour of training people for a particular mode of rationality which obscured critical thought, thus protecting an agenda of fiscal control (Atkinson 1999, 2003, Shaw 2004, Ledwith 2005). Atkinson (1999), drawing on the ideas of Foucault, argues that dominant discourses that define the way people learn to think and behave silence the expression of difficult social issues. For Ledwith (2005), different identities and possibilities for legitimate dissent are excluded and silenced, thus further marginalising those who might gain greater power from critical engagement. Shaw describes this as 'Government through communities' as opposed to 'Government by communities,' its purpose being to carry out new individualised welfare and 're-moralising communities' into the logic of Government policy (2005:3). In this managed process of 'corporate consensus' different interests and the possibility of

dissent are ignored and there is a danger that 'communities might be inadvertently participating democratically in their own ultimate marginalisation' (Shaw 2004: 24).

As stated, a communitarian model of civil society is interpreted as nothing more than the expression of coercion and consent expressed by Gramsci's analysis of hegemony (Ledwith 2005: 22). However, the formation of 'new counter hegemony' embodies the possibility of confronting conventions, traditions and world-views associated with the new social order (ibid). Gramsci defines this as 'intellectual and moral reform' (Gramsci, 1971:195).

In parallel with Gramsci's notion of a 'traditional intellectual' and their role in catalysing change, Janet Newman's analysis of the micro politics of modernisation and network governance identifies a new phenomenon of the role 'transformational leader' for senior managers in the public sector (2005:717). As policy outcomes are delivered through collaborative networks,' so identities can transcend professional boundaries and areas of knowledge and expertise become blurred (ibid: 723). For Newman, although policy discourses such as, 'joined up' and 'globalism,' constrain through target driven objectives, they also provide drivers for change extending beyond the New Labour Project. Newman challenges instrumental rationality in governance theory for constructing the agentic practitioner as 'a thin conception' of a person and reducing their identities to the 'internalisation of the structural requirements' (2005:730).

> A conception of the individual as 'subject to pressures to conform to
> rules, norms, rules and expectations implicated in the structural forces
> to which they are subject.
>
> Newman 2005:730

Instead Newman argues that actors are 'discursively placed as agents as well objects of cultural change' and argues that introducing notions of 'new public service leadership' into a Third Way attempts to resolve a neo-liberal agenda of restructuring

(2005:732). She argues that there are possibilities for transforming social fragmentation and inequality and the potential to renegotiate the tensions and fractures at the 'very heart of the New Labour project' (ibid). Newman's belief that spaces on the borderlands of professions are potential sites of resistance and transformation corresponds with Turner's concept of liminality:

> The possibility exists of standing aside, not only from one's own social positions but also from all social positions and of formulating a potentially unlimited series of alternative social arrangements.
>
> Turner (1974: 14) cited in Jackson 1999

In a study of Local Authority community development work, Banks and Orton argue that 'some of the most effective work...happened at the interface between the local and strategic, between the internal and external work' and between the different themes of policy and strategy (2005:109). Banks and Orton claim that although in an 'over-regimented bureaucratic setting,' the community development team were able to hold the ensuing tensions and dilemmas as a 'creative space' that was essential for engaging councillors and local people in a 'living local democracy' and as a source of critical reflexivity of the New Labour project within the Local Authority itself (2005:109-110).

As Mayo argues, people 'can and do find spaces as social actors and make their mark,' nonetheless, they must have a clear theoretical analysis of 'structural constraints and the opportunities within and around this' (in Shaw 2004:42). Although acknowledging that 'social justice' was not part of New Labour's policy lexicon, Newman (2005) suggests that at a local level at least, decisions can be based upon a collective understanding of this concept. However, it is argued that relying upon universal values to make decisions is unrealistic as they are subject to a multitude of competing interpretations and the influence of the most dominant interests (Hoggett et al. 2009, Banks 2009, 2013).

As discussed in chapter 2, Gaventa identifies a continuum of spaces including 'closed spaces,' 'invited spaces' and 'claimed/ creative spaces,' stressing that a dynamic relationship exists between these spaces and that they are constantly opening and closing in response to 'struggles for legitimacy and resistance, co-option and transformation' (2006:27). However, the literature reviewed for this thesis suggests that in a communitarian model, civil society is inhabited by the state, thus narrowing the boundaries between closed and invited spaces. What is more, this erosion of 'created' and 'organic spaces' severely inhibits interpretive and dynamic community development practice along with the potential for resisting dominant social and political orders.

In 2007, in an attempt close down organised single identity groups, a proposal was issued by Hazel Blears, the Secretary of state for Communities and Local Government suggesting that funding (both public and private) be 're-focused specifically towards organisations which complied with the Government's community cohesion agenda' (Bourne 2007, Woods 2009:1). Often with the excuse of 'equality of opportunity', single identity groups faced withdrawal of funding 'unless they could demonstrate that their services reached other groups as well' (Woods 2009:1). There is evidence to show that pre-empting the guidance, the proposal was used to cut Local Authority funding to Southall Black Sisters (SBS) to the detriment of specialist services provided to Black minority ethnic women. However, as a result of a concerted campaign cumulating in legal action, a judge ruled that Ealing Council had breach statutory equality duties, also stating that:

> There is no dichotomy between funding specialist services and cohesion; equality is necessary for cohesion to be achieved.
>
> Lord Justice Moses, Royal Court of Justice (2008:6)

The concluding comments of the Judge also highlight the futility of instrumentalism as it becomes severed from human experience.

> Records contribute to transparency. They serve to demonstrate that a
> genuine assessment has been carried out at a formative stage. ... But
> a record will not aid those authorities guilty of treating advance
> assessment as a mere exercise in the formulaic machinery. The
> process of assessment is not satisfied by ticking boxes. The impact
> assessment must be undertaken as a matter of substance and with
> rigor.

<div align="right">Lord Justice Moses, Royal Court of Justice (2008:6)</div>

Amid strong objection by organisations representing a range of single equality groups, the Government subsequently retreated upon their position, indeed even acknowledging of the importance that these groups played in encouraging 'cohesion' (Woods 2009:2). Nevertheless, New Labour's expansion of resources for community development practice had become wedded to instrumental accountability and Government control (Knight and Robson 2007). It is argued that this severely compromised the capacity of community groups to take independent action, thus jeopardising the ability 'to pursue divergent interests and become actively involved in dissent' (Shaw 2004, 2005, Benson et al. 2007:1).

During New Labour's term of Government, state manufactured community forums narrowed politically engaged activism (Atkinson 2003, Craig 2004, Ledwith 2005, Miller 2004, Mayo 2004 and 2007, Mayo and Robertson 2004, Ledwith 2005, Shaw 2004, Shaw 2005, Taylor 2005, Smith 1996, 2006, Hoggett et.al. 2009). Shaw argues that 'if empowerment means reconciling people to powerlessness then this is an ultimate irony for community development' (2004: 24).

> The point of departure is whether participation offers the opportunity
> for people to learn about political processes and to influence policy, or
> whether is necessarily as means of incorporation or co-option.

<div align="right">Shaw, 2004: 24</div>

There is a body of literature pointing to marginalisation and silencing of women's voices within LSPs (Berry and de Oteyza 2007, SERRIC 2008, Gudnadottir et.al. 2007, Corry and Robson 2010). As noted by Batsleer, 'although experience cannot

speak its self without language, language must be scrutinised for its ability to communicate, express or disguise' everyday lived experience and the things that matter to women 'otherwise there can be no emancipation' (2013:56). McCarl Neilson highlight models of informal women's scholarship and interactions that expose the ways in which male dominance is imbued in everyday conversations exposed and highlighting 'gender differences in social policy formation on the part of state legislators' (McCarl Neilsen 1990:20). This is an approach that was paralleled in a practice based research project named, 'Where are the women in Local Strategic Partnerships?' (Gudnadottir et al 2007). As one research participant put it: 'LSPs focus on business rather than people' (ibid: 15). This woman's brief reflection is a world away from the emancipatory experience of participation reflected in a large scale survey of voluntary organisations conducted not long before New Labour came to power:

> People talked about the way in which participation enabled 'self-discovery, freedom in forging relationships and undertaking tasks, belief in oneself and in one's potential as a human being and an agent, and ability to learn and change both in the context of the organization's objectives and in others.
>
> Elsdon 1995:47 in Jeffs and Smith 2002:31

Positing feminist scholarship as a useful test of the 'abstract' conception of a paradigm shift, McCarl Neilsen argues that the 'irreducible element in all feminist analysis is its focus upon the distinctive experience of women,' placing women at the centre 'as subject matter and creators of knowledge' (ibid: 20). For McCarl Neilsen the resistance to feminist work parallels what Kuhn would have perceived as the 'tendencies of scientists to ignore anomalies and maintain received theories for as long as possible' (ibid: 21). Asking a simple question 'where are the women?' revealed the gendered dimensions involved in implementing Government policy in a local context.

This practice-based research project involved creating methods for collaboration in boundary spaces between organisations for practitioners (including the author of this thesis), to conduct a feminist critique of New Labour policy based upon the experiences of women's participation in these partnerships. As such it was a dynamic blend of participatory research and critical community development practice and local action. However, Issitt and Spence argue that reflective work within scholarship and fieldwork practice had 'become secondary to the pragmatic needs of policy making and marketing' (2005:14). In a critique of the concept of 'evidence based practice' Fox points to a 'consequent authoritarianism' towards evidence that is based in practice (2003:82). As noted by Pitts (2003)

> Reflective practice and research-mindedness within professional work seem destined to remain in the 'borderlands' or 'swampy lowlands', political agendas from above, reaffirm positivist methodologies as a means of measuring service outcomes and ensuring efficiency.
>
> Pitts, 2003, paraphrased by Issitt and Spence 2005: 20

Issitt and Spence call for a practice/research relationship and its outcomes to be enhanced through critical reflection on the dynamics of the personal, professional and political nature of practice both for researchers and 'face-to-face' service providers (2005:1). In a post-structural critique of objectivity and rationality in modernist research, Fox challenges the hierarchy of knowledge between policy makers, academics and practitioners that 'constructs a model of research in opposition to practice' (2003:81). Fox's antidote is three fold: the 'pursuit of knowledge should be a local and contingent process;' 'research should be constitutive of difference' and question the 'legitimation and repression of particular aspects of the world;' and finally 'theory building should be seen as an adjunct to practical activity' (ibid).

4.4 MEASURING THE QUALITY OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PRACTICE

Issitt and Spence (2005), argue that in the community and youth work field, the relationship between academics, policy makers and practitioners is fractured by power and inequality, such that the primary purpose of research and evaluation outcomes has increasingly been shaped to meet policy-makers' requirements.

> The frequent crossing over the borderlands by academic researchers into the world of 'service delivery' to evaluate and develop knowledge appears to promote shared and integrative perspectives, but the symbolic frontiers between knowledge and experience have become more pronounced.
>
> Issitt and Spence 2005:21

According to Banks, accountability to service users is the essence of professional practice, yet in 'new public accountability' the voices and needs of individual service users and communities was lost among demands for increasingly detailed procedures for doing tasks and the setting of predefined targets or outcomes' (Banks 2004:149-151). Managers of 'community practice' were 'often limited in the degree in which they could respond to local needs' as a result of 'having to balance competing and contradictory demands from a range of sources (Banks 2013:106).

For Miller (2004), partnership governance models resulted in a number of challenges for community development practitioners relating to 'accountability and responsibility for public issues being addressed in practice' (in Shaw 2004:41). Miller argues that the priorities of community development practitioners became linked with service related concerns and this diminished their 'overall development role in response to wider issues and concerns' (in Shaw 2004:42). New Labour was not economical with target setting; moreover when it came to prioritising, those targets set by Government took precedence over those identified by communities (Mayo and Robertson 2004). Ledwith argues that replacing critical education concepts such as 'conscientisation' in

professional community development practice with 'sustainability' and 'social inclusion' brought a subtle change of 'prioritising material outputs over critical outcomes' (2005:24). For Mayo (2004), the focus of community practitioners shifted towards 'goals, objectives and meeting measurable targets' and 'accountability upwards' (in Shaw 2004:39).

> The drive to push power down to the people is constantly being frustrated by performance management and audit culture.
>
> Taylor 2004 in Shaw 2004:42

For Banks and Orton (2005) the complexity of the New Labour policy context included deep tensions between the logic of managerialism and the decentralisation strategy of governance and placed increased pressures upon community development practitioners. For Hoggett and Mayo, the tensions surrounded 'a policy emphasis on outputs and activities' and development practitioner's emphasis upon 'relationships, processes and outcomes' (2007:5). They argue that New Labour's emphasis upon things that could be counted and measured, 'fetishised outputs' and left little space for the 'emotional and relational work' which is central to community development practice (ibid). Thus suggesting that those practitioners who had thought they could work within New Labour policy had underestimated the degree of authoritarian control that would be exercised. As it emerged, the emotional and relational elements necessary for mobilising dynamic and energetic community development practice were not recognised in the new model, whilst spaces that practitioners initially hoped they could claim were either inhabited by a technical and rational policy discourse or closed down.

For Banks, the 'sense of self' expressed in social professions was seriously offended by 'new accountability' (2004:167). As the 'frameworks of rules procedures and guidelines get tighter,' the spaces 'between and around institutional roles' for trust to develop between professionals and 'service users' become narrower (p168). In terms

of professional ethics, the 'impartialist voice' became dominant, marking a shift

towards 'prescribed ways of seeing and doing' at the expense of the 'alternative

moral voices of empathy…and care' and 'reflective, creative, committed

professionals' (2004:173-5). Such is the intensity of her concerns about the removal

of personal responsibility, along with moral sensitivity and commitment to challenge

inhumane rules and procedures, Banks draws upon Eichmann's testimony of his role

in the holocaust to illustrate the potential dangers ahead.

> Eichman failed to exercise judgement, because he robbed himself of
> the requisite for doing so, namely his autonomy.
>
> Vetlesen 1994:111, in Banks 2004:177

It was not only in the realm of personal autonomy that practitioners were restrained.

Their methods for development and responsive practice, which had long centred on

processes of reflection associated with evaluation were also co-opted and distorted.

Evaluation is integral to critical community development and is congruent with the

Latin origin of the term as 'to strengthen' or to 'empower' (Smith 1994: 93). Smith

argues that evaluation slipped into an ends rather than a means approach and

thereby the term was 'twisted and distorted' to take on numerical meanings

(1994:84). This is not to reject quantitative methods in evaluation, rather stating that

figures are only a starting point for debate and that 'it is the debate that is important'

(Smith 1994:85). For Issitt and Spence, 'reflection transcends the mechanistic

evaluation of task performance,' widening insights into the dynamics of practice and

its limits and possibilities within different organisational contexts and structures

(2005:23). They argue that in the field of community and youth work, relationships

between academics, policy makers and practitioners is fractured by power and

inequality, such that the primary purpose of research and evaluation outcomes has

increasingly been shaped to meet policy-makers' requirements.

> The frequent crossing over the borderlands by academic researchers into the world of 'service delivery' to evaluate and develop knowledge appears to promote shared and integrative perspectives, but the symbolic frontiers between knowledge and experience have become more pronounced.
>
> Issitt and Spence 2005:21

In 2006 the Government harnessed community development to work towards social inclusion using its common framework of 198 National Indicators (DCLG 2006:5). Influences in the field that were close to New Labour had been advocating instrumental approaches to evaluating community development to meet Government policy ends. Two earlier studies commissioned by New Labour recommended that existing frameworks for evaluating community development should be used to devise local indicators along these lines (CDF 2000, 2001). Channon (2003) acknowledges that the development of such instruments had 'been delayed by the fear of inappropriate or damaging criteria' (2003:7).

Craig, in reviewing ensuing debates, attempts to identify the elements of the evaluation of public services that are most relevant to community development and then suggest a 'framework for moving towards a model of good practice' (2003:1). He advocates an evaluation process that is 'sensitive to the need to demystify and challenge the power of those who hold resources' as well as 'alert to the issues of power within communities' (2003:23 and 25). Craig suggests that as communities tend not to have access to quantitative data sets, qualitative indicators should be identified that are 'positive measures of well-being' rather that the 'traditional negative measures that are often used by policy makers' (2003: 23). Craig is at least attempting to reconcile meaningful evaluation in a model that will simultaneously satisfy communities *and* the instrumental requirements of Government but the approach is still ends-led.

In 2002, Paulo, a National Training Organisation (Life Long Learning UK 2009), revised the National Occupational Standards for community work, first produced in 1995. In the words of the Government's 'Community Development Challenge,' the community development field 'unexpectedly found itself largely in tune with Government thinking' (DCLG 2007:11). The UK Commission for Employment and Skills approved the revised standards.' Banks (2013) notes a trend of professional codes and standards lengthening each time they are revised.[39] The 2009 National Occupational Standards were expanded from 10 pages to 95 pages consisting of twenty-three standards across six key areas. In 2015, they were expanded again to 116 pages (FCDL 2015).

Subsumed within key area six, 'provide Community Development Support to Organisations' is the standard on evaluation, briefly defined as:

> An overall assessment of the achievements, effectiveness and impact of work carried out.
>
> Life Long Learning UK 2009: 19

Seemingly separating evaluation from processes of relentless interpretation situated in everyday relationships and interactions, is the standard that outlines how to construct an evaluation framework for Community Development 'incorporating the main components of inputs, outputs, indicators, measures, and outcomes/impact' (Key area six, point 29, p78). Issitt and Spence argue that separation of evaluation and research from practice in an 'external exercise in support of managerial control' leads to a 'stove-piping' of accountability through separate organizational systems (Issitt and Spence 2005:21). Within such a model the meanings of data and

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[39] UKCES is an executive non-departmental public body of the Department for Business, Innovation & Skills that describes itself as 'a publicly funded, 'industry-led' organisation that offers guidance on skills and employment issues in the UK - https://www.gov.uk/Government/organisations/uk-commission-for-employment-and-skills [accessed 18.10.14]

information can easily interpreted or distorted in relation to the requirements of dominant ideologies and interests.

Issitt and Spence (2005) argue that evaluation in community and youth work has been co-opted for a managerialist and financial agenda involving a 'distribution of power in favour of central organizational and political interests'

> Process-based understanding and questions which might otherwise encourage dialogue amongst practitioners and between practitioners, researchers and policy-makers, have been identified as inefficiencies and problems to be solved. Relationships which were previously implicit and organic have become mechanized, formalized and degraded.

> Issitt and Spence 2005:17

Drawing upon Foucault, for Rose and Miller, whereas, the Government 'establishes the rules, frameworks and 'centres of calculation' necessary to govern 'at a distance;' expertise and knowledge are central to Governmentality 'primarily because knowledge coordinates, and secondly because experts form nodes around which issues and explanations can be organized' (1992 in Lever 2011:87). In parallel with Newman (2005), Gilchrist claims that networks that strengthen formal partnerships by creating spaces for 'dialogue, reflection and building informal relationships' and consist of 'overlapping nodes and links' that 'directly or indirectly connect individuals, organisations and groups (2013:129). Instead, it could be argued that network governance creates precisely the conditions required to co-opt practical and emancipatory constituencies of knowledge, including the unique or tacit knowledge of community development practitioners towards an agenda of that is really about authoritarianism and control.

Foucault argues that power is not an 'attribute' held by a few, but an 'exercise' within which we are engaged (Kendall and Wickham, 1999:50). A challenge is available to all of us is the process of 'problematisation' whereby people can question 'what they

are, what they do, and the world in which they live' (Foucault, in Rabinow, 1997, pxxxvi). Foucault adopts the position of questioner and analyst, believing that progress is found in continual questioning of realities and deliberation of possible alternative truths as part of a continuing pattern of social relations where over time, power is formed, challenged, and restructured (Rabinow, 1984). However, as argued by Smith, community development practitioners need to ask questions about the 'rightness' of actions and these elements are 'not easily contained within dominant and managerial approaches to evaluation' (1994:85). Emirbeyer and Mische insist that action cannot be 'perceived as the pursuit of pre-established ends,' but that ends and means should develop 'conterminously within ever changing contexts' and always be subject to an iterative process of re-evaluation and re-construction (1998: 967-8).

There is an irony for Banks, that the 'ethics boom' emerging from NPM posed a 'serious threat' to professional ethics because it inhibited reflective practice and professional autonomy (2004:149). Even so, she claims that community development practitioners working in a Local Authority, whilst acknowledging the constraints of their position, maintained a 'critical edge' to their practice by becoming cleverer and more strategic about putting their values into practice (Banks 2007:145). Critical education and training, supervision, mentoring, practitioner dialogue and debate, reflective writing, practitioner research, seminars, action learning sets and dynamic and challenging and questioning learning relationships are all identified by Banks as ways of maintaining a critical edge to community practice (ibid). Whilst acknowledging the pressure upon senior managers from performance management and instrumentalism, Banks encourages informal networks of senior people to support critical dialogue and questioning of policy contexts (ibid). However, it emerged that under New Labour these critical and reflective processes became marginalised from the professional domain of management and supervision.

A national survey of community development practitioners in 2002, highlighted the demands of instrumentalism as replacing supervision and a 'paucity' of adequate training and support leading to 'alienation and burn out' (Gaffney 2002:20 in Hoggett et al. 2009:65). A second survey in 2005 highlights the way in which managerial proficiency was increasingly valued (Community Development Exchange 2005). Another study identified 'good formal supervision' to be a rarity across both statutory and voluntary sectors (Hoggett et al. 2009:66). In place of this, development practitioners were paying privately for non-managerial supervision or developing their own systems of support with colleagues or trusted friends because although they had busy professional lives, time and space for reflection was highly valued (ibid:66-67)., Established professional processes of reflective support and supervision were becoming marginalised from professional practice and being instead supplanted within personal arenas and relationship, thus further eradicating the personal self of the practitioner from the professional sphere of management and practice.

In another study, over half of public sector respondents stated that community development practice was not understood within their organisation and over a quarter that their line managers did not have direct experience (Sender et.al. 2010). Almost three quarters of respondents stated that Government agendas were displacing the interests of communities in shaping their practice (ibid). The findings suggesting that practice had diverged from theory, with a shift in focus towards identifying and helping people to 'engage with complex bureaucracies and policy agendas' (Bowles, 2009:3).

Even those aligned with New Labour became sceptical about its chances of success. Blackman identifies that the main problem with NPM was its 'anti-democratic tendencies' which threatened to undermine the improve performance it was seeking to realise (2001: 7). An Audit Commission report (2004), identified a 'Humpty Dumpty effect,' whereby complexity was hampering successful delivery and leading to

departmental fracturing and silos which local leaders had to put back together again. A Government study found that only a third of Local Authorities were actually engaging in participatory strategies, with most favouring a consultative approach (ODPM 2002). A further Audit Commission report (2003) identified that securing commitment from Local Authorities for the new local governance proposals would require 'permeating and penetrating into their very fabric and culture' (in Banks and Orton 2005: 100).

4.4 CONCLUSION

Bypassing its rich and varied traditions, New Labour attempted to create a new professional model of community development work that would contain the inherent volatility of community development practice by inhabiting or co-opting its critical and emancipatory discourse. Because some community development practitioners were won over by the apparent alignment between the aims of New Labour and their own intentions, they tried to work with the new approach. Initially criticism came from the political left but, eventually, even practitioners within liberal traditions were faced with contradictions that undermined core elements of practice that make community development work distinctive from other professions.

Instrumentalism and moral authoritarianism endangered emotional and relation elements that are at the very core of community development practice, whatever tradition it inhabits (Banks 2004, Hoggett and Mayo 2007). In the technical model of community development professionalism that emerged during the period of New Labour administration, accountably upwards to state policy was dominant and the interests of communities were secondary. Hence policy fractured what is a core element of any social/caring profession - the practitioner's primary line accountability to service users (Mayo 2004 in Shaw 2004, Banks 2004, 2010, 2013). Under these conditions the 'ethical self' of the practitioner became formally aligned with conformity

to norms and regulations, thus discarding community development critical concepts such as agency, reflexivity, emancipation, resistance and action (Banks 2013) and ignoring personal ethical values. The imposition of a technical modes of professionalism neuters any meaningful expression of the self and identity of the practitioner, yet this shown to be central to the formation of intersubjective relationship necessary for community development practice (Popple 2000, Shaw 2005, Ledwith 2009, Batsleer 2013).

Community development operates at its best within spaces on the boundaries of communities, organisations, policies and the state. In critical or emancipatory traditions these are conceived as ideological spaces to struggle over interpretations and meanings and containing endless possibilities for expanding democracy (Popple 1995, Miller and Ahmad 1997, Martin 1999, Shaw 2004, Miller 2004 and Taylor 2004 in Shaw 2004, 2005, Ledwith 2005, Ledwith and Springett 2010). It is understandable then, that in the first instance community development practitioners, including those influenced by critical traditions, believed that they could work creatively and interpretively within forums manufactured by New Labour. However, in doing so, they failed to notice the advancing wolf in sheep's clothing, New Labour's agenda of authoritarianism and control that would suffuse these spaces and threaten to erode the very essence of critical and emancipatory practice.

In conditions that transpired as thoroughly hostile towards all but instrumental community development practices, the possibilities of mounting a counter hegemony to expose the social and economic impact of New Labour's social functionalist foundations were seemingly slim. Indeed, by the time a concerted critique of New Labour emerged from literature and theory, even those practitioners influenced by radical traditions may have been so immersed within its discourse that they had become immobilised from critical thought and action

As noted by Issitt and Spence, 'reflection is not a neutral process, but requires awareness of and commitment to anti-oppressive values and actions' (2005: 24). They argue that this requires a commitment towards the following practice principles:

> Democratic engagement and an educational approach to practice which seeks both understanding and change within the social, political and organisational context of practice as well as amongst practitioners and users.
>
> Issitt and Spence 2005: 24-25

Yet these are the very dimensions of practice that were all lacking from New Labour's community development methodology. Just as critical and reflective processes were eradicated from community development practice, so they were from of its management and supervision methods. Whilst submerged by New Labour's instrumental mode of professionalism and accountability, the self and identity of the practitioner became marginalised from public arenas. This must have severely inhibited the potential for invigorating an alternative model of democracy and informing policy through dynamic and reflexive community development practices and held precisely the inherent tensions and contradictions that New Labour were attempting to contain.

5.   COMBINING COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PRACTICE AND RESEARCH METHODS

5.1   INTRODUCTION

This chapter chronicles the empirical research journey. It first discusses the practical, theoretical and philosophical perspectives and traditions that influenced the development of this thesis. Then, revisiting the research intentions set out in the original research proposal (12.12.04), the researcher reflects upon how her intentions altered in relation to her emerging learning and within a volatile and ever changing policy context for community development practice and research. This chapter then discusses the scope and limitations of participation in the research process including issues of ethics and power, how they were addressed by the researcher and sometimes, ways they could have been handled differently. The implications of the researcher's connectedness to the research in relation to the development of the methodology and issues of validity and the salience of the findings outside of the North East are discussed throughout this chapter.

5.2   METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The methodology for this thesis is inseparable from the researcher's overall intention to contribute to the development of theoretical ideas in relation to the dynamism of community development practice. That the boundaries for community development practice are constantly shifting, had corresponding implications for the development of a relevant and sympathetic research methodology. Hence, in addressing her empirical questions, the researcher adopted a holistic approach, mobilising research methods corresponding with critical and interpretive community development practice. Such blending of academic and community development fieldwork perspectives is noted for its

contribution to building 'local knowledge' (Herman 2012:127, also Issitt and

Spence 2005, Sawbridge and Spence 1990, 1991).

The interviews were designed to be mutually reflective and energising at a time when community development practitioners were feeling disempowered by the conditions surrounding their practice (Shaw 2005). The model developed by Joan Tash (1967) for the supervision of youth workers has an integral focus upon 'reflection on practice and engagement with the workers thoughts and feelings' (Smith 2007). Tash's model involved four 'simple' sets of abilities: the supervisor's learning, assessing learning needs, 'conveying acceptance and support' and helping the worker to learn (Tash 1967:84-85, in Smith 2007). As noted by Smith (2007), although appearing straightforward, when combined these abilities reflect a degree of complexity and chime with the experiential learning models developed by Kolb, Dewey and Schön. For Herman, supervisors who blend and extend knowledge and skills about critical inquiry and reflective practice offer a perspective that is empowering their staff (Herman, 2012:119). For Sawbridge and Spence the skills required for academic tutorial, support and supervision of practice and conducting fieldwork research are hard to separate (1990:29).

The methods and analysis employed in thesis are also framed within a cyclic model of reflection established by action research traditions (Zuber-Skerrit eds. 2003). Action research has an explicit emancipatory and democratic agenda, based upon collaborative inquiry and draws upon on many forms of evidence or 'ways of knowing' with an emphasis upon participation and 'democratising the research process' (Denscombe 1998). Action research is noted for its congruence with community development practice (e.g. Sawbridge and Spence 1990, Issitt and Spence 1995). Among minor variations among conceptions of action research, the following captures how it is understood in relation to the methodology for this thesis.

> Action research is a participatory, democratic process concerned with developing practical knowing in the pursuit of worthwhile human purposes, grounded in a participatory worldview… It seeks to bring together action and reflection, theory and practice, in participation with others, in the pursuit of practical solutions to issues of pressing concern to people, and more generally the flourishing of individual persons and their communities.
>
> Reason and Bradbury, 2001:1

According to Carr and Kemmis (1986), three epistemological traditions are evident in action researcher roles: 'technical,' in which an outside expert undertakes the research within a practice setting; 'practical,' in which the researched are encouraged to participate in the research process; and 'emancipatory,' in which the researcher takes on the role of a 'process moderator' assisting participants to undertake the research themselves' (in Fox 2003:89). It is argued that role definitions merely construct the 'researcher' in an oppositional role to the 'practitioner' (Stronach and MacLure 1997 in Fox 2003:88).

Fox argues for 'transgressive action research' which rejects three dualisms: researcher versus researched, research versus experience and theory versus practice,' hence there is an elision of the roles of research and researched (2003:90). Transgressive action research also challenges the dichotomy surrounding the rationality and thus external validity of scientific research and the 'messy, irrational uncertainty of practice' (Fox 2003:85). As such, a transgressive approach is collaborative and is 'implicitly and explicitly engaged' with 'interpersonal power and with wider projects of 'resistance to power and control' (ibid: 89). In Fox's model, action research, like the thesis of reflexivity is an open-endedness process and its 'propositions' must be constantly under review 2003:89). For Fox, the validity of research lies in its 'capacity to transgress, challenge or subvert existing conceptions,' being constitutive of difference, to challenges 'power and constraint' and to encourage 'resistance and new possibilities' (2003:89-90). The limitations and

possibilities for the furtherance of these capacities are explored later in this chapter as they relate to the methods employed.

In situating the methodology for this thesis in relation to wider epistemological traditions in the social sciences, the researcher reviewed literature from hermeneutic sociological perspectives associated with critical theorists such as Dewey, Schütz and Mead and phenomenology and symbolic interactionism in relation to concepts of the self, agency and inter-subjectivity. Dewey's interest was in epistemology although it came to be indicative of his own critical stance to reject the term in preference to the 'theory of inquiry' or 'experimental logic' (Dewey 1938 in Phillips). Dewey's interpretive stance in relation to the concept of epistemology resonates with the thesis of reflexivity. Phenomenological approaches in hermeneutic sociological traditions emphasise inter-subjectivity and people understanding situated experiences by 'telling their own story', 'in their own terms' according to how the 'phenomena' are lived (McCarl Neilson 1990, Lester 1999, Wilson 2002).

Two particular insights from Mead's 'The Philosophy of the Present' (1932) have relevance to key tenets of dynamism, reflexivity and agency as they relate to this thesis. The first is that of 'time' constituted through emergent events, requiring a 'continual refocusing of past and future' (in Emirbeyer and Mische 1998:967). The second is how Mead conceives 'human consciousness' as socially constructed and encompassing the capacity to be both 'temporally and relationally in a variety of systems at once' (ibid). Although for Mead, 'reality exists in the present,' the 'immediacy of present situations is extended by our ability to imaginatively construct a sense of past and future' (1932:1). According to Mead, we 'must continually reconstruct' our view of the past when attempting to understand the 'causal conditioning of the emergent present;' at the same time, 'using this understanding to control and shape our responses in the arising future' (in Emirbeyer and Mische 1998:967). As Emirbeyer and Mische comment, 'actors develop their deliberative

capacities as they confront emergent situations that impact upon each other and pose increasingly complex problems' (1998:968).

Emirbeyer and Mische argue that the 'agentic dimension of social action can only be captured in its full complexity…if it is analytically situated within the flow of time' (1998:962). Their analysis draws upon Mead's theory of temporality and his assertion that although the present implies a past and a future, 'reality is always that of a present' (1929:235 in Maines et. al. 1983:161).

> The past arises through memory and exists in images which form the 'backward limit of the present.' Likewise, the future has a hypothetical existence since it exists in our anticipations…Experience is inherently temporal, and the specious present establishes the extent and span of temporal experience. The act involves a span of time and the process of reflection and self-indication, and thus it is not a mere arrangement of isolated moments.
>
> Maines et. al. 1983:161

Such fluid and dynamic conceptions of self-hood, experience, human agency and indeed our existence, speaks to the challenges and the transgressive potential of combining research, practice and action within volatile and turbulent community development contexts. The thinking of pragmatists such as Mead and Dewey and Schutz crucial as they provide the basis for developing a conception of the 'constitutive creativity of action,' conceived of as 'the permanent reorganization and reconstitution of habits and institutions' (Joas, 1996:24 in Emirbeyer and Mische 1998:968). In this model, action cannot be perceived as the 'pursuit of pre-established ends or abstracted from concrete situations,' but 'ends and means develop conterminously within contexts that are themselves ever changing and thus always subject to re-evaluation and reconstruction on the part of reflective intelligence' (Emirbeyer and Mische 1998:966).

> At every step, actors are conceived of not as atomized individuals, but rather as active respondents within nested and overlapping systems...the construction of temporal perspectives is fundamentally an intersubjective process, constituted by the ability to hold simultaneously to one's own and to another's viewpoint. Actors develop their deliberative capacities as they confront emergent situations that impact upon each other and pose increasingly complex problems, which must be taken up as challenges by the responsive (and communicative) intelligence.
>
> Emirbeyer and Mische 1998:968

In symbolic interactionist perspectives arising from social psychology, such as those associated with Mead (1934) concepts of self-hood, inter-subjectivity, reflexivity and agency are inextricably linked. The mind is perceived as the 'thinking part of the self' and the self as developing out of the mind, in turn the mind develops out of social interaction and meanings and shared meanings about the self are created through the use of language, encapsulating 'meaning in the use of symbols.' (Mead 1934, in Stets and Burke, 2003:4). The self is perceived as 'both individual and social in character' (ibid). Symbolic interactionism perceives humans as continually evolving and formulating, the 'hallmark of this process – of selfhood – is reflexivity' (ibid: 4).

> Humans have the ability to reflect back upon themselves, taking themselves as objects. They are able to regard and evaluate themselves, to take account of themselves and plan accordingly to bring about future states, to be self-aware or to achieve consciousness about their own existence.
>
> Stets and Burke, 2003:4

Phenomenology 'demands that we discover the world as it is experienced by those involved in it' (Lester 1999:1). Phenomenology does not depart entirely from a positivistic methodological position whereby the 'facts of the world' are represent in real objects. For phenomenologists the world is full of 'intersubjectively constructed meanings' and the researcher's position is of a 'disinterested observer' with 'cognitive' (but not practical) interests in the activities of the researched (Schütz 1967

in Wilson 2002:2). Of significance to blending community development practice methods with research is Schutz's claim that as 'scientific' researchers we are 'trying to make sense' of the 'sense making' of our research subjects, in doing so we must 'make use of the same methods of interpretation that the subject does' (1962 in Wilson 2002: 2). Where this thesis departs from phenomenology is its concept 'bracketing off' or researchers suspending their own subjectivity so that they can be objective about the subjectivity of others (in McCarl Neilsen 1990, Wilson 2002:2).

Phenomenology insists upon the objectivity of the researcher, so whilst accepting that meanings are constructed intersubjectively rejects inter-subjectivity as a means of establishing validity. Feminist epistemology, refutes the possibility of 'starting without preconceptions or bias,' emphasising the centrality of 'making clear how interpretations and meanings have been placed on findings' and making the researcher visible in the 'frame' of the research as an interested and subjective actor (Stanley & Wise 1993 in Lester 1999:1). A reflexive analysis of the social identity of the researcher is central to issues of power and difference in feminist research (Anderson 1993). Much has been said in relation to abandoning objectivity in favour of an intersubjective approach (e.g. McCarl Neilson 1990, Oakley 1991, Hall 2003), particularly in relation to research in the social professions (e.g. Sawbridge and Spence 1990, Fox 2003, Issitt and Spence 2005). Even in the physical sciences the superiority of objectivity has been undermined by the revelations from quantum physics that objects can only be defined in relation to other things (McCarl Nielsen 1990:14).[40]

As noted by Blackman, the 'reflexive turn' in qualitative sociology and its consequent challenge to the notion of objectivity has created the space whereby it is now

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[40] This is specifically in relation to the study of sub-atoms ('protons,') they are characterized by their interconnections; not their properties (Capra 1984:80 in McCarl Nielsen 1990:14).

possible to write the researcher into the world they investigate. For Hall, central to the concept of reflexivity is the 'connection between the researched and the researcher' and how one's own experiences shape the interpretation of data (Hall 2003: 37). For Ruby, reflexivity brings dimensions of objectivity and scientific rationality first by making public the subjectivity of the researcher (Ruby 1977 in Hall 2003:31). Correspondingly, Blackman argues that reflexivity in research is about power and risk because the sociologist exposes their origins, biography, locality and 'intellectual bias' (Blackman, 2007:700, drawing up Denzin and Lincoln 1998 and Bourdieu).

What emerges from this epistemological journey is a methodology that draws heavily upon the critical, interpretive and reflexive community development practice methods and informed by methods of enquiry established in action research and feminist epistemology.

5.3   THE ORIGINAL RESEARCH INTENTIONS AND HOW THEY DEVELOPED

This study began with an ambitious proposal to design an emancipatory paradigm for regeneration as it relates to the social and economic policy context of the state. This would involve devising a methodology to validate experience from subaltern or marginalised perspectives based upon critical community development practice principles. 41 These notions emanated from the researcher's practice and her Masters Dissertation, 'Towards a feminist community development strategy for urban regeneration in Britain' (2014). The MA thesis was influenced Hill Collins in 'Black Feminist Thought' (1990, 2000) who argues for a paradigmatic shift to

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41 The term subaltern originates from post-colonial theory, describing the lower classes and the social groups who are at the margins of a society (Gyan 1994, Young 2003).

redefine 'power' and 'empowerment' towards the transformation of 'unjust social institutions' (2000:274).

It was intended that this thesis would develop through three elements. First, a historical and contemporary analysis of regeneration in Britain, situated within a global context and including case studies of transformational practice. Second, a review of alternative research epistemologies developed on the margins of mainstream sociology. Third, an empirical study relating to community development accountability and policy making, triangulated with an analysis of the literature and case studies. In a rejection of scientific positivism (Stanley 1990, Ramazonolgu 1992, Oakley 1981), the methodology for the empirical research would draw upon feminist epistemology, community development practice and participatory action research. As the this thesis developed, rather than rejecting positivism, the researcher came to conceive the thesis of reflexivity as adding validity to positivistic methods through a cyclic and endless process of critical questioning, interpretation and dialogue (Hall 2003, Winter 2003:14, Issitt and Spence 2005).

Congruence with action research principles, the research methods were intended to encourage reflection and also lead to changes the research participants thinking and practices (Sawbridge and Spence 1990, Denscombe 1998). The initial intention was for a sample of 32 regeneration practitioners across England from a range of policy and practice backgrounds, including Government ministers and civil servants (see proposed profile in appendix 2). In an effort to establish external validity, the researcher's original intention was to conduct a comparative study in other areas of England (outside of the North East). This was to involve local, regional and national focus groups for the purpose of seeking validation of the findings from a range of diverging perspectives.

During the process of reviewing the literature, the researcher became less concerned

with the broader urban regeneration context and more focused upon the conditions

for community development practice as it related to state policy. The focus shifted

specifically towards community development practitioners and how they experienced

practice conditions, although the researcher remained interest in those with particular

insights into the national policy context (Research Diary, 22.1.07). The literature

review corroborated the researcher's practice-based insights that under New Labour,

governance structures, language, discourse and practices were having a universal

and often negative impact across the community development field (Atkinson 2003,

Shaw 2004, Ledwith 2005, Gudnadottir et.al. 2007). Elliot maintains that 'close

analysis of narratives produced by a relatively small sample of individuals may

produce evidence that is considered to provide an understanding of the

intersubjective meanings shared by the whole of a community (2005:28). Thus

suggesting that it was possible to establish external validity from a relatively small

sample of self-identified community development practitioners.

> The external validity or generalizability of this evidence will therefore
> depend on a demonstration of how widely those intersubjective
> meanings are shared or in other words what delineates the
> boundaries of the community or culture that is being studied.

Elliot, 2005:28

Although the researcher's connectedness was intensified as a result of the case

study being set in the North East, in reviewing debates surrounding concepts of

subjectivity and objectivity in the social sciences, she came to understand that her

insider perspective could add validity and salience to the findings.

> Our closeness and involvement in the practice was an important
> element of our findings. In fact, we are firmly of the opinion that it was
> important that we were 'inside the situation' not only in terms of our
> connection with community and youth work practice but also because
> we are also women workers.

Sawbridge and Spence (1990: 27)

Feminist epistemology emphasises self-definition, the significance of inter-subjectivity in defining the nature of oppression and the methods by which this should be addressed (Sawbridge and Spence 1991, Stanley 1990, Cook and Funow 1990, McCarl Neilsen 1990, Anderson 1993). As argued by Ramazonolgu, 'feminist methodologies are the outcome of power struggles over what it means to 'know and what counts as valid research' (1992:209) and validation of knowledge requires 'connectedness' and participation in the research process (Hill Collins 1990). For Ruby, a 'disinterested' social science 'has never existed and, for logical reasons, can never exist' (1980:174). She argues that subjective/ objective dichotomising in positivist sciences leads to a dangerous state of 'false consciousness' whereby value premises are 'implicit and vague, leaving the door open to biases' (Myrdal 1969:55 in Ruby 1980:174). Hence, the researcher came to conceive that coupled with embedded reflexivity into the research processes, her connectedness could actually reduce bias in the study.

5.4   PARTICIPATION IN THE STUDY, THE SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

The researcher wanted to ensure that the sample reflected the spectrum of community development perspectives. To avoid her own bias influencing the findings the researcher specifically asked those interested in participating to self-select on the basis of being full-time community development practitioners (see appendix 4). Upon reflection, this selection criteria could have influenced the debate towards equating professionalism with full-time paid practice. However, as it emerged, two research participants worked in an entirely voluntary capacity at the time of the interviews (Interviews 8 and 21), one had only recently started to be paid for their role (Interview 2), another worked part voluntarily and part in a freelance capacity.

The initial approach was to ask a range of infrastructure agencies with an interest in influencing policy from community perspectives to promote the research to their members. The letter outlined that the commitment required from research participants would consist of a face to face semi-structured interview (lasting up to two hours) followed by participation in a focus group discussion located somewhere in the North East (see appendix 6). There had also been an intention to hold a final meeting with research participants and other interested parties to and disseminate and discuss the findings. Although the extended timescale for the study came to rule this out, over the period of the study, the researcher disseminated the findings through various seminars, workshops and conferences (see 5.6.7).

The researcher was committed to ensuring that the sample reflected a range of different community development perspectives and backgrounds. First aiming for a sample of 12 research participants, the initial approach elicited nine firm responses biased towards white females working in the voluntary sector and reflecting the researchers own situated perspective. The researcher then widened her approach to her own immediate practice networks, taking a more informal approach to promoting the study. This elicited more interest, doubling the sample to 24. The profile of the research participants is shown in table 5.1.

Table 5.1 Demographics of research participants

Group/ perspective	No. of research participants	Percentages
Male	12	50%
Female	12	50%
Black	9 (4 female)	38%
White	15 (8 female)	62%
Public	9.5	42%
Voluntary	14.5	58%

The sample of 24 reflected the national distribution of practitioners between the public and voluntary sectors (55%:45% respectively, Gaffney 2002, Glen et.al. 2004), there were equal numbers of males and females and 38% participants with Black perspectives.[42] No specific North East data was available by ethnicity, but in a national study, 83% of respondents were white, 6% were Asian, 5% were of mixed heritage and 3% were Black (Glen et.al 2004). The researcher was aware from her knowledge of the community development field that Black perspectives were underrepresented in the North East. To counter this perceived power imbalance, the researcher set out to ensure the representation of Black perspectives in her sample. This resulted in there being 9 (38%) research participants who expressed Black perspectives (5 men and 4 women).

Although age was not monitored, from the researcher's knowledge and historical accounts in the interviews, the age range spanned from 30 years to 60 years old, with the average being around 45. This also correlates with the national survey where almost two-thirds of respondents were aged between 35 and 54 (Glen et.al 2004). Of those who specified a religion, two stated they were Muslim, two practising Christians and one a Hindu. One stated he was a gay man and another stated she was lesbian. As it emerged, the sample was biased towards the Tyne and Wear sub-region, reflecting the scope of the researcher's practice networks.

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[42] No equality and diversity monitoring of the research participants was conducted, so in terms of the terms 'Black' and white' this amounts to if the researcher knew the research participants to identify themselves as coming from a Black perspective or not, or if this position was stated in the research interview.
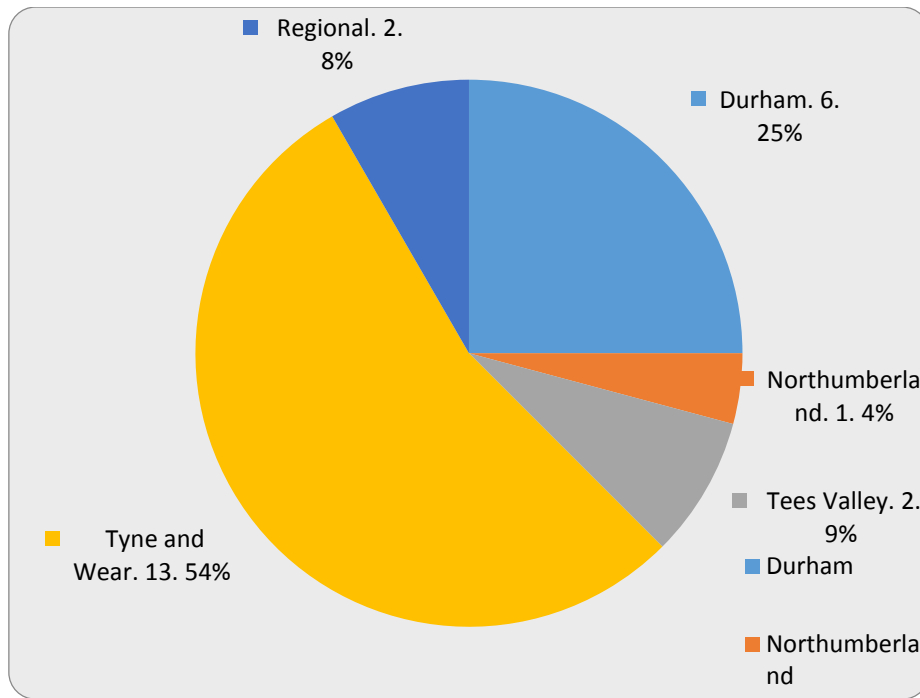
Figure 5.2 geographic location of research participants

Table 5.2 provides a profile of the research participants according to geographical base, sector, sex, perspective and those in managerial and practice-based positions. As it emerged:

–   13 (54%) were practitioners, more than half of these (7) had some management responsibility

–   9 (38%) were predominately managers of community development practitioners

–   2 (8%) were senior managers of community development teams

Table 5.2 Research participants – Location, sector, sex, perspective and employment

Geographical base	Position	Sex	Perspective	Sector
County Durham	Manager	Male	white	Public
County Durham	Senior Manager	Male	Black	Public
County Durham	Senior Manager	Male	white	VCS/ Public
Darlington	Manager	Male	white	VCS
Darlington	Practitioner	Female	Black	Public
Gateshead	Manager	Female	white	Public
Hartlepool	Practitioner	Female	white	VCS
Middlesbrough	Manager	Male	white	Public
Newcastle	Manager	Female	Black	VCS
Newcastle	Manager/ Practitioner	Male	Black	VSC
Newcastle	Practitioner	Female	white	VCS
Newcastle	Practitioner	Male	white	VCS
Newcastle	Practitioner/ manager	Male	white	VCS
Northumberland	Practitioner/ manager	Female	white	VCS
Region- wide post	Manager	Female	white	VSC
Seaham	Practitioner/ manager	Female	white	VCS
South Tyneside	Practitioner	Male	Black	Public
South Tyneside	Practitioner/ manager	Female	Black	VCS
Sunderland	Manager	Female	white	VCS
Sunderland	Manager	Male	Black	VCS
Sunderland	Practitioner	Male	white	Public
Sunderland	Practitioner/ manager	Female	Black	VCS
Sunderland/ Durham	Manager	Female	white	VCS
Tyne and Wear wide	Practitioner	Male	Black	Public

Ten of the original twenty-four (42%) research participants attended the focus groups, four on 15.6.09 (afternoon) and six on 8.7.09 (early evening). Those who attended the afternoon session were all from the statutory sector, three men and one woman, they were all white. In the evening session all of the participants were from the voluntary sector, there were four women (one Black) and two men (both Black). The first focus group was mixed and the second focus group was split into groups of men and women. However, as it emerged the male group contained two Black male participants with a Black facilitator, the one Black woman, decided to share her time between both groups.

To account for the research participants who did not participate in the focus groups, one had left the area, one was on long term sick, one was un-contactable, four gave apologies, five said they would attend but didn't and two did not respond at all. Lower participation in the focus groups than intended may be attributable to a two year time lapse between the interviews and focus group due to the researcher's personal circumstances at the time.

5.5 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The researcher's statement of confidentiality and ethics declared compliance with the ethical systems and procedures of the University of Durham and The Statement of Ethical Practice for the British Sociological Association (BSA, March 2002). Expressions of interest to participate in the research were followed up by letter explaining the interview process (see appendix 5) and the statement of confidentiality and ethics (see appendix 6). Participants were requested to sign to confirm they understood the ethical principles and that they would inform the researcher should they wish to withdraw from participation in the research.

The BSA Statement of Ethical Practice (2002), affirms the anonymity and privacy of the research participants will be protected, a) by maintain confidentiality and b) by ensuring that the evidence gathered, as far as possible will not be attributed to specific individuals and their identity will be disguised. Although care and diligence was taken to comply with this, as noted by Knight, 'it is very easy to identify people inadvertently' (2002:71). The challenges surrounding anonymity intensified as the study became focused upon the community development field in the North East. Many research participants were known to each other, thus more easily identifiable. To account for this, it was made clear to each of the participants that the research findings would be shared in a focus group context.

This study materialised amid a raft of Government policy initiatives that were impacting upon the community development practice conditions more extensively that ever before. The researcher had learned from implementing action research to develop the learning plan that once the findings reach the public domain, they can be used differently from what was intended (Finch 1994). In her approach to this study, the researcher reflected upon the concept of 'phronesis' deriving from Aristotelian ethics in relation to how practice based research findings can be co-opted for different interests. Phronesis is conceived as the skill involved in expressing values into research and practice in a clear and meaningful way (Banks 2007:136, Smith 1994, 2002, Issitt and Spence 2005). Distinguishable from the 'logic or rationality' embodied in technical and instrumental approaches, phronesis involves 'creativity, flexibility and attention to context' (Frank 2004:221 in Banks 2007:143). Smith (1994) uses the concept in relation to 'praxis models' that have an 'explicit commitment to emancipation' (in Banks 2007:143). Given that the researcher intended to disseminate the empirical research findings as they emerged, her learning and reflections upon practice based research resulted in ethical issues for this study to

address. These concerns centred upon sharing the perspectives of those who felt they lacked power and agency, with those with more powerful interests such as policy makers. She believed that highlighting conflicts and disagreements between research participants could be used divisively by those inhabiting dominant perspective. However, as the research focus moved away from policy makers towards the community development field, this became less of an ethical issue; more so, given that as time progressed, the policy context dramatically altered in terms of waning Government interest in community development practices. Hence, this set of ethical considerations became even less of an issue for the researcher.

Another ethical concern at the outset was the researcher sustaining integrity among her peers. As noted by Finch (1994:177) if there is suspicion that the research is only being utilised to further the career of the researcher this could lead to a sense of 'betrayal' from the research participants. The researcher ensured that the core purposes of the study as they relate to contributing to the distinctiveness of community development professional practice were communicated through the critical, interpretive and reflexive methods employed in the empirical research. She also made the emergent findings accessible to the community development field and subject to critical discussion and debate through many presentations, conference discussions and publications. In any event, at time progressed, the political and economic climate resulted in a dearth of career prospects for anyone in the community development field (O'Hara 2014).

Addressing issues of intersectionality and power in relation to the empirical research process entailed ongoing reflexive analysis of the researcher's belief systems and assumptions. This included examining how the researcher related and responded to the narratives of the research participants, according to her own definitions and identifications in her interpretation of the data. Coghlan and Brannick (2005) name

this 'epistemic reflexivity,' that is the 'constant analysis of your lived experience as well as one's own theoretical and methodological presuppositions' (2005: 62).

The methodology for this thesis, although informed by historical and contemporary research traditions, is based upon the researchers own unique view 'of the nature of reality' (Wilson 2002:6). For McCarl Neilsen, prejudices and biases are 'simply conditions whereby we experience something – whereby what we encounter says something to us' (1990:28). The researcher's closeness, identifications and bias were addressed through all of research processes but also through an enduring process of self-examination, introspection and questioning in relation to the evolving findings and the researcher's feeling about them.

> Methodological reflexivity requires the policy-maker, researcher or practitioner to observe and examine her own behaviour within the workplace or research setting as it occurs.
>
> Coghlan and Brannick (2005:6)

Despite attempts to avoid interviewing those with whom the researcher had close connections with in the field, in the processes of achieving a representative sample, a quarter (6) research participants fitted this category. In total seventeen (71%) of the research participants were known to the researcher at the outset and many of these personal and professional relationships have endured, six years on from the empirical research being carried out (Oakley 1981).

The researcher has a mental picture of a spiral, with herself in the middle with those who shared her critical and feminist perspectives being closest to her and those with service delivery approaches, reflecting consensual approaches being the furthest away. The researchers own motivations were shaped by gendered oppression in her personal life and during the research process identified mostly

strongly with the narratives of those who had also inhabited subaltern or marginal positions along he the lines gender, race and class.

The researcher intended the sample to reflect a wide spectrum of community development perspectives. So it was by design that the interview participants self-identified as 'full-time community development practitioners.' In relation to the research intentions, it should not have been a problem that some of the participants did not fit the researcher's conception of a community development practitioner. This being so, in relation to three of the interviews in particular, the researcher found herself thinking 'this is not my idea of a community development practitioner' thus revealing her own biases in relation to the sample. Reflecting upon why this might be so, the researcher first considered whether it was a question of qualifications, i.e. if they were professionally trained in community development.

Of the research participants who did not fit with the researcher's perceptions, one had a nursing/ health management background, one a health and fitness background and the other had a competency based community work qualification and was motivated by self-help. Going back to the researcher's visualisation of a spiral, thinking about the three that she most identified with, only one had a professional qualification in community and youth work. What was common among these three research participants (one was male and two were female) was that their passionately and motivation to address social injustice and inequality was very much influenced by their personal experiences of oppression. What was also significant among these three research participants' narratives, was evidence that their practice entailed processes of 'conscientization' and mutual identifications that attempted to build solidarity in relation to experiences of different forms of oppression.

As discussed, reflexivity is conceived as 'an interactive process that takes into consideration the relationship between self, other and context' and extends the process of reflection through introspection that has 'implicitly personal dimension' (Darling 1998:1, Butcher 2007b). Ruby's examination of reflexivity in relation to other concepts such as 'auto-biography', 'self-consciousness' and 'self-reference' makes the elements of personal introspection explicit (1980:156). Ruby (1977) is drawing up the concept of reflexivity from the perspective of ethnography, a stance implying that researchers must avoid losing their objective perspective. Yet she argues that publicly exposing the self in a reflexive way, means showing how the self is constitutive in the process and the products and knowing this to be 'purposive, intentional and not merely narcissistic or accidentally revealing' (Ruby 1977:4 in Hall 2003:27).

> Only if a producer decides to make his [or her] awareness of self a public matter and conveys that knowledge to his audience is it possible to regard the product as reflexive.
>
> Ruby (1977) in Hall 2003:31

Ruby's emphasis upon reflexive pubic self -exposure captures how the researcher came to conceive reflexivity in relation to her community development practice and the methodology for this thesis. That is to say, how the thesis of reflexivity relates to the centrality of making self-awareness known in the production of research *and* also its significance towards developing intersubjective relationships. As discussed, feminist praxis highlights the centrality of personal experiences and the disclosure of the self in dynamic community development practice, particularly in relation to mobilising critical incidents (Popple 2000:37, Ledwith 2009, Batsleer 2013).

For Banks and Orton (2005:107), values in community development work are 'usually understood as general ethical principles about how the work should be undertaken'. Although there is variation in the 'precise configuration' of these values, they generally include; social justice, equality, participation and empowerment and self-

determination (Banks and Orton 2005:107, CDX undated, Life Long Learning UK 2009, Banks 2013). Given the researcher's intention to integrate her research into the community development field, she attempted to promote its values and ethics as she understood them. As noted by Dominelli, 1996:

> Questions of justice, equality and democracy are transgressive sites for practitioners, users and also for responsible, engaged researchers (Colley, 2003; Edwards, 2002)…Goals enshrined within 'empowerment' and 'anti-oppressive practice' inevitably open possibilities for professional intervention as an agent of political and social change.
>
> In Issitt and Spence 2005:22

Fox (2003:95), takes this proposition a stage further by arguing that in practice based research, 'ethics and politics are integral to the propositions and practices of research in this paradigm, and as such, there should be 'no requirement for an additional section on the ethics of research.' If research is intended to be committed to transgression and difference, mobilised through reflexivity, and collaboration, then it is 'itself ethical and political' and this position 'flows from these propositions, rather than remaining separate and unengaged' (ibid). In parallel, it is argued that, the 'values of practice are displaced by abstract codes of research ethics' such as those outlined by the BSA and although they help to 'protect researcher and the researched,' they do not take the values of practice as a starting point' (Issitt and Spence 2005:21). Concepts and arguments surrounding the displacement of traditional ideas about research ethics correspond with a central claim of this thesis, that reflexivity can be mobilised towards the accountability of community development practice.

5.6   THE METHODS

The remainder of this chapter outlines each of the research methods, including the coding, interpretation and analysis, highlighting methodological problems

encountered and how they were addressed. It also outlines the scope and limitations of the empirical research methods in terms of their emancipatory and transgressive potential and with consideration towards issues such as ethics and bias and the validity and salience of the findings.

5.6.1 Reflective tutorials

Despite its extended timescale, this study benefitted from structured and consistent academic supervision from tutors with fieldwork experience in community and youth work. Corresponding with practice-based support and supervision, the tutorials had dual purposes, monitoring the progress of the study against University guidelines and providing a discipline for learning with a strong 'focus upon reflection' and engagement with the researcher's 'thoughts and feelings' (Tash in Smith 2007). Academic supervision is recognized as particularly useful for exploring how personal perceptions may influence research development (Ely at al. 2001).

The researcher drafted the agenda prior to the tutorial and monitored her own progress through an action plan that she updated for review in each session. The researcher used a research diary to record her reflections before, during and after the tutorials. Tutorials entailed a cyclic process of action and reflection, providing 'more in depth and focused' perceptions as noted by Herman in relation to youth work supervision as (2012:127) and evidenced throughout the research diary, for example:

> I am thinking of community development as a way of producing knowledge (not just a way of working), not in opposition to technical rationality/ positivism but a way of involving divergent perspectives in the process of interpreting and creating meaning.

> Research diary entry, December 2005

Just over a year into her studies, the researcher was working for a private social regeneration company subcontracted by private planning companies to carry out community engagement strategies as part of New Labour's Housing Market Renewal Programme.[43] The practices involved were so far removed from everything the researcher believed to be important about community development work, she communicated through her tutorial that she felt her passion was waning. To help resolve her feelings of despondency, her academic supervisor suggested she start writing about her community development practice. What emerged from this process were two in depth case studies.

> I started linking these to what I had read and it really helped me to objectify my experience and de-personalise some of the conflicts.

> Research diary entry, December 2005

This blending of theory from reviewing community development literature with reflections from the researchers own practice formed the basis of scoping the key questions for this thesis. This approach is congruent with a 'practice based research' perspective, whereby 'a research question would only emerge after a considerable period familiarizing oneself with the local issues' (Fox 2003:90).

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[43] Criticism of Housing Market Renewal Programme was widespread and included: residents of the affected areas, geographers, architects, politicians, and experts in the field of heritage and building protection (Hatherley 2011).

5.6.2   Objectifying questions and structuring the interviews

The interview questions and prompts were designed to encourage research participants to engage in exploratory conversations around the key research themes. The interview was intended at a site for practitioners to reflect upon their practice and to trace historical and contemporary contexts for community development work through their personal biographies. Hence, the questions needed to be open ended and focused in such a way as to elicit how the research participants experienced the terrain within which they were operating and how they dealt with the any tensions and contradictions in practice. Objectifying the questions involved many changes and re-ordering to balance the differing perspectives of the research participants with the information necessary for the line of enquiry. As noted by Fox, to be 'constitutive of difference:'

> The research questions should not have the effect of closing down or limiting the ways in which the subjects of the research will be understood or conceived.

Fox 2003:90

The interview questions encompassed: the research participants' backgrounds motivations and involvement in community development work, their perspectives surrounding its purpose, their practice methods, any issues and problems encountered, opportunities for community development learning, the current structures for practice, policy influences and impacts and any other related issues raised by the participants. The order of the questions and prompts finally used are in appendix 1.

The questions were refined through two pilot interviews, one with a work associate of the researcher in London and one in the North East. In the first pilot, a question on equality and identity was framed as, 'do you think that there are any issues about identity in community development work?' The question came towards the

end of the interview and did not elicit a clear response. Yet earlier in the interview, when asked about their early motivations the research participant had reflected on their childhood influences, linking these to what they now believe to be important about community development practice.

> I suppose with what I have grown up with I feel uncomfortable about doing jobs that are without strong values and opinion if you like...I have learned about where I feel I belong in terms of work that I want to do really and what motivates me is the stuff around community development about people taking power and control of their own lives.
>
> Pilot interview 5.3.07

There is agreement that qualitative interview questions should be framed in 'everyday rather than sociological language' (Elliot 2005:29).

> We are most likely to succeed in eliciting narratives from our research subjects when we ask simple questions that clearly relate to their life experience.
>
> Elliot 2005:29

It is also argued that the best questions invite the research participant to talk about specific times and situations 'rather than asking about their life over a long period of time' (ibid: 30). Subsequently, the questions were redrafted to enquire earlier in the interview about how issues of self and identity relate to their practice, the following prompt included in the first section on 'community development 'motivations.'

> Was there anything about your own personal life that influenced you to get involved?

And then in the section on 'practice methods':

> Does your own background, your sense of who you are and what group you belong to influence your practice in any way?

In the first interview (after the two pilot interviews), when asked 'does the sense of who you are and the group you belong to that influence your practice in any way?' the response suggested the participant identified with those who shared a 'background of adversity and oppression' (Female, Voluntary Sector, Interview 1). However, when asked 'do issues race, gender and class or any other equality issues impact upon your work in any way? the same research participant said they had difficulty working with Black groups. This suggested it was not *all* oppressed groups that they identified with, only those that shared a similar background and identity to themselves. As noted by Batsleer, informal learning in community and youth work is 'about identity, about others and our relationship with them, about our relationships with the wider world and the context of our lives' (2008:5). Given the centrality of questions equality and identity power, these were moved to the beginning of the interview under 'practice methods' with a specific prompt:

Do you find some groups easier to work with than others? Explain?

In the second pilot interview, the researcher left space for the participant to reflect upon her motivations for the first 45 to 60 minutes of the interview. Prompts were only used for encouragement or to seek clarity. Even in semi-structured and in-depth interviews, there is a tendency towards suppressing stories or treating them as 'problematic in the analysis' Mishler (1986) in Elliot 2005:21). Yet, it is claimed that providing space for the research participants to shape the interview process, contributes to validity.

> Participants were encouraged to talk about what they felt was most important and to frame this in whatever ways seemed appropriate to them. This enhanced validity by allowing participants to pattern the timing, sequence and context of topics discussed.
>
> Cox, 2003:260 in Elliot 2005:23

The learning from the pilot interviews led to an inquiring and reflective conversational approach, which centred upon the research participant's biography and narrative (Research diary, 26.4.07). Elliot notes two advantages of narrative and biographical approaches to research. Firstly that 'most people like telling stories' so will provide useful narrative accounts of their experience. Secondly, such an approach addresses the balance of power between researcher and research participant.

> Allowing respondents to provide narrative accounts of their lives and experiences can help to redress some the power differentials inherent in the research enterprise and can also provide good evidence about the everyday lives of the research subjects and the meanings they attach to those experiences.

Elliot 2005:17

The process of constructing data by 'eliciting in-depth individual story-telling' to gather the 'cumulative essence of the experience' is also integral to phenomenological approaches (Campbell 2011). However, as noted by Elliot, narratives themselves 'do not transparently reflect experience,' it is the process of reflection and 'making sense' that makes the process meaningful and the interview 'not just a means for collecting data, but a site for the production of data' (Elliot 2005:24 and 17). Such understanding is paralleled in emancipatory community development practices:

> It is reflection upon experience, the process of making sense of experience, which constitutes the explosive terrain of political change, rather than 'experience' alone

Batsleer (2013:56) on Haraway (1991)

5.6.3   Conducting the interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with twenty-four self-identified community development workers in North East England during 2007. As stated, the interviews were designed upon similar principles as those established for reflective supervision of community and youth work practice (Tash 1967, Herman 2012).

> Basically in consisted of two professional workers who met together, and whose exchanges were about work. Through the exchanges the supervisor helped the worker to learn – to understand himself and his job, to become more competent and to understand how to supervise.

Tash 1967:22

Indeed, three research participants specifically commented that the interviews reflected their ideal model of practice supervision (Interview 12, 17 and 24). The interviews provided research participants with a rare opportunity to reflect upon their practice at a time when appropriate support and supervision of community development practice was in decline (Gaffney 2002:20 in Hoggett et al. 2009:65, Community Development Exchange 2005, Hoggett et al.2009). Although Herman is drawing here upon Schön's concept of reflection upon action in relation to youth work practice, similar suppositions could be made in relation towards transgressive possibilities arising from the research interviews.

> As they reflect on the phenomenon before them, they may choose to think through and carry out an experiment which generates both a new understanding of the phenomenon and a change in the situation (Schön, 1983: 68)

In Herman 2002:119

For Herman, methods that combine the reflection with critical inquiry contain the 'potential for a deeper understanding' of practice issues and the 'promise for new perspectives to emerge' (2012:119). Herman contends that such potential arises

from belief that using the 'tensions and questions' arising from practice in a 'reflective inquiry context' encourages 'supervisors and supervisees' to 'construct joint knowledge about day to day events, norms and practices' (2012:120-21). Hence the similar conjectures can be made in relation to the mutual benefits of field work research. In 'The Active Interview,' Holstein and Gubrium (1995) claim that 'task of making sense is an intrinsic part of the research process' thus the interview is a site for the 'production of knowledge' (in Elliot 2005:24). For Sawbridge and Spence, participatory methods enable *both* the 'interviewer and the interviewee to explore issues and extend their thinking' (1990:29). In relation to the validity arising from connectedness to the research, these claims could be taken further to suggest that as in Lave and Wenger's (1991) concept of 'situatedness' it is the *relationship* between the research and the participants generates learning and meaning through their intersubjective interpretations of the questions and responses.

For Herman, critical reflection allows for 'puzzlement; confusion and uncertainty' to be 'condoned as a means to enhance mutual understanding' and this can 'strengthen the knowledge base, improve practice and broaden the voices that inform policy' (ibid). Endorsing the transgressive potential of the model adopted for the interviews, for Hill (2009), 'a combination of reflection, critical enquiry and action research becomes powerful' (in Herman 2012:120), also captured by Sawbridge and Spence:

> The action component of the interviews whereby people appeared to be using them to reflect and extend their thinking and in some instances to work out strategies for action, clearly indicates a positive use of this method.
>
> 1990: 30

Debate surrounds the optimum length of qualitative research interviews, ranging from 90 minutes up to 'six hours' (Elliot 2005:32). What is agreed is that the timing needs

to be made clear to the research participants at the start, in this instance, the researcher suggested that participants put aside up to two hours. So as to create optimum conditions for a meaningful dialogue, interviews were arranged a location that suited the research participants.

A pattern emerged where research participants would reflect upon their biographies relatively unprompted for around thirty to forty minutes at the start of the interview, with the researcher intervening only for clarification on aspects such as chronology, timescales and geography to gain a better contextual picture. The second part of the interview was more conversational with the researcher asking questions to encourage refection and introspection so as to draw out deeper understanding and meaning. Conversation is recognised as the basis of community work practice and as a 'vehicle of enquiry' that opens up 'new ideas and new ways of understanding the world' (Smith 1994, Batsleer 2008:7). Although for Batsleer, resonating with Schön's (1983) concept reflective practice inquiry as 'artistry:'

> Conversation is a series of exchanges before two or more people over time through which meaning and understanding are deepened. It is an art rather than a science but an art which enables 'going deeper,' a development of knowledge and understanding and a growing encounter with truthfulness.
>
> <div align="right">Batsleer: 2008:7</div>

For Smith, 'every conversation 'opens hope and up room for manoeuvre' and holds the possibility of dialogue to further understanding by 'discovering new understandings and meanings from experience' (1994:59 and p159). A conversational and interpretive approach allowed space for the research participant to locate what the researcher understands as 'tacit' knowledge, which derives from practical experience and is 'incorporated into working practices' (Knight and Robson, 2007:17). For Schön (2000), tacit knowledge is implicit and cannot always be

expressed in words. 'Professional knowing requires practitioners to access their tacit understanding' and through reflection they can 'access hidden knowledge that would otherwise not be available to them' (Schön 1983, 1987 in Issitt and Spence 2005:9).

It is widely recognised that research participants are 'eager to comply with the wishes of the researcher to provide the type of responses that the researcher is looking for' (Elliot 2005:31). The researcher was known to 70% of the research participants and was concerned that they would let this shape their responses. However, this was only clearly detected with one research participant. The researcher also had to be mindful of participants not elaborating on happenings if they knew the researcher had prior knowledge. On one occasion, the researcher intervened thus:

> Can you talk to me, even though I already know how you found your way through…Can you tell me again for the purposes of the tape how you have dealt with it.
>
> Interview 24, 27.8.07

In accordance with what is believed to be 'good practice in all qualitative interviewing', the interviews were recorded using a digital tape recorder (Hermanowicz 2002, in Elliot 2005:33). In this study it meant that the researcher was able to listen attentively and engage with the research participant and probe appropriately. All research participants were provided with an interview transcript.

5.6.4   Coding and analysis

Habermas (1972) and Mezirow (1981) argue that for evaluation and learning to address equality and social justice, technical, practical and emancipatory interests need have equal priority (in Webb 2003). The researcher's analysis of the interview data reflects these three cognitive interests, containing elements of critical

questioning, reflexive interpretation and cognitive reasoning (McCarl Neilen 1990:9). The researcher's overall approach to data analysis also embraces phenomenology, whereby the focus is upon 'understanding experience of the world' and methods are those of philosophy, including, conceptual and linguistic analysis, hermeneutical method and praxis, historical-critical method, literary philosophy and formal logic (Wilson 2002:6). It is argued that 'conceptual analysis,' that is 'breaking down or analysing concepts into their constituent parts in order to gain knowledge or a better understanding' is the 'basis of all coding activities in all methods for analysing qualitative data' (Beaney 2003 in Wilson 2002:6).

Understandably, doubling the sample (from 12 to 24) resulted in twice the volume of data, around 48 hours of recordings. Out of necessity, the transcription of the interview recordings was outsourced and the quality of the transcriptions was poor in places, particularly where English was a second language or the accent working-class. Transcription of narrative interviews is associated with producing 'trustworthy accounts' (Webster and Flanagan 2005:90) and adding to transparency and validity by creating a 'resonating' experience.

> The story sounds true because either it reminds the reader about something that has happened to him/her or it opens a new window to the reader. Sometimes this may generate new understandings…whereby upon reading a story, they gain new understanding of an experience
>
> Webster and Mervota 2007:90

However, outsourcing transcription was a disadvantage because it then took longer for the researcher getting to know the data intuitively. She compensated for this by carrying out a detailed manual analysis of the data, initially designing a colour-coded system based upon the six research sub questions. This involved in depth reading of each transcript and manual colour-coding with highlighter pens,

repeating this process electronically to group the data into sub-themes under each overarching question. Herman is discussing reflective and critical inquiry as it related to an action research approach towards the supervision of youth work, yet the processes are compatible.

> Identifying emerging themes is a way of making sense of the data gathered. 'Looking for themes in written material typically involves pawing through texts and marking them up with different colored pens' (Ryan, 1985:88). Themes emerge as a search for similarities, differences, and repetitions is conducted. The voluminous raw data in field notes can be organized into readable narrative description with major themes, categories and case examples extracted through analysis of the notes. This analysis can be viewed as interviewing the collection of data acquired, and allowing for new perspectives to emerge.
>
> Herman 2012:125

An early draft of the findings highlighted the need for 'more correlations and more precision' in relation to the issues raised in the interviews 'especially numbers of respondents' (tutorial notes 31.1.12). As noted by Elliot, the 'notion of measurement clearly has connotations of quantification and comparison which is rare in qualitative research' (Elliot 2005:22). However, she also notes that in a 'small homogenous sample of individuals living in a specific geographic area,' attention must be paid to the 'stability, trustworthiness and scope' of the findings and the researcher must 'confront the question of whether the accounts produced are 'accurate' or 'valid' representations of reality' (Elliot 2005:22).

The researcher considered using data analysis package such as NVivo to assist to further explore trends and correlations in the data and to better deal with the researcher's bias and closeness to the research. However, according to Tesch (1993) the conventions and procedures in software programmes can also inhibit intuitive analysis in of qualitative data (in Denscombe 1993: 219). After undertaking

initial training and realising that NVivo still relied upon her own knowledge and subjective insights, the researcher continued with manual analysis. Although extremely time consuming, this way of working was closer to reflexivity resulting from the researcher's own encounters and ongoing interpretation of the data.

Using a spreadsheet format facilitated a level of quantitative analysis of the qualitative data and illustrated some emerging patterns and themes. The manual coding and analysis involved setting up an excel spreadsheet identifying each research participant with their job role, sector, sex and if they had a Black perspective. The research then revisited the whole of the interview data, drawing out a number of themes and extracting data from the text into the spreadsheet. This methods corresponds with Wilson's challenge towards the usual separation of quantitative and qualitative methods.

> Qualitative interviews may be analysed to identify underlying concepts
> and the occurrence of these concepts in a succession of interviews
> may be counted and related to, for example, the demographic
> characteristics of the respondent.

2002:7

Lester (1999) claims that it is useful 'to enter the data into a database according to the analysis headings…this also enables data entered under different headings to be juxtaposed and compared' and it 'particularly useful to identify relationships between different themes and factors' (1999:2). Thus themes were drawn from the initial analysis of the data to enable a more detailed analysis of emerging trends. Table 5.3 illustrates the themes and sub-themes applied.

Table 5.3 Themes and sub-themes used to analyse research participants perspectives, influences and experiences

1. Perspectives on community/ community development	2. Influences and motivations	3. Views and responses to Government Policy and its impacts upon CD	4. Management and supervision
a. Notions of community b. Purposes of community development c. View of different perspectives/ imprecision(strength or weakness) d. Role of community development worker e. Accountability in community development	a. Early influence b. Ideological influence c. Motivations d. Emotional relationship to the work e. Prior experiences of CD processes f. Identity/ identifications	a. Position on New Labour policies b. Impact upon relationships / trust c. Impact on self d. Strategies used to address impact of policy upon practice	a. Managerial supervision b. Reflective supervision? c. Is reflective supervision part of paid work role? (Yes/ No)

Examining how research participant were conceiving concepts of 'community' and 'community development' highlighted a pattern reflecting the spectrum of consensual, pluralistic and structural conflict perspectives identified in the literature review and this reflects the quality of the sample. To explore this pattern further, the researcher devised a rating system from zero to two, with zero representing a critical perspective upon 'community' and 'community development', one a pluralistic perspective and two a consensual perspective. [44] She then used these scores as a lens to examine corresponding influences and motivations and then research participant's perspectives upon issues such as volatility and imprecision, practitioner roles,

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[44] The rating scale designed by the researcher was similar to a 'Likert scale' as used to represent people's attitudes.

accountability, views of Government policy, experiences of support and supervision and so forth (see appendix 10).

Reflecting upon the draft findings in a tutorial, the researcher became aware that by categorising the interview data and then 'using this later to associate other responses to these categorisations' the analysis was turning out to be tautological (tutorial notes 9.5.14). To address this analytical problem, the categorized data was put to one side and discussed in the earlier sections of the findings chapters. The interview data was then subject to further analysis and discussion without reference the rating scale assessment.

5.6.5 Focus groups

Knight is entirely dismissive of using focus groups to gather empirical data, although he does acknowledge their use in terms of summarising initial findings to research participants and using the material to stimulate thought and reflection (2002:70). However, for Sawbridge and Spence (1990:30), analysis and dissemination of findings needs to be approached that sustains the 'intent of the research,' the task for the researcher being to maintain the relationship between the information received and the information givers. Corresponding with both of these perspectives, for the purpose of this study focus groups were mobilised to share the initial findings from the interviews and for the researcher, with the research participants to take the interpretation and analysis further (see plan, appendix 7).

The design of the focus groups was modelled upon group work methods used in community and youth work practice. Applying community work methods to the complex task of analysing interview data is encouraged by Sawbridge and Spence:

> The subsequent complexities of analysing the data from interviews is problematic but in our view is worthwhile in terms of overall input into the field. It seems to use that the most valid method available must be one that blends good community and adult education methods rooted in participatory practice. This includes actively seeking to involve people in defining the issues to be researched and extending their knowledge and skills in the process.

<div align="right">1990:30</div>

Group work is recognized as a form of 'working with' and importantly in terms of the research intentions, suggests a social, emotional and moral relationship between the participants (Batsleer 2008, Smith 2008). Working with others is simply 'to engage in a conversation with them' and 'join with them in a search for understanding and possibility' (Smith and Smith 2008: 20). It is also recognised for its potential to widen democratic participation:

> It isn't only that participation in groups and associations is a means of learning about democracy, they are a crucial means of participating in larger political processes.

<div align="right">Jeffs and Smith, 2002:31</div>

Young (2006) argues that 'working with' can also be seen as an exercise in moral philosophy, 'often people seeking to answer in some way deep questions about themselves and the situations they face' (in Smith 2008).

Three focus groups were held for research participants during June and July 2009. These were held at an accessible central location and alternative afternoon or evening sessions offered.[45] The focus groups lasted for two hours, thirty minutes of

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[45] 15.6.09 from 2 – 4 pm and 8.7.09 from 5 – 7 pm in Elvet Riverside 2, Durham University

presentation of the key findings and one and a half hours of facilitated discussion. In the evening session the six participants split into two groups for the discussion.

The focus groups were facilitated by 'independent' facilitators who were known to the researcher and had not participated in the interviews. The researcher's role was to present the findings and to provide clarification and additional information where needed. The researcher did not take notes as the focus groups were recorded on a digital tape recorder and transcribed. This left the researcher free to listen to and absorb most of the discussion and also to make interventions that she felt appropriate. As noted by Smith and Smith, 'to engage with another's thoughts and feelings, and to attend to our own, we have to be in a certain frame of mind. We have to be open to what is being said, to listen for meaning' (2008: 20).

'Powerpoint' was disregarded as a means of presenting the findings as it is a technical tool and not compatible with encouraging participation and group discussion for community development research or practice purposes. [46] Instead, from the initial manual analysis exercise and before electronically coding the data, the researcher illustrated the key themes pictorially with mind maps using flip charts, coloured pens and 'post it notes. Although the researcher adopted these dissemination methods from her youth work practice, a similar process is applied to dealing with large quantities of data generated from phenomenological research.

> The first stage is to read through and get a feel for what is being said,
> identifying key themes and issues in each text. These points - can
> then be aggregated and organised with the aid of a mind-map or set of
> 'post-it' notes.'

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[46]Powerpoint it a software package designed to create electronic presentations consisting of a series of separate pages or slides.

A series of flip charts covering both research questions, six sub-questions and emerging themes formed the researcher's presentation (figures 5.3 and 5.4 show examples of the flipcharts used).
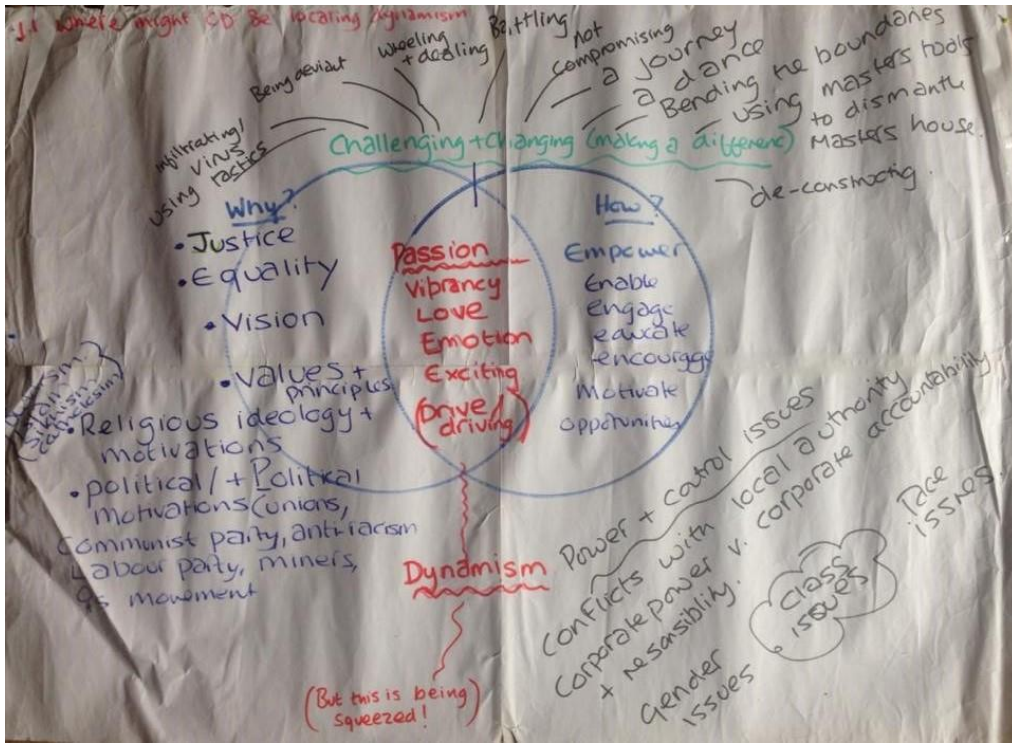
Figure 5.3 Illustration of findings from initial manual analysis (Dynamism)

Figure 5.4 Illustration of initial manual analysis (Accountability)

Creative and visual methods proved to be an effective way of communicating a lot of

information to focus group participants and encouraging them to engage with the

findings. The room was set up informally with chairs in a semi-circle and the flip-charts laid out on the floor so the research participants could view the findings in their entirety as the researcher talked through them and they asked questions. The researcher sat on the floor for much of the presentation, stressing the informality and hoping to dispel any notions of her being a professional expert.

The researcher had briefed the facilitators that it was not necessary for participants to elaborate on their individual roles and perspectives as these had been identified through the interview data. It was more important at this stage that the discussions focus upon how the differences and conflicts can be accommodated. The focus group participants were posed with one key question that was drawn from the initial analysis of the interview transcripts and an interpretive discussion with the academic supervisor in a tutorial (25.5.2009):

Professional & accountable

Passionate & Inspired

'How can we bring passion and inspiration together with professionalism and accountability?'

The focus group facilitators were provided with prompts for discussion surrounding: the possibilities for accommodating, nourishing and sustaining passion in a professional approach; whether a universal approach to community development is possible or desirable; accommodating differences and conflicts within such an approach; and the types of organisational forms and structures and relationships needed with each other, in the field and in communities. In the evaluations of the first focus group (see appendix 8) it was suggested that is should 'be clearer at the

beginning what you want to get out of it'. In the second focus group, the researcher requested that the facilitators to keep more focus upon the key question identified above.

Knight argues that the group dynamics in focus groups mean that 'dominant individuals can obliterate alternative points of view' (2002:70) and the researcher had brought in independent facilitators to counter this effect. The researcher trusted their facilitation skills coupled with their understanding and commitment to issues of power and inequality. One of the facilitators was a white woman and one a Black man. Upon reflection, it would have been more ethical to include a Black woman's perspective in the facilitation. Given what emerged this may have prevented Black women's perspectives being marginalised in the focus groups.

The researchers approach was grounded in her belief that working with separate groups would produce different interpretations on the findings. She understood from her reading of feminist epistemology that mixed groups reflect sectional questions of dominance, whilst groups based on common or shared identities encourage discussion of issues that might otherwise be silenced (e.g. Oakley 1981, Cook and Funow 1990, Stanley 1990, Ramazonolgu 1992). As Batsleer argues, there is no denying that the knowledge and experience arising from subaltern positions has been erased from 'mainstream traditional subject-based formal instruction' (2008:56). Inevitably separate group produce different interpretations, but this was intentional on the part of the researcher as her interest is in locating subaltern and submerged perspectives is a central focus of this thesis.

The first focus group was mixed (male and female) representing entirely white perspectives. It had been planned to split into male and female groups but the group was too small; so this group was facilitated by the white woman with the Black man

acting a 'provocative participant' (i.e. raising stimulating and challenging questions). The second group was larger and mixed in terms of sex and ethnicity. However, the female facilitator was not able to make it so the researcher facilitated an all women group and the male facilitator facilitated a group of Black perspectives. Although one third of the female research participants were Black (4 out of 12), only one Black woman participated in the focus groups. This research participant voiced that she was faced with a dilemma about whether to go with the Black perspectives of the women's perspectives and finally elected to share her time between the Black group and the women's group. Upon reflection, in her effort to follow an egalitarian process, the researcher had isolated the perspective of the one Black woman in the group. In this instance, it might have been better to abandon the quest for subaltern perspectives and work in two small mixed groups. What occurred in the focus group reflected the historical position of Black women. Because of their intersectional position, Black women have been systematically ignored by social justice movements. In an expression of how Black women resists their voices being submerged, it is proclaimed:

> All the women are white, all the blacks are men, but some of us are brave.
>
> Hull et.al. 1993 (book title)

A technological malfunction meant that the recording of the Black focus group was poor in sound quality. The transcription agency attempted to remedy this but parts of the recording were inaudible. The difficulties of getting good focus group recordings for technical and other reasons are documented by Knight (2002:71). As it emerged, brief notes and reflections during and immediately after the focus groups may have better assisted the analysis as the recording had limited use.

5.6.6. Conferences and presentations

To share the emerging findings with a wider North East audience the researcher also presented the interview findings in the same form to a regional CDX conference (on 30.6.09), posing the focus group questions to small groups who fed back on flipcharts at the event. The discussion from the focus groups and the CDX presentation informed the researcher's ongoing interpretation and analysis of the data. McCarl Neilsen, maintain that making findings accessible or public, contributes to the objectivity of the study in a way that is consistent with their interpretation of knowledge production as a 'communal, intersubjective, dialogical examination or observation of facts' and distinguished from 'objectivism' as the assumption of 'a reality that is separate and distant from a subjective knower' (1990:31). Throughout the course of this study the researcher disseminated the findings number or conferences within the community development field, opening them up to discussion and critical debate (as documented in Table 5.4)

Table 5.4 The researcher's record of conferences contributed to as part of Ph.D. study and sharing/ analysis of findings

Opportunity/ context	Presentation/ reflection/ analysis
Durham University's 'Policy, Professions and Communities' Research Group (23rd January)	Presentation – 'Developing effective measures for community development' - Raised thought provoking questions about whether my passion and closeness to the research would create problems for the validity of the findings.
During the course of my studies, I established a relationship with three feminist community development workers in the West Midlands who established **'Changes'**, an independent consultancy specializing in active citizenship, equalities and diversity and community development.	'Changes' usefully provided sponsorship for my Ph.D. for the final year of supervised study. However, of greater value was the time and space provided to share and critically reflect upon my emerging findings in relation to community development theory and practice and current policy.
With my Ph.D. supervisor, I published an article **'The erosion of feminist self and identity in community development theory and practice'** (Robson and Spence 2011) in a special issue of Community Development Journal entitled 'The Politics of Everyday Life: Feminisms and Contemporary Community Development (Emejulu and Bronstein 2011).	Became motivated towards facilitating a wider exploration of the ideas and themes that emerged from the special issues. From the outset, we wanted the events to be women only, our stance being that 'women only spaces provide unique opportunities for women to meet and organise together away from male-female gender dynamics' (Changes and Robson, 2012). Attempts to get financial support for a women only event were unsuccessful, so we decided to go ahead without funding.
'Speakeasy – conversations and reflections about feminist community development and activism. (Durham 26.11.12 and Birmingham 27.11.12) With Changes, we held two 'gatherings' to explore the significance of 'feminism' in community development theory, activism and practice in relation to the current climate.	As facilitators, we provided a short presentation to outline our own journey towards the events and the rest of the time was devoted to small group work and open conversation. As discussed, conversation is integral to the research methods applied to this thesis and was endorsed by one of the research participants. 'Thanks for organising the day - It was good to be in a situation where the main event was conversation.' Changes and Robson, 2012

Opportunity/ context	Presentation/ reflection/ analysis
Until its closure in March 2013, I was an active member of **Community Development Exchange (CDX).**	I presented the emerging funding of my study at a national conference on 3rd November 2009 and also produced three articles for CDX magazine (Robson 2010, 2011, Mills and Robson 2010).
ESRC/Northumbria University/IVR Policy Seminar 'Hearing Uncomfortable Messages: Volunteering as Activism/Dissidence', Tuesday 3rd July 2012	I presented 'The erosion of activism from community development practice.'
'**Practising in a Cold Climate,**' The Social Work Action networks first North East's conference on 17th November 2012.	I presented the emerging findings under the title 'Reclaiming radical community development.'
I am also a member of the **Federation of Community Development Learning**, a UK wide membership networking organisation that support the development, evaluation and dissemination of learning, training and qualification opportunities.	At their national conference in Derbyshire on 22nd November 2012, I presented the emerging findings under the title 'Celebrating and Reclaiming Community Development Learning and Practice'

5.7 THE RESEARCHER'S JOURNEY THROUGH HER THESIS

Table 5.5 The researcher's journey through her thesis

Date	Research activity	Significant learning/ findings
12th Dec 2004	Final research proposal submitted	Setting out to design a new paradigm for regeneration in Britain based upon community development values, principles and processes.
2005	Scoping and structuring of Ph.D., 17,300 words (31.10.2005) First draft Literature review	Exploring the concept of reflexivity helping to frame my thinking about how knowledge is produced and validated in a partnership context and how reflexivity can complement more traditional scientific methods (positivism). Writing the case studies was cathartic in helping to de-personalise and objectify my practical experiences over the last few years and helped me identify the problems I had encountered in my own practice which subsequently formed out the questions for my Ph.D. In tutorial (August) - discussed in depth the theoretical concepts I was exploring in my reading and some phenomena arising from practice. Then further reading from Issitt and Spence and Nick Fox and on the division between research, policy and practice. Exploring concepts of liminality and reflexivity have provided a theoretical framework for some of my practical experience that I consider I can consolidate and develop. Continued reading; mainly around liminality, reflexivity (Schön) and 'The Third Way' (Giddens). Produced a structure for thesis based upon the questions I had scoped out from my practice and from this produced three drafts of an introduction, the outline chapters being based around the questions. Introduction Chapter- main criticisms about making claims before I have validated them and that I am tending to describe rather than engage in analysis that is grounded in my practical experience. To revisit my introduction again when I have completed my literature review.
2006	Literature review Annual review (1.1.2006)	A lot more structure and direction for second year having identified my key and surrounding questions and coming up with a system for the research of the relevant literature and a framework for my writing.

Date	Research activity	Significant learning/ findings
	Annual report (25.8.2005)	Thinking has changed in that originally I considered that a new paradigm for regeneration should reject positivism in favour of more qualitative processes and methods offered by Community Development. View now is that Community Development needs to establish its value in complementing positivism in regeneration and that problem is how to make its processes and methods accountable to a wide range of stakeholders with different interests and agendas.
2007	Durham University's 'Policy, Professions and Communities' Research Group (23rd January) Completed first draft literature review (January) 24 Interviews (April to December) Annual Review (14.6.2007)	Presentation – 'Developing effective measures for community development' - Raised thought provoking questions about whether my passion and closeness to the research would create problems for the validity of the findings. Progress at annual review (June) • Review of the literature researched/ read to date (Jan/ Feb 2007). • Designed and refined the questions for the interviews for my empirical research • Conducted two pilot interviews. • conducted 14 interviews and six left to do • Targeted research participants from areas where there were gaps sample i.e. men in the public sector • On target to have interviews completed by the end of August • Planning to draw out the findings to disseminate for analysis to focus groups in the Autumn Term.
2008	Impact 1968 - (3/4th July) BSA Theory Study Group conference on the events Leave of absence (from Sept) Interview transcriptions (outsourced)	British Sociological Association Theory Study Group conference on the events of May 1968 in collaboration with the Birkbeck Institute of Social Research. The conference sought to provide a forum for reflecting back on the events of that time as well as thinking about their implications for current and future theoretical and political. Several of those delivering papers at the conference were part of my early inspirations when I began to study the sociological theory behind gender, race and class oppression during the early 1990s (e.g. Paul Gilroy, Patricia Hill Collins, Juliette Mitchell, and Lynne Segal). As well as providing me with an opportunity to reflect and focus on my own studies, I left the conference feeling energized, passionate and motivated - all key

Date	Research activity	Significant learning/ findings
		ingredients towards in sustaining my studies during some difficult personal circumstances.
2009	Leave of absence until March Coding of data Initial analysis of data 3 x Focus group (July) CDX conferences, local and national (see table 5.5) 18 month review (November)	Planning for focus groups – key question, 'professional' and 'inspired' – how can we bring these together? (from tutorial 25.5.2009) Outcomes of review 19.11.09 (Methodology Chapter) • Keep golden thread running through and unfolding in writing • Provisional working theory – then revisit • Schon, Freire and Gramsci– go deeper into the theories. • Think about Gramsci in relation to NHS as a socialist structure • Show coherent theoretical concepts to explain what happens. • Linking of research to practice methods. • Justify manual analysis –to stay close to reflexivity, my own encounters – not an object analysis, constant dialogue going on, direct encounters and action • Visit my reactions • Visit all of the interview/ focus group data that is not colour coded
2010	Writing Across Boundaries: Explorations in Representation, Rhetoric and Writing in Qualitative Research (29th/30th March) Writing article for Community Development Journal with academic supervisor Suspension of study	Durham University/ University of Northumbria (held at Grey's College)- Provided an opportunity to explore different analytical and practical approaches to writing and to reflect on the writing process itself as a form of social science thinking. Shared data that I was beginning process and to use this as a basis for discussion and practical exercises. Began to think about the thesis structure as a novel (and later reflected that this was about allowing the narrative and thinking unfold through the thesis) Article published in Community Development Journal 'The erosion of feminist self and identity in community development theory and practice' (Robson and Spence, 2011)

Date	Research activity	Significant learning/ findings
	September to December	
2011	Redrafted literature review Deeper analysis of findings from interviews and reflecting upon findings through tutorials – writing up findings March to July Suspension of study	Literature - Working on setting up tensions and how tensions manifest themselves (in literature). Particularly different interpretations, what is involved in working on the boundaries and margins and why there is tension between policy and communities (when there is no reason for there to be). Professional is generally seen as the obverse of professional. Research findings – working on correlations, precision and patterns, Picking out key themes and using data to bring out the key issues, following up themes that have particular significance in relation to research participants trying to articulate the struggles of everyday practice. Exploring the implications to practice and the implications to policy. Drawing out universal points about policy. Writing/ drafting and redrafting – separating out my own thoughts from the literature and presenting findings in a way that is 'cold' without reference to the literature. Working on being as precise as possible, not over-generalising and grounding in data and literature
2012	3 x conference to disseminate findings (2 national and 1 regional)	Details of outcomes and learning from conferences in Table 5.5 (Chapter 5) Working on precision in language, correlation and cross referencing (not slipping into analysis) – looking at where there are patterns Looking in details at issues of accountability, trust, conflict, identity, policy implications and different interpretations of policy
2013	Findings chapter Suspension of study January to June	Being clear about difference between drawing out findings, making some observations about them (general from the specific) and interpretation. Only offering interpretation when it is a pointer for later discussion.
2014	Suspension of study January to March	Clarifying meaning of what I am doing - experiment in consensus politics

Date	Research activity	Significant learning/ findings
	Writing up thesis Three way meetings 23.10.2014 and 9.5.2014	More work on: New Public Management (key theme in accountability), vocation (no distinction between personal and professional) –e.g. feminism. Division into the models on the spectrum located more firmly in the literature or with reference to models devised by others. Findings to be presented more discursively and analytically. Theory to practice to theory Drawing out - Meaning of findings to policy and practice etc.
2015	February (24.2.14) November (30.11.15)	Ph.D. awarded with major corrections Thesis submitted to Internal Examiner with major corrections

6. THE NATURE OF DYNAMISM AND REFLEXIVITY IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PRACTICE

6.1   INTRODUCTION

Drawing upon the testimonies of 24 practitioners and managers in the North East of England, this chapter attempts to identify the core elements of community development practice whichever tradition it inhabits. It argues that the conflation of the personal and the professional in community development practice is inherent to dynamism and the reflexive use of the self of the practitioner is integral to critical and transformational learning.

The chapter first explores research participants' perspectives on the purposes of community development practice, highlighting any commonalities, anomalies and contestations. It then examines how research participants conveyed their practice principles according to their influences and motivations and in relation to the organisational contexts they were operating in. Here, particular attention is placed upon the quality of the relationship between practitioners and participants within community development processes. The combined evidence presented in this chapter suggests that in order to capture and work creatively and powerfully with the subjective experiences of those participating in community development processes practitioners need to work agentically, dynamically and reflexively within liminal or boundary spaces. It is only from this position that they can hope to achieve the resolution of the tensions and dilemmas involved in being accountable to communities *and* to state policy.

Although this is a largely a qualitative study, the set of data is also amenable to quantitative analysis. A numerical analysis is useful in offering clues to its sense and meaning and has the advantage of minimising researcher bias in its interpretation.

Figures illustrate the patterns, connections and contradictions emerging and begin to

shape a framework for the discussion that follows.

6.2   DISTINGUISHING COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FROM OTHER PROFESSIONS

The literature review identified three competing community development

perspectives, consensual, pluralistic and critical or radical, reflecting a spectrum of

controlling and emancipatory purposes (Rothman 1968, 1974, Miller and Ahmad

1997, Banks 2011, Martin 2003, Popple 1995, 2000, Toomey 2009). As a positive

reflection upon the quality and diversity of the research sample, such a spectrum of

controlling and emancipatory perspectives regarding the purposes of community

development is also evident in the interview data, both in terms of the range of

opinions represented and in terms of the professional awareness of individual

practitioners. For example, although one research participant's perspective on

community development purposes was of people becoming politicised through

community activism, he understood that there was a much broader spectrum of

perspectives than his own critical approach.

> It's like a continuum you know, at one end you've got [name] who
> should be community service; you service the community, which is like
> a consumption model, and then the other end is community action.

<div align="right">White male, voluntary sector (Interview 12:8)</div>

Broadly, the three perspectives are evident in the interview data, correspond with the

consensual, pluralistic and critical traditions identified in the literature. For seven

(29%) research participants, their overall community development approach was

expressed as informal or critical education and as involving a process whereby

people are politicised to take action to bring about social change (Interviews 6, 12,

14, 15, 17, 18 and 23). Eleven (46%) research participants expressed a broader

approach wherein they perceived community development purposes as being about education and empowerment for individuals and communities to take control of their lives, with an emphasis upon confidence building, awareness raising and access to opportunities or resources (Interviews 2, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 13, 20, 21, 22 and 24). Six (25%) research participants perceived the purposes of community development to be around self-improvement and improving public services. This involved the development of practical and technical skills leading, for example, to improved health or better employment prospects (Interviews 1, 3, 7, 11, 16 and 19).

As outlined in Chapter 5, when the researcher noticed that a controlling and emancipatory spectrum was emerging from the interview data, she devised a rating of perspectives based upon her own interpretation of the meaning of the data. Whilst acknowledging that the research participants may not necessarily agree with her assessment, she identified three community development perspectives that are referred throughout this and subsequent chapters as, 'critical/ community action', 'community empowerment' and 'community service.' Although anomalies and transgressions are identified along this spectrum and within these three categories, they are used to illuminate some emerging patterns within the data in parts of the ensuing discussion.

In Figure 6.5, the shading on the cells with the interview numbers indicates the strength of alignment with the categories and shows that, rather than being fixed, a pattern emerged where the perspectives were indeed on a spectrum. The researcher's rating was on a scale from 0 to 2 with increments of 0.5. So zero equates with a critical perspective at the empowerment end of the spectrum (shaded in black here) and the lightest shading denotes a score of two and equates with community service perspectives at the controlling end of the spectrum. Again, the pattern identified by the researcher in the interview data relates to the consensual, pluralistic and critical perspectives identified in the literature. In the analysis that

follows this community action, community empowerment and community service

model will be used to frame much of the discussion.
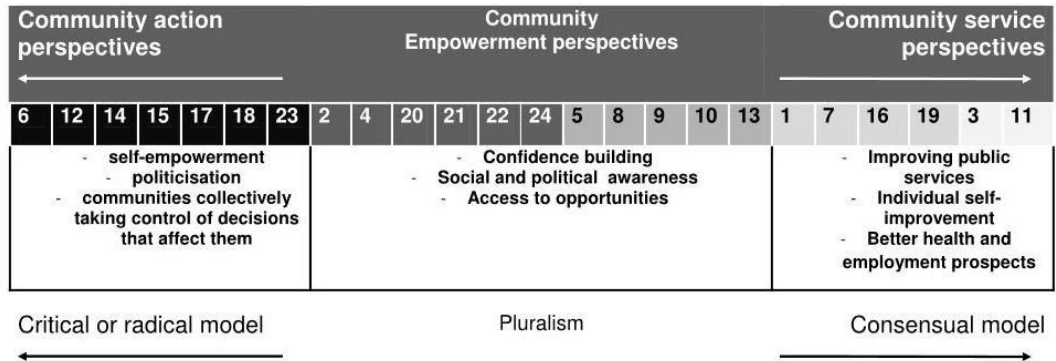
Figure 6.5 Spectrum of perspectives on the purposes of community development of research participants

Figure 6.6 expands upon Figure 6.5, showing different perspectives regarding

community development purposes and overall approaches as they were interpreted

by the researcher. Again the areas of commonality between the categories is

highlighted in text boxes.

Critical/ community action approach
- Being inclusive, involving people, equality and respect
- Helping people to articulate their feelings
- Valuing people – individually and collectively
- Giving people a voice
- Communities participating fully in their agendas and taking action their way
- Politicisation through activism
- Whole education process
- High risk

Community empowerment approach
- Understanding the system
- Educating people
- Raising awareness about social justice and cultural issues
- Subsidiary – decisions taken at the lowest level
- Challenging social injustice, inequalities and institutional barriers
- Self-empowerment and collectivity
- Access to opportunities and resources
- Individuals coming together with their issues and having the ability to take action
- Independent action based upon learning

Encouraging people and communities to have control over their own lives

- Develop individuals' confidence and skills experiences and knowledge
- Bringing out the potential of individuals and groups to live fulfilling lives

Community service approach
- Self-improvement and individual change
- Improving communities and neighbourhoods
- Develop community groups to bring about change
- Empower people to take collective action to improve the quality of life in their community
- Listening to a community turning their views into neighbourhood and service improvements
- Building trust between Local Authorities and the community

Figure 6.6 Research participants' overall approach to community development practice.

As illustrated, developing individuals' confidence and skills and knowledge and increasing their potential to lead fulfilling lives spans those with community empowerment *and* community service approaches. Encouraging people and communities to take control over their own lives was aligned with critical/ community action *and* community empowerment approaches. Wider transformational purposes of collective action for social change is indicative of those with critical/ community action approaches. However, there are anomalies. Thus this research participant's narrative expressed a critical/ community action perspective, despite her overall practice falling into a community empowerment approach, perhaps mirroring the philosophy of her employing organisation.

> It is about change. About changing people's, on a local level about changing people's attitudes and skill level and knowledge and understanding so they can actually take part in decisions about their lives and almost at a national level it is about challenging the attitudes and policies of decision makers to change it so they are more accessible so people can participate and it is about political change, with a big P as well as a small p. So it's changing people's personal politics in order for them to take part in political politics.
>
> White female, voluntary sector (Interview 24:3-4)

The approach adopted by research participants to some extent is reflected the organisational context of their work and/or their organisational role. Thus, of the research participants with community service approaches, four worked in Local Authorities, three in senior management positions (3, 7, 11, 19), the other two in voluntary organisations that were heavily involved in service improvement agendas with public sector funding (1,19). Their approach to community development practice resonated with a 'social planning' model, witnessed in regeneration programmes and public bodies where priorities are focussed upon resource allocation and co-ordination of services, emphasising rational problem solving and technical methods (Rothman 1974). Here one of these research participants outlined the purposes of her community development practice in these terms:

> To help them improve their diets, to perhaps manage or lose weight if that is a problem for a particular group, to help people be more physically active … and to help them manage stress and anxiety. Often it is helping people build skills such like enabling them to return to employment.
>
> White female, statutory sector (Interview 3:2)

Corresponding with the insights in community development literature, the interview data highlights an inherent volatility and lack of precision surrounding community development practice. Half of the research participants (12) identified tensions arising from the imprecision surrounding community development, with ten (42%) saying that they found it difficult to explain its purposes and practices to different stakeholders (Interviews 4, 6, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 20, 22 and 24). This particular group of ten

research participants reflects a broad cross section of the sample in relation to sex, ethnicity, sector and their position and role in the organisation. This suggests that the sense of the imprecision of volatility surrounding community development practice cut across the field. That being so, the narratives of the research participants suggest there were polarised opinions as to whether these unstable practice conditions strengthened or threatened its integrity in relation to other professional areas. This tension reflects debates in the literature, for example Toomey 2009 in contrast with Smith 1994 and Shaw 2005. In the interview data, on the one hand, there were those who interpreted a lack of clarity to threaten the existence of community development as a distinct profession.

> I find it very difficult to get a handle on it – unlike any other profession. I'm a clergyman and you know I can identify all the clergymen. I can tell you how they train, the qualifications they have and I guess anybody who is a doctor or nurse. In community development work is very muddy and we need some clarity and I can imagine it can very easily disappear.
>
> White male, voluntary sector, (Interview 4:19)

On the other hand, there were those who identified volatility and uncertainty as integral to the dynamism of community development practice (e.g. Interview 10:7 and 17:7 above). For one research participant, although a 'plethora of community development type agencies' existed to work with policy makers nationally and regionally, none could describe it in any way that was 'universally understood' (Male, statutory sector, Interview 11:15). Believing that community development practice did not have 'buy in' as a result of this, rather than attempting to 'crack a paragraph or a sentence which explained community development,' instead he explicated by example. This particular narrative suggests that the absence of a stable or clear professional discourse means that the practice can only be effectively understood through action which suggests an open and process-based approach.

When you're a community development worker I will say, 'right well my job is - well, here's an example because I can only really tell you it through example' – and I've done that for 20 years

As highlighted in the literature, in critical community development practice, negotiation and collaboration is considered to be integral to establishing professional relationships and accountability and this includes negotiating practitioner roles with communities (Smith 1997, Schön in Burgess and Herrmann 2010:90). Another research participant understood that practitioners needed to work through community development's purposes and roles in ways that were relevant to interests of different stakeholders. He was also aware of the complexity and uncertainty arising from the different interpretations and interests surrounding community development practice. This research participant's narrative demonstrates self-conscious, professional awareness and that he understood the need to build a relational basis for practice. He seemed to be able to temporarily suspend his own beliefs in order understand the perspectives of others:

You have to alter your face to different people and that is what I am going back to – my belief in the way to do things is to understand the cultures and perspectives of where people come from. Therefore you can communicate to them and if you can't communicate to them then you've lost them in the first place so there is no real universal clarity of what community development is. You can be speaking to somebody else now who might think slightly different.

Figure 6.7 shows research participants' perceptions of the role of a community development worker, again using the three categories identified by the researcher. Resonating with the principal role identified by those with critical/ informal education perspectives in the literature review (e.g. Ledwith 2005, Smith 1995, 2006, Batsleer 2008), the role community development practitioner as an educator is common across the range of community development approaches emerging from the

interview data. However, in the interview data, the centrality of the educator role was strongest among those whose community development perspective was critical/ community action and/or community empowerment. For these research participants, the role entailed facilitating learning and reflective practices while challenging oppression and discrimination. The process of 'conscientization' or consciousness raising as integral to practice was expressed most clearly by those with critical/ community action perspectives. Perceptions of the role of community development worker as an organiser or as inhabiting some kind of 'empowerment' role were particularly evident among those with community empowerment *and* community service perspectives.
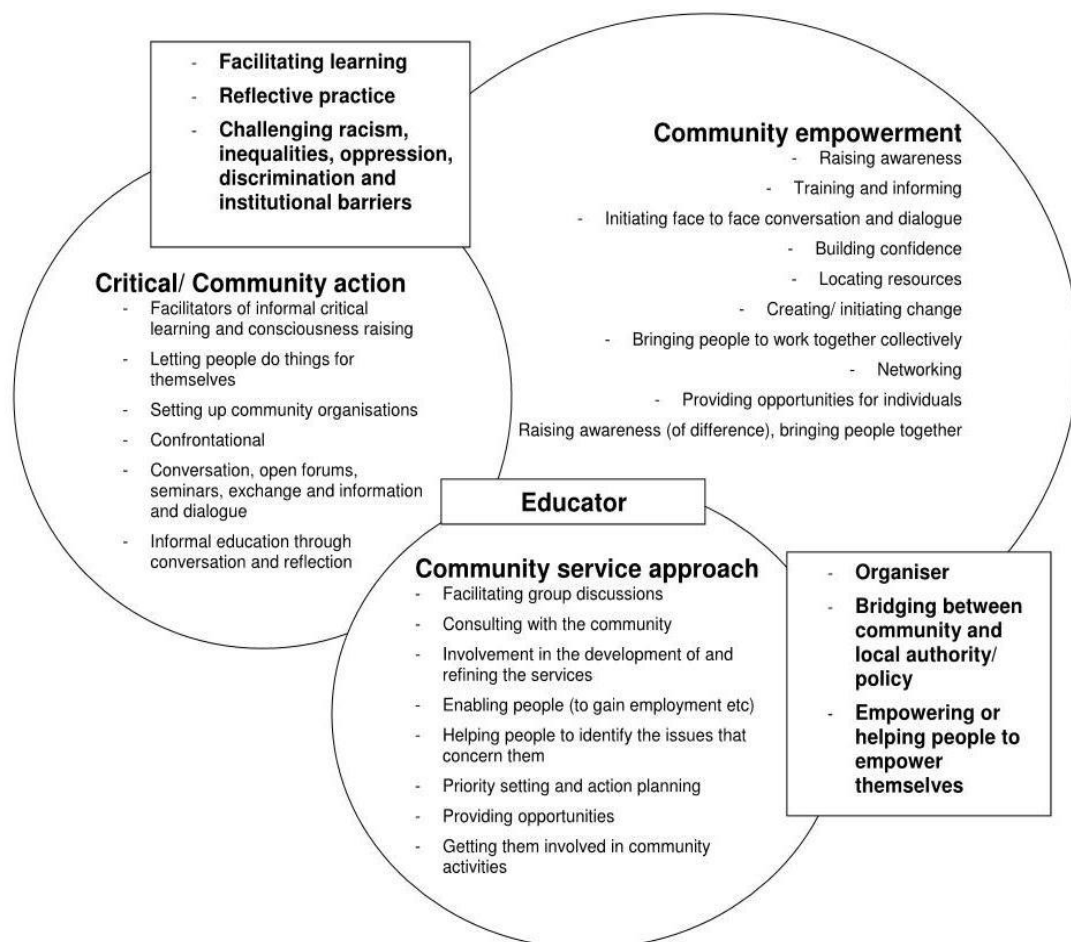
Figure 6.7 Research participants' perceptions of the role of a community development worker

As argued Toomey some community development roles 'serve to empower communities, while others can result in their disempowerment' (2009:181-182). For Toomey, the problematic lies in a lack of agreement about which actions fall within different perceptions and meanings of community development by different stakeholders. Whilst accepting that the overall approach adopted by research participants is subject to the vision of the self-defined practitioner or practising institution' (ibid), the interview data also suggests that community development roles were also determined in relation to the proximity of communities to the sphere of policy making and the practitioner positioning within these dimensions. For example, those with critical/ community action perspectives, particularly those employed in the voluntary sector, the practitioner was perceived to be working *within* boundary spaces between communities and policy makers (Interviews 6, 12, 14, 17 and 23). Their role was perceived as being a facilitator of processes of self-empowerment and community action and a protector of the spaces where independent agency could remain a possibility:

> They need to take empowerment for themselves but there has to be the leeway for people to do that and the freedom for it to look different in different areas. It's about individual people to be able to come together with their issues and being able to take some action around it. They might not want to take action, which is absolutely fine but the fact that there is a possibility to do that, there is an avenue to do that, to me is probably the most important thing.
>
> White female, voluntary sector (Interview 13:3)

Those with perspectives towards the controlling end of the community development spectrum and particularly those employed in public sector organisations, seemed to understand their role as mediating between policy makers and communities (Interviews 1, 3, 11, 16, 19 and 22). In the following narrative, the research participant understood the purpose of community development to be making services more effective and accessible and within this raising awareness of commissioners about social and cultural issues. However, the metaphor of a 'bridge' here does not

give a sense of opening up spaces for interpretation and dialogue between

commissioners and 'the community'. Rather it suggests that the community

development practitioner was the conduit for communication and was crossing

boundaries back and forwards from one domain to the other:

> It's about delivering effective and cultural services to the BME
> community. So I am not a services provider, I am not a commissioner
> also of services. I'm like a bridge. I go to the community to talk to
> them about services available for them, how to access them, and I go
> to professionals to tell them how they can deliver an effective service
> to the BME community culturally so they can take all the context, their
> beliefs, their culture, all their needs.

> Black male, statutory sector, (Interview 22:6)

In contrast, the following research participant worked *within* the boundaries between

communities and policy makers. She understood boundaries as conceptual or

dialogical spaces filled with tensions and conflicts but also possibilities. This narrative

is aligned with conceptions of liminal spaces and notions of 'communitas' or 'liminoid

phenomenon' that are filled with risk of 'chaos and disintegration but are also times of

unparalleled opportunity for creative insight and growth' (Ward and Wild 1998, Turner

1969, Turner 2012, Felder 2012, Vonnak 2012).

> It's not as simple as saying well everything should come from the
> bottom mark. So the created tension where those two worlds meet in
> the middle. Where you have got community X that hates wind farms or
> community Y who is a group of post-natally depressed young women
> type community development happening here; and you have
> 'Surestart' and the policy about that and the policy about energy and
> environment. So somewhere between the two lies something really
> creative, which is full of tension full of conflict but trying to bring those
> two things closer together is really where the contribution that
> community development can make.

> White female, voluntary sector (Interview 10:7)

As argued by Shaw, policy initiatives *can* provide opportunities for critical

engagement, but this relies upon practitioners acting as 'agents' rather than

'instruments of policy' and treating community development participants 'as active

political and social subjects' rather than 'passive objects of policy' (2005:4-6). The above narrative suggests that the research participant understood that these tensions were central to her community development practice, along with the need for created liminal spaces to deal creatively with the tensions. Liminality is conceived as times when individuals, institutions or even whole societies are 'betwixt and between' (Ward and Wild 1998). The following research participant also understood these tensions, but when the more dominant partner failed to enter the boundary space that he had created with the community, he adopted the role of a 'messenger' which is similar to the 'bridge' analogy above (Interview 22:6). Inadvertently, he too became the conduit for communication and crossing boundaries from one domain to the other and subsequently blamed himself for allowing this to happen:

> I think some of the difficulty started because I was looked at as a person who would do the outreach on behalf of the exhibition team whereas that wasn't the role I was asked to perform. I was only asked to perform a supporting role, where I am working with a community group, working with the exhibition team, bringing them together which I tried but people from the exhibition team weren't available for one reason or another to attend the meetings of the group. So to an extent I became a messenger which I should have avoided. I think perhaps that was one of my mistakes, I should not have become a messenger and I am sure I made it very clear from the outset that I am only in a facilitator's position
>
> Black male, statutory sector, (Interview 20:14)

The interview data suggests that the emancipatory or controlling potential of community development roles was dependent upon the juxtaposition between the practitioner, communities and policy makers. This positioning was turn is influenced by the organisational context that the practitioner was operating in. Seemingly, the most dynamic combination was where community development practitioners were in a facilitatory role whilst creating and protecting boundary spaces where tensions and conflicts but also subjective interpretation, creativity and agency could be played out. In the absence of boundary spaces and where the research practitioner took on the role of mediator of differing and competing interests between communities and policy

makers, the implication is that this did not alter the balance of power. This interview data suggests that conditions in the voluntary sector were more conducive to dynamic and agentic community development practice.

As discussed, the term 'community' is itself highly contested and used for conflicting ideological processes (Martin 2003, Mayo in Shaw 2004). In the initial analysis of the interview data, a pattern also emerged whereby research participants' conceptions of 'community' correlated with their perspective on the purposes of community development. As illustrated in Figure 6.7, those research participants who expressed critical/ community action perspectives and those expressing community empowerment perspectives tended to conceive communities as sites of conflict, inequality and marginalisation. The sense of communities being in conflict with power and authority was stronger from those with critical/ community action perspectives, whereas, those with community empowerment perspectives tended to focus more upon aspects of difference and diversity. Common among those with community empowerment perspectives and those with community service perspectives were notions of communities of geography, interest and identity. Those with perspectives towards the controlling end of the community development spectrum tended to conceive communities as generic or geographical neighbourhoods and adopted a 'whole community' approach (Interviews 3, 11 and 16). The relationships emerging from the interview data are illustrated in figure 6.8. The research participants' perspectives are organised under the three overarching categories with the areas of commonality between the categories highlighted in text boxes.
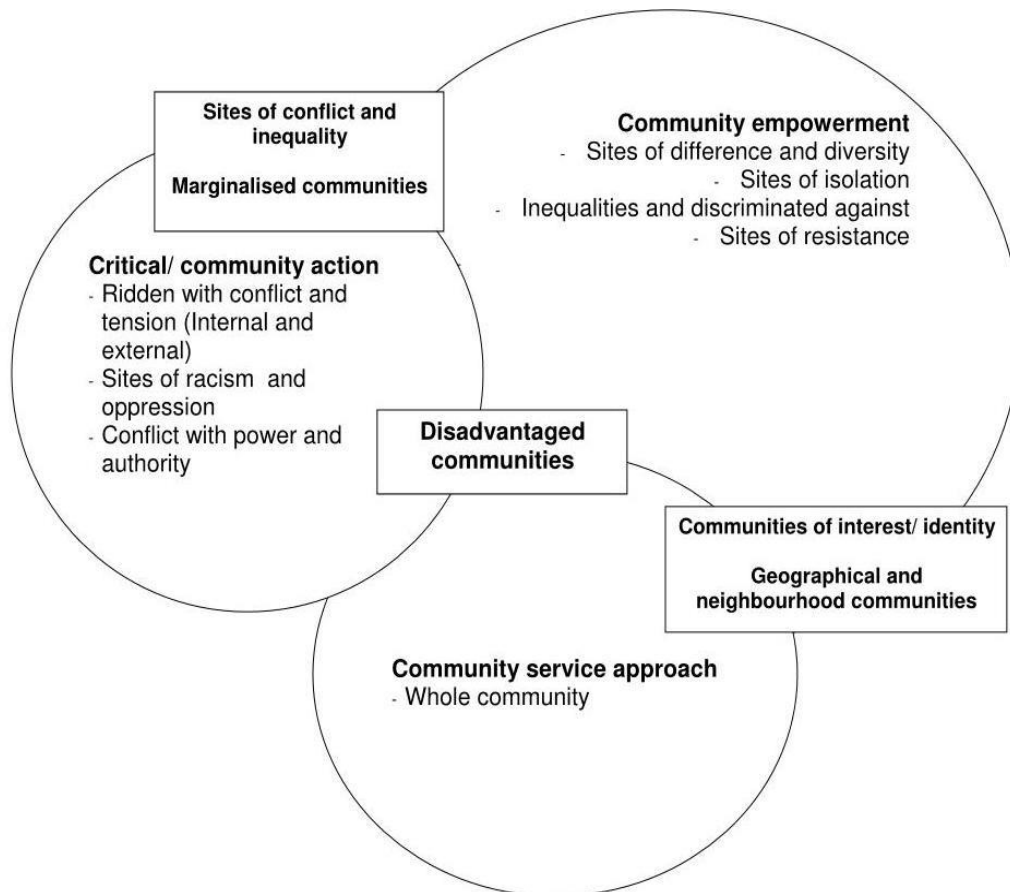
Figure 6.8 Research participants' notions of 'community/ communities'

As illustrated in Figure 6.8, across the whole spectrum of research participants' perspectives were conceptions of communities as disadvantaged (Interview 1, 2, 4, 7, 11, 15 and 24). A common notion of disadvantaged communities may have made community development practitioner more amenable to adopting the notion of social exclusion as an explanation for disadvantage. It has been argued that New Labour discourse conflated 'community' with 'social exclusion' to such a point that it elided questions about the relationship between power and inequality at macro and micro levels (Fremeaux 2005). Drawing upon Dewey, who argued that 'society is strong, forceful, stable only when all its members can function to the limit of their capacity' (1920: 208), for Jeffs and Smith targeting any one group for developmental or educational intervention is problematic (2002:19-20). Accordingly, Berner and Phillips

argue that 'strengthening the power of the poor' requires cooperation with wealthy 'allies' and confrontation with wealthy 'opponents' (2005: 27).   In particular, Jeffs and Smith argue that targeting the 'underclass' and the excluded fuels social stigma and prejudices, linking this to the rise of the fascism and the far right in some of the most prosperous corners of Europe, including middle-class communities in the UK (ibid). Their rationale is that such an approach 'fuels resentment amongst those denied the service' and 'stigmatises those who receive it,' thus and confirming the 'prejudices they already hold' concerning certain groups of minds the majority (ibid). For Jeffs and Smith, the answer lies in rediscovering 'the 'club-like' qualities of spontaneous groups' and the potential of 'organizing around enthusiasms' especially 'enhancing of mutual aid in leisure; and working to open up associational spaces' (2002:20). The example from the interview data that follows, exemplifies all of these elements and is of particular interest because the work was funded by a programme specifically targeted towards putting a share of resources into communities that looked, from the statistics, as if they were 'quite middle-class' and 'did not need a lot of input' so they had missed out on other funds (Interview 7:5).

This research participant's community development practice was constrained by complex layers of accountability arising from partnership funding arrangements and her secondment to a voluntary organisation by her Local Authority. Where she felt best able to express her practice principles was in work that tackled social isolation from an early age. To ensure that she was able to pursue this practice, she had it agreed that one of her targets should be a cultural event, even though this was not something that was identified in community consultations prior to the local partnerships being established (the main priority identified by the community was a park warden). Although community partnership members were well trained, capable and intelligent, the research participant found them 'very discriminating people' particularly towards those from minority ethnic backgrounds and young people

(Interview 7:14). In congruence with the potential of 'organizing around enthusiasms' (Jeff and Smith 2002:20), the research participant built upon the young people's common love of football and organised a multicultural tournament. Even though the community partnership refused to be part of it, the event was a huge success and marked the beginnings of building association, mutuality and understanding within the community.

> We have over 140 children coming every Sunday and the parents are forming relationships, the parents play football on the side with each other. We have a Polish family coming to this country, they couldn't speak a word of English they were homeless and after five days they were on the football pitch and the children were playing football and the Polish people made contact with other Polish people to get them settled within this country. Families bring their younger children around who are not allowed to play because they don't reach the age group but there is a little playground around and the younger children play together, so they mix up as well and the parents start bringing food and coffee and things like that...We have children who are overweight and they are coming on the team because it was about fun and not being about a Rooney or a Beckham, it was about building their confidence and making them feel part of something. Now it works so much so that we now have opened it up for the girls too. And instead of having four countries we have eight different countries that the children represent, we have Africans as well as Asian children, Bangladeshi, Hindi, Spanish, Chinese, we have the obvious English ones with Scottish involved, we have Irish children, we have Mauritian children. So it is wonderful, I love it.

> Black woman, statutory sector (Interview 7:12)

A non-targeted approach as advocated by Jeffs and Smith (2002) should not preclude working with single identity groups as it was proposed in relation to New Labour's 'community cohesion' agenda (Bourne 2007, Woods 2009:1). Community development practice requires understanding of the intersections of inequality at a micro level within communities (Shaw 2005, Berner and Phillips, 2005). A critical community development approach involves an analysis of how structures power and inequality reach into local communities, personal interactions and the very being of individuals (Ledwith 2007). However, such understanding in the theory of community

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development work does not necessarily translate easily into practice realities. Indeed, in some research participant's narratives particularly those at the controlling end of the community development spectrum, such an understanding lacking was lacking (Interviews 3, 11 and 16). For those employed by Local Authorities, with: a remit to directly translate Government policy into practice; a strong hierarchical line management; and an explicit line of accountability that prioritised the line management system, were most likely to lack a nuanced understanding of the complexities of inequality in order to develop their argument about the significance of informal education. The following research participant was a Local Authority manager of a community development team with long experience of community development practice, yet it seems he lacked insights into how power operates at macro and micro levels. After stating that the Local Authority leaves the 'equality agenda' to voluntary organisations (p17), he suggested that equalities were not an issue for geographical communities either. Unlike the previous research participant he does not seem to understand that the Local Authority agenda could well be masking vested interests and power inequalities within the communities.

> We're not specifically doing work on women, we're not specifically doing work on disabilities …as a team I don't think we particularly do that work. We're tending to do more generic neighbourhood, geographical based, local people coming together to address whatever issues they want to do and in a lot of cases it tends to be environmental issues that they want to address, so I wouldn't say we're particularly coming across equality as an agenda to address.
>
> White male, statutory sector (Interview 16:17-18)

In this particular Local Authority, the 'community development officers,' in addition to their 'normal community development service support,' were each responsible for an area committee (Interview 16:7). There were six council committees which met every six weeks to look at 'green and safe issues' (ibid). This is a reference to New Labour's commitment to action to 'make public spaces cleaner, safer, greener places,' along with guidance informing Local Authorities how to do this (DLCG

2006c). So a different interpretation is that the reason equality issues were not being raised by the community with community development practitioners is because the Government's agenda was determining the discourse. There is an emerging sense in which the logic of the meaning of community development practice is to some extent, particularly in management spheres, determined by the terms under which it is governed and the policy discourse within which it is pursued.

In the following example, the research participant realised upon entering the community development field (just after leaving University), that not all practitioners 'were working for the same cause' (Interview 17:17). Instead she was faced with competing interests where she could 'never quite know what the next thing is coming out' (ibid). In this context, it was necessary to reflect-in practice and to self-consciously 'situate' herself. She perceived this as a positive attribute of the work. Corresponding with the four dilemmatic capacities conceived by Hoggett et.al. (2009) (see section 3.5), she subsequently developed her own reflexive and dynamic way of practising. She used the metaphor of 'a dance' to express how she was constantly moving and reflexively interpreting her own reactions in response to the shifting and uncertain nature of practice.

> Slowly I began to learn there was (sic) different moves I had to make and almost like a dance really, you learn how to read people and you learn how to work within what's there and I think that's one of the big plusses about community development work is that we can respond and we can be creative and we can challenge and think outside the box.
>
> White female, voluntary sector (Interview 17:17)

This same dance metaphor was used by another research participant, this time in relation to how she built relationships with participants in community development processes so that she was in a position to challenge prejudice and inequalities. She did this not by crossing boundaries or encroaching into the group's territory but by creating liminal or dialogical spaces to explore and then root out prejudices whist

remaining reflexive about her own belief systems in relation to whoever she was

working with.

> You are still standing with your values but you are also respecting
> where other people are coming from and you are finding a place
> where you kind of dance a bit in the middle and people can listen to
> you and you can also listen to them and really listen to what it is they
> are saying. People sometimes have very genuine reasons for why
> they have come up with their inequality around thinking, around a
> different group or something but it doesn't justify the inequality but you
> always need to explore that.
>
> White female, voluntary sector (Interview 13:5)

For those research participants with critical perspectives, issues of power, inequality,

difference, diversity and intersectionality were at the forefront of their practice. This

was more likely to be in evidence amongst those working in flatter management

situations with lines of accountability that were more ambiguous between the

employing organisation, their own belief systems and the community 'on the ground'.

In the following example, the research participant highlighted how macro power and

conflict issues were impacting upon interpersonal relationships at a micro level and

how she responded to the emergent conflicts in practice:

> I think it must have been some sort of conflict in India and Pakistan
> and it erupted in this group where you had Indian and Pakistani
> women. I didn't work directly with that group but there were colleagues
> who were working with them saying, 'How do we deal with it?' and, 'It
> is just awful that women are sitting there being really awful and
> abusive to each other and this can't go on.' I said, 'What are you doing
> about it?' and they said, 'Nothing' and I said, 'How can you sit back
> and do nothing about it?'
>
> Black female, voluntary sector (Interview 23:10)

Her approach was to go and talk to the group, first showing respect to the elder women

by calling them 'auntie' and beginning the conversation by talking about keeping Asian

cultures. In her narrative, once the women were at ease with her, she introduced the

subject of the conflict in the Indian subcontinent and then used her own intersectional

identity to challenge the women's way of thinking and attempt to raise their consciousness.

> I very often use myself as an example and I would say 'which side do you think I should be on because I am Indian and I am a Muslim?' and that got them thinking because up until now all Muslims were bad because they were all Pakistani and all Indians were bad because they were Hindus. Suddenly there was somebody coming in saying 'I am an Indian Muslim' and one of them said, 'Oh you are on our side, you're an Indian' and the other would say 'You're a Muslim.' I said 'No I am not here to take sides I am here to find out what the issues are and I have been hearing there have been some issues around it because you are not very happy about what is happening.'

> It was just getting them talking and really getting them to sort of think about what the real issues were and why should conflict in the Indian subcontinent have an impact on them when they were a group that got on together, supported each other and were really good for each other.

> Black female, voluntary sector (Interview 23:10-11)

The research participant concern demonstrates a personal commitment to addressing the issues which are raised for those with whom she shared common identity. She drew upon her community development practice in rural India, where groups of women would be sitting under a tree doing craft work and people would be coming in to have a 'chat' and that would spark off discussion. Her role then involved raising awareness of domestic violence, so she was well practiced in finding ways to bring issues out through conversational group work. The same research participant encouraged the most submerged voices, by first developing an individual relationship with the women so she understood their perspective. This meant she knew specific ways to encourage the women to participate without putting them 'on the spot' (Interview 23:11). Her critical approach was greater than her own experience and identifications. Its professionalism was also informed by Black feminist perspectives (e.g. bell hooks, Audre Lord, 23:18). As discussed, feminist community development practice consciousness-raising is collective, educational and critical and involves breaking silences about everyday experiences of oppression (Dominelli 1990,

Dominelli 2006, Ledwith and Springett 2010, Robson and Spence 2011). The practice is shown to encourage historical and social analysis of the sources of oppression and is linked to political struggles for equality (ibid). As argued by Smith (1994), informal educational methods involving exploratory conversation and small group work heighten subjective awareness and are important components of consciousness-raising in *all* community development processes [researcher's emphasis].There is thus a correspondence between questions of mobilising personal identity around questions of power and inequality, the informal educational component of community development practices and the politicised notion of consciousness-raising.

Despite the tensions and contestations and the lack of clarity, the majority of research participants (21, 88%) seemed to be operating within an identifiable common community development discourse. Apart from a minority whose perspectives were identified as at the controlling end of the community development spectrum, who adopted a social planning approach (interviews 3, 11 and 16), there was broad agreement about the educational and transformational purposes of community development practice. However, the interview data suggests that the anticipated extent and possibilities for transformation depends upon a combination of variables including the ideological perspective of the practitioner, their understanding of power and equality issues and the organisational context within which they are operating. All of these are ultimately processed through the filter of the research participant's personal and emotional commitment to practice and its purposes.

6.3   THE PERSONAL/ PROFESSIONAL DYNAMIC IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PRACTICE

A significant majority (16, 67%) of research participants specifically expressed their commitment to community development practice in emotional terms (Interviews 1, 3,

4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12, 13, 15, 17, 18, 22, 23 and 24). Figure 6.9 illustrates that an emotional commitment to practice cuts across the whole spectrum of community perspectives, although among the minority in management positions at the community service end of the spectrum there was no such evidence in their narratives (19, 11 and 16). This is not entirely interpreted to mean that these research participants did not have any emotional commitment to practice. It could have been that their understanding of the meaning of professionalism prevented them from expressing it or required them to hold it to one side in order to pursue objectivity. However, these narratives were expressed within the context of a research interview specifically designed to encourage self introspection and to draw out participant's personal and emotional motivations and influences for community development practice.

Critical/ Community action perspectives							Community empowerment perspectives											Community service perspectives					
6	12	14	15	17	18	23	2	4	20	21	22	24	5	8	9	10	13	1	7	16	19	3	11
X	X			X	X	X		X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X			X	

Passion and anger in relation to the work - expressive use of language Passion driven central to practice (in relation to social injustice) Connection between practice settings and own personal experiences very important Feeling strongly about those who don't follow proper community development principals CD workers needing to feel a passionate commitment and New Labour agenda, appropriation and statutory intervention driving this out	Passion try to work on social justice issues Passion and frustration Passion and loving aspects of the work Annoyed about women not being a priority for funders Coped with the tensions by being true to self, feeling of not over compromising principles for the sake of the organisation Unhappy when prevented from doing the work in the way they wants to Love for the work - when community development going in the way they think it should	Pains in chest from daily arguments about direction of the work Passionate about inclusion Excited about Local Authority Community Strategy (every single person reaching their potential)

Figure 6.9 Distribution of research participants who specifically expressed an emotional connection to community development (by CD perspective)

Emotional commitment to community development was more clearly expressed among those with critical/ community action and community empowerment perspectives and exemplified by expressions of tension between passion when the work was going the way that they believed it should and frustration when it was not. In this example, a relationship between the research participant's belief systems and her emotions and ethics is evident:

> I think it's almost like a faith, you've got to be very kind of driven and passionate, I think passion comes into it a lot that what you are doing is the right thing to do.
>
> White female, voluntary sector (Interview 24:9)

As discussed, Banks has a concept of the 'language of emotion,' whereby a combination of values, motivation and emotion are prerequisite for critical and transformational practice (2007:138). This is exemplified in the narrative of the following research participant whose commitment to challenging inequality and injustice was shaped by her personal experiences of institutional racism in school upon coming to England as a child.

> Passion – maybe it's a bit frustration! I really believe that things have to change…Young people are still having to suffer what I suffered twenty odd years ago.
>
> Black female, voluntary sector, (Interview 9:14)

For 21 (88%) participants, it was evident that their political, ideological and/ or religious beliefs had motivated them towards community development work and sustained their commitment over time. This resonates with Banks' claims that 'social professions' are characterised by a vocation or 'calling to care' (2004: 25, 28 and 166). Although all are generally concerned with people 'developing in society,' social work is concerned with people 'functioning in society' and youth work people having 'a place in society' and the strongest emancipatory and democratic strands is in community development work (ibid:13). For Banks, professional life is morally

inseparable from personal life and core motivations are derived from this dynamic (ibid). For a majority of research participants (22, 92%), their quest for social justice was rooted in experience of political movements, religious community life or in first-hand experiences of poverty or discrimination. In parallel with Hoggett et.al., who argue that 'identificatory processes' throughout the life-course play a powerful role in the establishment of values (2009:103), these experiences were significant influences upon research participants' original motivations towards community development work.

A strong belief system, involving religious faith and/ or political convictions had shaped the community development perspectives of 18 (75%) research participants. Eight (33%) were influenced by religion and twelve (50%) by identity or party politics (two of these by both religion and politics). Of those with political influences, five were identified in terms of identity politics such as feminism, gay rights and (personal?) class struggle and another five by left wing philosophies such as communism and anarchism. As stated, those research participants with strong religious or political influences tended to cluster around the emancipatory end of the community development spectrum. These patterns are illustrated in Figure 6.10.

	Critical/ Community action perspectives	Community empowerment perspectives		Community service perspectives	
	6 12 14 15 17 18 23	2 4 20 21 22 24	5 8 9 10 13	1 7 16 19	3 11
Party politics	A communist Socialism Labour Party	Political activist for Party in Congo Communist Party		Labour Party	
Social/ political movements	Trade Union Involvement then higher education - Gramsci, Machiavelli Feminism The women's movement (India and UK Anarchism	Trade Unionism Human Rights Critical informal education theories	Class consciousness Feminism & women's movement	Gay politics Anarchism and Theories of Revolution at university (1980s)	
Religion	Muslim beliefs and culture As a Muslim woman the prophet's granddaughter	Christian/ devoted Catholic Trained as a Jesuit Priest Sikhism (strong sense of social responsibility) Christian church	Hinduism		

Figure 6.10 Political and religious influences by research participants' community development perspectives

Figure 6.11 illustrates that early experiences of politics and activism feature more in the lives of those research participants at the emancipatory end of the spectrum. For those at the controlling end of the spectrum (those with community service perspectives) there was an absence of political or religious influences or direct experience of discrimination in their narratives (Interviews 3 and 11). Although this does not mean that such influences or experiences were absent in their lives, it does suggest that they we absent in their professional discourses or at least their motivations towards community development practice.

	Critical/ Community action perspectives ←	Community empowerment perspectives		Community service perspectives →
	6 12 14 15 17 18 23	2 4 20 21 22 24	5 8 9 10 13	1 7 16 19 3 11
Activism/Politics	Local community activism (mother & grandmother) Radical political stuff Vietnam and other Civil Rights movements Involved in politics from an early age ...witnessed friends shot and killed others were put into concentration camps Local community activism (mother & grandmother)	Red Cross (in the Congo) & Human Rights Trade Unions Political and religious clashes in India in 1970s Mother community activist Political activist for political party (in the Congo)	Local community activism (as mother of young children) Early working class roots	Mother/ grandfather involved in Labour politics Student politics in the 1970s
Religion	Father a Congregationalist Minister, moved around and rebelled at school Muslim young woman growing up and listening to father (encouraging of women)		Dad a Baptist Minister, who did lots of social work	
onDiscrimination	Single mother in the 1970s Bangladeshi young person growing up in North East England	Industry and poverty Young single parent on benefit with concerns there was nothing for children	Isolation and racism faced as a young child from Bangladesh (particularly in education)	German/ Asian decent - experienced discrimination but did not recognise as such until older
Other			Migrated in 1970s from Southern India – created own support networks	Social policy degree at Durham (social services placement) Did not do well at school Fortunate background and a nice family life

Figure 6.11 Early influences for community development in the lives of research participants

As highlighted by Hoggett et al, early identification with parents and grandparents, is significant in shaping social identities (2009:88). Half of research participants reflected upon the significance of their childhood experiences and/ or influences in their motivations for community development (1, 4, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 18, 21 and 23), with a third (8) making connections between the influence of parents' or grandparents' involvement in political and social movements and their community development interests (Interviews 1, 4, 6.1, 10, 12, 13, 18.1. 21.1 and 23.1).

> Me (sic) mum's family were from the pit villages, very political, very involved in the Labour movement. Me mum and grandma gave milk out and vitamins to children and all the rest of it as volunteers. Me dad was from a very different farming background so there is two very different cultures, pit villages and the farms, that clashed but they were both socialists. So it meant for a very odd up-bringing… it was very much a debating background.
>
> White female, voluntary sector (Interview 6:1)

Ten (42%) research participants linked their motivations for community development to early experiences of oppression (1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 9, 17, 18, 19 and 24). For example, being a young single mother (Interview 6, 2: 13-16, Interview 24:1); experiencing homophobia (Interview 19:1-2); surviving violence against women and girls (Interview 1:1, Interview 17:2); or, as in following examples, growing up poor or living amid political repression as a child (also Interview 2:1).

> The sense of injustice, of growing up in a family where we could hardly make ends meet, where mam on a Tuesday had no money for the rest of the week, where dad was often in work while the ships were building then [there] would be unemployed for a while after the ship had been launched. We were living in a world where it was pretty brutal and pretty hard when I look back at what I know and what I've experienced since then. I think it was that sense of injustice, that sense of wanting to stand alongside the Trade Union movement and some of the movements that were around at that time, trying to bring about a more equal and just society.
>
> White male, voluntary sector (Interview 4:3)

The combined research findings suggest that whilst mutual identifications are shown to strengthen critical and emancipatory community development practice in terms of significance of interpersonal relationships in the practice arena, they are also the basis for a range of tensions, dilemmas and inherent personal biases (Banks 2004, 2013, Hoggett and Mayo 2009). For a majority (17, 71%) of research participants, their identifications mirrored their personal or social identities in terms of which groups they found it easiest or most difficult to work with. For example, a third of the women (4) specifically identified with groups of women (one, identifying as a Black woman, specifically with Black women). Four out of five of research participants who identified as Black men identified with other Black men in their work; in two cases this was specifically asylum seeking men who shared the same diaspora or religious background (Interviews 4, 18 and 22). Three research participants who expressed strong working-class influences in their work also identified more closely with people from working-class backgrounds (Interviews 1, 6 and 24). Research participants also

said that they found it difficult to work with particular groups because they did not share aspects of their identity, in particular class (Interview 3, 6. 11, 15 and 23), faith (Interview 6 and 22) and race and ethnicity (Interview 4). In contrast, two male interview participants found it easier to work with women because they could relate to them better at an emotional level (Interview 12 and 16).

The following research participant came from a background of socialism and her early influences were from the Labour movement, the Women's Liberation Movement and a Claimant's Union. Her overall approach to community development practice is thus informed by critical perspectives. Within the context of the liminal space provided in the research interview, the research participant provided an honest and reflexive account of the relationship between her personal identity and her identifications within a community development practice context. Identifying herself as working-class she said that she had an inverse 'prejudice against middle-class accents (Interview 6:13). She also admitted that she held prejudices towards transsexuals and surrounding particular traditions which she interpreted as religious fundamentalism and oppressive towards women, her example being the imposed wearing of the hijab or veil.

> I suppose the only problem that I could have that I haven't encountered yet, I worked with a lot of clergymen, all Christian, all different denominations, I found them very interesting to talk to but I would, I'd have a problem if somebody was like insisting a woman had to wear veils or something, I'd really have to challenge that so that would cause conflict within me. I think I have a problem with fundamentalist religions so if I had, we have discussed this as part of the project we are doing with the Web Pole volunteers. We would not put any related views that were insulting to other people anything like that. I have not had to work with a fundamentalist group but if that was a necessity, I think that would give me a problem.

> White female, voluntary sector (Interview 6:13-14)

In bringing together the early influences, beliefs and the motivations and identification of research participants, a pattern emerged in relation to the three community development approaches identified by the researcher. Although, as throughout three category model there were anomalies and tensions within them, as highlighted in the example above and in some of what follows.

For those with community service approaches, although their life experiences and interests had to some extent shaped their motivations for entering community development work, they generally made less of how this shaped their practice. In two cases, a personal interest in fitness and sport had influenced their direction towards community development work. Two in this category had been involved in student politics (Interviews 16 and 19) and one had been influenced by family involvement in the Labour Party (interview 1). For another, her motivation to take up community development learning stemmed from childhood abuse. However, for the most part, they lacked strong identifications with any particular group or a sense of a collective commitment to social justice and equality that linked together systems of oppression was lacking in their narratives. An absolute exception in relation to the researcher's model was heavily involved in single identity politics (Gay rights) and he linked this to working-class politics. However, this instance it was the agenda of one of the organisations main funders that had constrained his organisations' practice and propelled them towards and ends led/ community service/ instrumental approach.

> The NHS are interested in how many groups do you have, how often will they meet, how many people will be there, what is their residency, what is their age range and it is all about targets, targets, targets. So that has changed dramatically. Where I would argue that the organisation itself has still got many, many community development objectives to reach and they are far more important than all the box ticking and the target approaches so we have had to adapt how we work so we can fulfil their requirements to fund us for all the targets that they require. Some of the targets they require and I question them on this, what do you do with the figures – and there is no answer.

> White male, voluntary sector (Interview 19:11)

Those with community empowerment approaches had a mix of political and religious influences in their lives (Interviews 2, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 13, 20, 21, 22 and 24). These ranged from trade unionism, community activism as a young single parent, human rights struggles abroad, feminism and class-consciousness, to religious beliefs (Hindu, Sikh and Christian). It was evident that early experiences of politics, religion and/or oppression shaped their current practice principles or ethics. This corresponds with the 'ego ideal,' conceived as pursuing honesty as a positive virtue thus representing the 'ethical self' 'as something to be achieved' (Hoggett et.al. 2009:103). They were motivated towards tackling poverty, challenging social injustice and inequalities and by human rights struggles. Their identifications tended to be with those who shared aspect of their own identities (e.g. people experiencing oppression and poverty, Asylum seeker/ refugees, African/French diaspora, local [neighbourhood] community, Asian/ South Indian diaspora, women, LGBT). Two from within this group of research participants said that they had been involved in establishing community groups based upon a combination of association, self-help and action in response to the isolation they themselves experienced when first coming to live in the UK (Interviews 2 and 8).

> I was among a few African people who was first dispersed in [this City], dispersal started when I came in this country in April 2000. The area was really isolated to us because it was difficult to find someone who can assist advice about the area, with the language barrier, I couldn't myself speak English, French is my first language my mother tongue is Swahili but was hard even there was a service which a refugee can go there for information and advice…no, nothing, no refugee service at that time. Sometime you might go and find no interpreter speaking your language.

> Black male, voluntary sector (Interview 2:1)

From here, upon meeting Swahili speaking woman who it transpired had missed the deadline for her right to appeal against being refused asylum on the basis that she had not understood a letter from the Home Office, this research participant had been

inspired to set up an African community association offering advice, support and advocacy (p2).

Those identified as having critical/ community action approaches tended to have early experiences of marginalisation and discrimination and strong identification with women, Black people/ women, working-class people/ women and young people in terms of such discrimination (Interviews 6, 12, 14, 15, 17, 18 and 23). Their ethical influences were shaped by trade unionism, socialism, communism, feminism and Islamic religious beliefs and all stated a commitment to the pursuit of social justice and challenging oppression and inequality. For this group in particular, self-empowerment and collective power based on understanding emerging from self-as-subject were central to their community development practice, being particularly evident in the narratives of those with feminist community development perspectives. In feminist community development practice, critical consciousness is associated with self-awareness, and develops as people begin to explain their everyday experiences with reference to external systems and structures of inequality and oppression (Dominelli 1990, 2006, Ledwith and Springett 2010, Robson and Spence 2011). The methods used in feminist community development corresponds with critical approaches and informal educational practices which start with people's everyday lives and use practitioner subjectivity within small group work settings to situate insights within a wider political picture (e.g. Smith 1994, Ledwith 2007, Batsleer 2008, 2013). The following narratives expressed understanding that the self-conscious and reflexive use of the 'self' of the community development practitioner in making intersubjective identifications is integral to dynamic community development practice (Interviews 17, 23 and 20):

So I tell them honestly about my life. About I was a victim of domestic violence and other things that have happened in my life. They are gob-smacked because they see me as this professional worker that they think knows everything and therefore wouldn't have any experience of that. That makes a big difference to the person when you say I know what you're talking about and you can see the difference in their reaction and their response to me because I'm not going in telling them what I think they should do. I have had experience of that and they value that honesty.

White female, voluntary sector (Interview 17:11)

In the above example (Interview 17:11), the one that follows and in Ledwith's (2009) example of a critical incident (discussed earlier), the acknowledgement of the subject overrode the objectifications of dominant conceptions of professionalism. As argued by Hooks (2015), drawing upon Freire (1972), to enter the struggle we have to ourselves become subjects. Here notice how the research participant began by narrating her own experiences of race and gender oppression and then immediately related this to her efforts to raise the consciousness of the women she was working with.

I always say this, I say when I get up in the morning until when I go to bed at night being Black only affects me when I leave my house, or when I am watching TV and there is something on it but if I am at home with my family – that is what women that I work with say to me they say the racism they get is only in the outside world but being a woman has an impact on what happens to them when they open their eyes in the morning and it is difficult to get away from it but it is also difficult to get women to recognise it.

Black female, voluntary sector (Interview 23:8-9)

For those who expressed critical/ community action approaches (in particular Interviews 12, 17 and 23), their narratives reflected the influences of liberatory thinkers such as Gramsci and Freire, including implicit references to the process of 'conscientization' (Gramsci 1971, Freire 1973). As discussed, for Gramsci, 'critical consciousness would not erupt spontaneously,' and 'false consciousness initially needs an external element to demystify the prevailing hegemony' (in Ledwith 2009:686). In the following example of a critical incident the research participant's

critical consciousness was awakened in an instantaneous way through a women's

confidence building course (ibid),

> I didn't think of confidence in my personal confidence and me building
> my self-esteem. So when I went to the course I was shocked but I felt
> as if the facilitator was speaking directly to me about women's roles. I
> remember her doing a session on the skills of a managing director and
> then the skills of the housewife and I remember being furious and
> thinking, 'do you know? I could do that.'
>
> White female, voluntary sector (Interview 17:11)

Here, the same research participant was reflecting upon what Freire (1973) would

conceive as a state of 'naïve consciousness' associated with self-blame and political

passivity and an absence of connections between individual problems and social

systems (1973:14). This concept was also expressed succinctly by two other

research participants reflecting upon their own 'conscientization' in their journey

towards community development practice (1:2 and 8:4, both were female

practitioners in the voluntary sector):

> Becoming a single parent was my fault and I never thought to question
> well, what's happening to him. Because I was a woman, I was the one
> who fell pregnant, and I accepted that that was all my fault and I was
> told, 'well you've made your bed you lie on it', and I just took that as,
> well yes, because that's what women did.
>
> White female, voluntary sector (Interview 17:11)

The research participant, started by conveying her new found critical consciousness

towards challenging inequality in her home, workplace and social life. From there,

she expanded her political awareness through ongoing conversations with feminist

community development practitioners, she took up academic study for community

and youth work (17:4-5).

> The impact that had on me was when I was working in a [Baker's] shop in the town, I seriously began to challenge the management about the way they spoke to us, about the way they treat us, the difference between the management and the workers, the disparity between that we were there doing our hard slog. The manager would swan in and out as she saw fit and speak to us as if we were scum and I began to answer back and use the skills I was learning in the confidence course to do that.

> White female, voluntary sector (Interview 17:11)

Consciousness-raising is shown to increase critical understanding of the subjective impact of social constructs such as gender, race and class (Ledwith and Springett 2010). Here the other research participant used the internalisation of race and gender oppression as a starting point for her conversational group work practice with Black women:

> What we do with women here all the time is help them to have a better understanding of the different ways in which they internalise what has happened to them over the years and how they accept it and very often they challenge anything that is set against it. And so we think, 'alright okay let's start from where you are and work through.'

> Black female, voluntary sector (Interview 23:8)

In feminist community development practices, identification based upon sharing experiences of oppression are shown to provide the basis for developing 'collective consciousness' (Dominelli 1990, Dominelli 2006, Ledwith and Springett 2010, Robson and Spence 2011). This involves identifying and organizing around shared political priorities for challenging and changing oppressive systems and power relationships (Ibid). As discussed in the literature review, female-only space is central to 'conscientization' because it enables women to transcend the unequal gender dynamic in which they are defined as 'other' (e.g. hooks 2003). Here, the research participant narrated how she and other Black women practitioners had to organize separately in order to prioritise the issues arising from their community development practice. At this time (late 1980s/ early 1990s), the Black community leaders nominated by Local Authority officers (all men) were thought to be colluding

with power and authority by preventing Black women's projects from getting funding (20:14-15). The women responded by meeting in female-only space, a 'created' liminal space that enabled a creative and focused response to the issues emerging from practice.

> I think the most useful and the most productive times were when we met as women because the other thing we recognised was that as Black women there were certain types of oppression that we faced that the men never faced.
>
> Black female, voluntary sector (Interview 23:7)

The example above was in the late 1980s and the research participant acknowledged that such strategies were easier to implement at that time. The more focused group of Black women 'professionals' was drawn from a wider, more informal group for Black women. The more informal community group remains in existence (even at the time of writing). However in her interview the research participant commented, 'I think that is what is missing now' (Interview 23:7). In the late 1980s, the female practitioner's group had emerged in a space between the professional/ practice sphere and the informal community/ practice sphere. Then, Black women practitioners had inhabited both spaces (as women and as practitioners) and they had manoeuvred to create another space specifically to address the emergent issues from their practice and their own communities. What is evident here, is not just a slippage going on between critical theory, policy and community development practice, but also separation between practitioners and communities, suggesting that a dominant model of 'impartialist-detached' professionalism had come to determine practice. This is further evidenced by a complete absence of examples (that were current under New Labour) of 'created' liminal spaces in which to formulate ways to influence policy in response issues emerging from practice. Not being able to identify any further concrete example of critical community development in created liminal spaces from the interview data, the

following example is drawn from the researcher's own practice experience (and thus written from a first person perspective).

Conducting the empirical research expanded my practice networks and knowledge about ongoing work in the community development field. Shortly after completing the field work interviews, in February 2008, I was commissioned as a freelancer to develop a network of women's voluntary organisations to strengthen the women's sector in the North East of England (NEWN). My role involved working with feminist community development practitioners who participated in this study, as does my current community development role. In this sense, my own narrative constitutes data because the reflexive and critical dialogue that took place in the research interviews has continued through our ongoing actions to strengthen feminist community development practice.

Protecting and creating women only space and within this 'understanding and applying intersectionality as central to the pursuit of social justice and equality' were from the beginning elementary to NEWNs practice principles and the basis for establishing influencing priorities at every level to end discrimination and the oppression of women (NEWN, 2014a, Hill Collins 2000). In the liminal female only created spaces created by NEWN, women were, and still are, able to transcend unequal gender dynamics and this is a basis for mobilising energetic, creative and co-ordinated collective action (hooks 2003, Lowndes 2004, Spence and Stephenson 2007, Bedford et.al. 2008, Corry and Robson 2010, Robson and Spence 2012). Now beyond the New Labour context, but still amid harsh practice conditions, NEWN members continue to strive to promote women's self-empowerment, collaboration, solidarity building, collective action and anti-oppressive practices (NEWN, 2014a:1, NEWN 2015).

NEWN adopted a non-bureaucratic and organic organisational model that allows for independence, openness, flexibility, creativity and shared accountability. Its biggest resource being the political commitment, energy and passion of its members, now a network of over a hundred women's voluntary organisations and community groups, many with a long track record in supporting the most marginalised of women. Collectively, these organisations have supported thousands of women to overcome the impacts of discrimination and oppression and as such they possess tacit knowledge about how to approach this and what might work (NEWN 2013a). This is the unique contribution of feminist perspectives and approaches to the community development field and to wider social justice movements.

The combined findings of this study suggest that being accountable to communities *and* to state policy, requires community development practitioners to work agentically, dynamically and reflexivity within such liminal or boundary spaces. This position enables practitioners to name and work creatively and powerfully with the subjective experiences of those participating in community development processes. Bringing in the examples of action emerging from the researchers own practice highlights that community development dynamism can only be maintained by practicing in liminal spaces. Such spaces are key to relational, developmental approaches including ensuring that intersubjective identifications involving the reflexive self of the community development practitioner are nurtured and flourish. The model of NEWN demonstrated that liminal spaces can also transcend the changing political landscapes and the dominant ideologies of whichever Government is in power. Such conceptions had informed the researchers approach to practice, prior to starting this thesis in the development of the Community Empowerment Network (discussed in Chapter 1). However, as will emerge in the ensuing analysis of the interview data, creating liminal spaces within statutory community development practice

contexts or those that have been fashioned by Government is problematic and contradictory.

6.4 THE ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXT AND THE PHILOSOPHY OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PRACTICE

Assessing research participants' overall community development approaches involved examining a range of factors, including: perceptions of community development purposes, conceptions of community/ communities, practice methods, practitioner roles and the context in which they were operating. To illustrate this approach, one research participant stated the purpose of community development as empowering people 'to take collective action to improve the quality of life in their community,' thus spanning the researcher's categories of critical/ community action and community empowerment approaches (White male, statutory sector, Interview 16:8). His practice methods were a blend of interpersonal and practical techniques, involving 'facilitating group discussions' to help people to 'identify the issues that are a concern to them' and 'priority setting and action planning' (p8). However, in exploring his narrative further, he conceived communities to be geographical and the issues and priorities he identified were revealed to be limited by the environmental and enforcement agenda of the Local Authority (p18). Accordingly, this research participant's overall community development approach was assessed as service improvement within a context of authority and control, and hence identified as a conservative practice perspective.

Ultimately, the research model was only that, a model, with inherent limitations. What was sometimes difficult to distinguish in some research participants' narratives was how far the philosophy or ideology of their employer (Interviews 7, 20, 22, all statutory sector), or their funder (Interviews 9 and 19, voluntary sector), or complex lines of accountability from partnership arrangements (Interview 1, voluntary sector)

was impacting upon their overall approach to practice. Nevertheless, what did emerge was a sense that the interests of Government or the local state being dominant in shaping community development priorities and perhaps understandably, those with direct employment and accountabilities in the statutory context being less likely to resist its influences upon their practice.

At the time of the interviews, 16 (67%) research participants were employed (paid or unpaid) in the voluntary sector (Interviews 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 17, 19, 21, 23 and 24). The other eight (33%) research participants were employed by public sector agencies (Interviews 3, 7, 11, 15, 16, 18, 20, and 22). Figure 6.12 illustrates the distribution of research participants employed in the voluntary and public sectors in relation to the community development perspectives identified by the researcher.

Inter-view no.	Voluntary sector - Perspectives on community development
6	Critical/ Community action perspectives
12	
14	
17	
23	
2	Community Empowerment perspectives
4	
21	
24	
5	
8	
9	
10	
13	
19	Community service perspectives

Inter-view no.	Public sector - Perspectives on community development
15	Critical/ Community action perspectives
18	
20	Community Empowerment perspectives
22	
6	Community service perspectives
16	
3	
11	

Figure 6.12 Distribution of research participants by community development perspectives by organisational type/ sector

Five out of seven (71%) of those with critical/ community action perspectives worked in the voluntary and community sector. Nine out of eleven (82%) of those with broader community empowerment perspectives worked in the voluntary community

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sector. Of the six with community service perspectives, five (83%) worked in the public sector (all but one in management positions which reflects the nature of contemporary funding and organisational arrangements). Those research participants with weaker ideological and personal motivations whose perspectives were toward the community service end of the spectrum, tended to be employed in the statutory sector (Interviews 16, 3 and 11). Those with strong convictions and motivations at the critical end of the spectrum tended to be employed in the voluntary sector (Interviews 6, 12, 14, 17 and 23). Although the sample is not broad enough to be conclusive, these findings are an indication that the organisational context and the degree of freedom within that context are directly mirrored in the perspective of the community development practitioner. The data also suggests that community development practitioners exercise agency in relation to operating in the sector that best reflects their perspective if their circumstances allow it.

As noted by Popple (2000), although community work practices tend to be less prescriptive than other professions, practitioners may not be able to satisfactorily fulfil their practice principles where they conflict with the employing organisation's philosophy. The interview data suggests that employers or managers in the statutory sector were less likely to place trust in community development practitioners to determine their own practice priorities (e.g. Interviews 3, 9, 15, 16 and 22). As a reflection of the turbulent policy conditions and resultant tensions, it was not uncommon for those in Local Authorities to find themselves in untenable positions in attempting to remain true to their practice principles. Thus reflecting that their perspective rather than mirroring the perspective of their organisation, came into conflict with it. Unable to resolve the tensions, one research participant chose to leave their employment (Interview 21). Another refused to compromise their practice principles and was subsequently ostracised (Interview 6:8). Two were obstructed by their head of service from developing a community project in a particular direction,

due intervention from the Local Authority planning department (Interview 3:11 and Interview 12:37). The interview data suggests there was little or no room for manoeuvre in Local Authorities wherein practitioners could operate the capacities for principled practice in the 'dilemmatic space' outlined by Hoggett et.al. (2009).

The voluntary sector offers the possibility for the expression of a range of values and purposes that mediate between Government policy and practice on the ground. This has the potential to open more space for personal values to align with organisational values, or at least for space to be opened to allow for negotiation or ambiguity. Thus, one research participant moved from the public sector to a voluntary sector position because of her strong belief in the voluntary organisation's philosophy and practice, confirming Popple's claim that some practitioners would sacrifice larger salaries in order to follow their convictions (ibid:9 9),

> I just thought okay I am just going to go for this and get this…
> Because it is a commitment – yes there is a drop in salary or whatever
> but for me I couldn't let this organisation go.
>
> Black female, voluntary sector (Interview 23:16)

According to the literature, when considering whether practitioners are operating in a partialist or impartialist ethical framework it is important to understand the organisational context within which they are operating (Hoggett et al. 2009). The interview data contains perceptions of a 'difference between the voluntary and the statutory sectors' in relation to concerns such as anti-oppressive practices (Interview 15:15). There were also perceptions of community development practitioners inhabiting statutory sector positions thinking and acting differently to those who work in the voluntary sector, especially around issues of equality and power (e.g. interviews 15, 17 and 23). There is an implication that in statutory settings practitioners were less likely to express what Gramsci termed as 'feeling-passion' and 'intellectual and moral unity' (Gramsci 1971: 418). The concept of 'feeling-

passion' speaks to established critical community development practice principles and to its personal and professional dynamic. Gramsci conceives an 'intellectual error' whereby you can know without understanding and without 'feeling and being impassioned' (ibid). According to Gramsci, transformational practice is only possible when intellect is fused with passion *and* historical/contextual understanding. For example, in response to the question, 'in what settings has it been easy to promote and put into practice what you believe to be the purposes of the work and in what settings has it been difficult?' the research participant in question stated that was easier to pursue her purposes in a women's voluntary organisation. She believed that Local Authority equality policies are only effective if the people who were carrying them through felt passionately about them. However, she perceived that most practitioners in the statutory sector fell short of this. Her narrative suggests that practitioners in Local Authorities were working within 'impartial, detached' ethical frameworks (Banks 2004:77):

> It has been easier at women's level to do that, it has been easy in the voluntary sector to do it. It hasn't been as easy when you are just opposed with Local Authority and their requirements, even though you challenge some of it because all of them have different policies, whether it is equality policies, action plans whatever – most of them fall short of following through in terms of commitment. I think any of these policies only work with people who have that influence and commitment to some of those issues and feel passionately about them. Others will just find a way of working around it and that has been the case in working with some of the statutory agencies where people have participated because it was required and not because they wanted to.'
>
> Black female, voluntary sector (Interview 23:12)

One research participant, at odds with his public sector employer believed the statutory process to be 'top down,' in which community development practice amounted to delivering something that had already been decided upon. Whereas, he comments, 'I don't think people in the voluntary sector think in that way at all' (Male, statutory sector, Interview 15:15). Another research participant, having left the

statutory sector, believed the conflicts and tensions surrounding community

development practice in Local Authority settings were intransigent:

> I think they convinced me that probably community development
> should never be done by Local Authorities. It should always be done
> independently; there is too much tension between politicians and
> officers what in their view of things and what local communities
> want…I think there is huge tensions between local Authorities and
> community development.
>
> White female, voluntary sector, (Interview 6:18)

The following research participant was narrating the opposition he encountered when

as a senior Local Authority officer, he suggested the Local Authority should take a

corporate approach to community development.

> So I then went very naively and said, 'Right what we need to do now is
> we need to get all the staff who have a community development role
> and function across the organisation into one corporate unit, so the
> existing community development staff from social services and the
> libraries and environment, from education. We need to bring them
> together into one leadership.' And they looked at me as if I had two
> heads and said, 'No, no, we can't do that.'
>
> White male, voluntary sector (Interview 21:11)

Although acknowledging this was by no means a new phenomenon (e.g. LEWRG

1979), the interview data highlights tensions for community development practitioners

in establishing trust with communities where Local Authorities were perceived to be

the power holders. This research participant believes that the women started from

the premise that they were in a subjugated relationship to her and that this framed

their interpersonal interactions. As such, she claimed she was unable to transcend

her professional identity, in order to make the intersubjective identifications she

understood to be necessary for meaningful community development practice:

> I think it is genuinely difficult to get some sort of rapport or relationship with women particularly in some of the real poor communities and I would say that is along the lines of class and …it doesn't matter how much you try … you know you come in with your Council ID on and quite clearly you are not one of us and I can't quite put my finger on it but I think a lot of people might have dealings with the council in other ways, in sort of enforcement ways. They might have, social services who come and say, 'well …you know something is going to happen if you don't manage to run your family in a different way' and you roll up with your badge on and you say, right girls come and help me talk about your family and we will do some really great stuff and we will take you down the gym and all that and they go alright fine, and they join in up to a point but I don't think they ever completely open up.

> White female, statutory sector, (Interview 3:6)

The interview data suggests that if community development practitioners in Local Authorities attempted to transcend the confines of dominant conceptions of professionalism, they were swiftly reined in so as to restore the normative social order. The following research participant, had been employed by a Local Authority to develop local partnerships in twelve rural villages. She was of a working-class background and has made a conscious decision to retain her accent because she believed it made it easier to form intersubjective identifications in practice in working-class communities(Interview 6:12). However, being successful in using community development methods to facilitate community participation, seemed to have disturbed the balance of power within the Council. She believed that they were 'very threatened by the whole process' and when she defied the instruction of her line-management to redefine her professional boundaries, she was subsequently bullied (p9).

> It was my job to work with the community … and in doing it; it conflicted with what the Council's actual agenda was. They tried to stop me from going to community meetings and I received really bad verbal abuse from my line manager. [I said] 'Unless you are giving me a direct instruction not to go to that meeting, I am going to go along.' So they ended up being very, very aggressive and at the finish they shunted us (sic) off to a job, put us in an office and ignored everything I did.

> White female, voluntary sector, (Interview 6:15)

The interview data suggests that conditions in the statutory sector were limiting towards practising in a ways which can challenge how individuals encounter dominant social and cultural values and internalise them within their identities. Similar tensions were also particularly apparent in voluntary sector settings where local elected members were involved in management committees. This research participant was attempting to encourage members her employing management committee to question and think critically. Her efforts were frustrated because of their tendency to objectify Local Authority officers as professional experts, thus being complicit in their own subjectification.

> They thought these people were experienced professional people who knew what was best for them and had far more knowledge than them so they would know better than they knew.
>
> White female, voluntary sector (Interview 17:13)

She was finding it difficult to find ways that would overcome their normative perceptions of themselves in relation to the Local Authority, including their traditional notions of professionalism. This was necessary in order to break their naïve consciousness and build critical and collective consciousness within the management committee. When the research participant tried challenge the status quo, the management committee members were seemingly threatened by this, perceiving her as 'a wild card or a trouble-maker' (p14). When she refused to attend a customer service training course that she believed to be of no value to improving her community development practice, a management committee member, who was also an elected member, scolded: 'Young lady you will do as you are told' (she must have been around 50 years old at the time) (p15). The dominant notions of power and class exemplified in the term 'lady,' (even though the elected member in question is an ex-mine worker) suggests he was attempting to restore the normative social order. The research participant was perceived as a public servant in the elected members' terms, so although not an employed by Local Authority, her freedom to

shape her own practice was restricted as though she were. Contrast this with the following narrative, although the research participant understood his formal line of accountable a local management committee, he also had a role in guiding, advising and influencing them towards an educational role with communities that promoted self-empowerment and self-determination.

> I'm employed by the management committee so my duties lie with them. So working with all sorts of minorities and the ethnic community, I think the priority is being able to say, 'look we need to be much more proactive' and I think now is the time, in the sense that you are educating community to take much more initiative within their own hands and raises directly to what their needs are, far rather than nodding and accepting.
>
> Black male, voluntary sector (Interview 14:6)

Comparing this example with the one above, although both research participants were operating from a critical community development perspectives and within voluntary sector settings, the management committee in the second example understood that the philosophy of their organisation was in conflict with that of the Local Authority so they were more open to the educational intervention of the research participant and his guidance on how to bring about the required transformation.

6.4   CONCLUSION

In terms of identifying what distinguishes community development from other professions, much of the interview data confirms the perspectives contained in the literature.   It illuminates the conflation of the personal and the professional being integral to the dynamism of community development practice; and the reflexive use of the self of the practitioner and intersubjective identifications as the basis for critical and emancipatory learning. In congruence with the literature, critical community development approaches are shown to start with individual's everyday experiences

and use intersubjective identifications to situate their insights within a wider historic and political picture (Smith 1994, Banks 2004, Ledwith 1997, 2009, Batsleer 2008, 2013). This is shown to be how critical and collective consciousness and solidarity are achieved.

Correspondingly, the interview data also emphasises the significance of dilemmatic, dialogical and conceptual spaces on the boundaries of communities and state policy makers (Popple 1995, Miller and Ahmad 1997, Martin 1999, Shaw 2004, Miller 2004 and Taylor 2004 in Shaw 2004, 2005, Ledwith 2005, Ledwith and Springett 2010, Hoggett et.al. 2009, Toomey 2009, Banks 2013). Such spaces, which can be claimed or created as in women-only meetings, and are more likely to be facilitated by voluntary organisations acting between communities and the local state or entirely independently, are shown to be integral to community development dynamism at several levels: dealing with its volatile and turbulent practice conditions, negotiating practitioner roles with communities, facilitating dialogue between competing interests and fulfilling the role of educator, as it is conceived by those with critical and informal education perspectives.

The conception of operating in liminal spaces, or 'betwixt and between' policy makers and communities, emerges most powerfully from the narratives of those who express emancipatory perspectives. The interview data suggesting that critical community development practice entails practitioners operating within boundary spaces because this is precisely where dynamism is situated. As highlighted by Ward and Wild, liminal people are between the structures of society and as such they 'have no identity; in a sense they do not exist,' yet they are also seen as 'at once powerful and dangerous' (1995:25 and 27). Applying the concept of liminality or liminoid phenomena toward the analysis the empirical data suggests that dilemmatic and reflexive capacities are required to operate within enduringly unresolved conditions. These capacities include: community development practitioners deciding when it is

appropriate to suspend their self and identity and when to reveal it; also to consider how these nuanced ontological positions relate to consciousness raising, inter-subjectivity and inspiring critical incidents in practice at any given moment.

These findings begin to suggest the possibilities for an alternative model of professionalism that addresses the conflation in the personal and professional by coupling reflexivity with accountability and thus maintaining the dynamism of practice. However, the interview data suggests that one dimensional power relationships are inherent in Local Authorities and that these are antithetical towards engaging with the subaltern or submerged perspectives so important to addressing questions of power and to forming the intersubjective identifications and practices important for accountability to community groups.

7. NEW LABOUR, ACCOUNTABILITY AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PRACTICE

7.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter explores the impact of New Labour policy upon community development discourse, in relation to core elements of community development practice. It argues that the ensuing managerialism and instrumentalism marginalised necessary aspects of the self and identity from community development processes. In identifying factors and influences impacting upon the quality and management of community development practice, it is clear that the quality of management systems during the time of New Labour was crucial to the interpretation of policy and systems of accountability. In the first instance there were intensifying contradictions arising from Local Authority enforcement agendas relating to issues of integrity and identity. Then, as instrumentalism coupled with centralisation, even those in the voluntary sector experienced mounting tensions as management, accountability and practice conditions tightened.

The prevailing practice conditions led to a narrowing of boundary or liminal spaces thus inhibiting expressions of agency, reflexivity and dynamism in community development practice. What emerged from the New Labour policy context was an authoritarian approach to management and accountability, which immobilised critical community development practice. The effect was to polarise the controlling and emancipatory functions of community development practice whilst pluralist approaches, established to support community participation in partnerships to achieve small scale change, were effectively compromised and controlled.

7.2 New Labour and community development discourse

The interview data highlights a range of tensions and contradictions arising from New Labour's rhetoric of empowerment and participation, these include: the narrowing of boundary spaces, increasing marginalisation of identity groups, instrumentalism and an overriding sense of disempowerment. Community development priorities became less focused upon the interests of communities as accountability veered upwards. Although there was a variation in the degree of disenfranchisement across the spectrum community development perspectives, there are broad based concerns about marginalisation and inequalities emanating from social inclusion and modernising public services agendas. These findings resonate with a body of critiques about New Labour's ideological influences and policies emerging from the literature in the same period (e.g. Atkinson 2003, Morrison 2003b Driver 2004, Brownhill 2003, Shaw 2004, Burns 2006, Taylor 2007).

A third of participants specifically stated that they had initially welcomed Government policy, indeed recognising their own perspectives in its language of participation and empowerment (Interviews 1, 3, 4, 7, 11, 16, 21 and 22). Half of the research participants (12) expressed frustration about a perceived disparity between policy rhetoric and reality (Interviews 5, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 19, 22, 23 and 24). A third (8) of participants suggested that community development practice conditions were leading to disempowerment for communities and practitioners (Interviews 4, 5, 6, 12, 15, 17, 21 and 24). Only a minority of research participants remained enthusiastic about New Labour's community policies by 2007, all four with perspectives at the controlling end of the community development spectrum (Interview 1, 3, 11 and 16). Three of these worked in Local Authorities, two at a senior management level. The other was employed by a voluntary organisation but her paymaster was ultimately the Local Authority via complicated structures of accountably with the local CEN and LSP.

Although Local authorities were developing a proliferation of strategies in response to New Labour's 'community empowerment' agendas, it was perceived that they were paying lip service to them (e.g. Interview 12:17: 18, Interview 6:20). Inspection, improvement and enforcement agendas were dominating the attention of community development managers in public bodies (also Interview 15:15, Interview 16:13). Two research participants, both managers in Local Authorities expressed particular tensions surrounding their enforcement role and their community development practice (Interviews 3 and 16).

> I'm in area management, a part of a division called community protection, the vast majority of that is concerned with enforcement issues. Community safety wardens, anti-social behaviour team, committee safety partnership, trading standards.
>
> White male, statutory sector (Interview 16:7)

In response to the question 'is community development going in the direction that you think it should be going?' the other research participant responded that she felt 'very positive' and excited about it.

> When you read the policy statements that are coming out of national Government it excites you because the potential is there because certainly those very high level statements are exactly saying that, that the Government have got this commitment to empowering communities to seeing people, groups seeing their potential. It is very exciting…
>
> White female, statutory sector, (Interview 3:13)

She went on to say that the 'community strategy' reflected the Council commitment to supporting local people to 'reach their full potential, if that is what they want to do.' However, then she quickly reflected that 'somewhere in the middle of all of that, it falls down.' When prompted, she attributed this to different Council departments 'not really getting it' and putting local people 'outside' rather than 'right at the focus of what they do' (Interview 3:13). She clarified that this tension laid with 'the enforcement side of what we would do' (p14). Another research participant (also a

Local Authority manager), believed that New Labour's modernisation agenda gave legitimacy to changing the culture of Local Authorities in a way that would benefit communities and elevate the status of community development practice within the Council.

> It gives us a backing to undertake what we have always been undertaking – you know it's to challenge the culture of the council…It is almost a Government remit to say the council is dodgy in these areas and needs to be improved and we can help improve it…It has given us a great big remit to try and improve the council but it is also to get them, or to help to shape them to think, 'well how is the council going to help to work in neighbourhoods?' Because we know what it's like out there and we know what it's like in here and therefore we are the sort of broker of how things happen…it has never been given the status or necessity through policy.
>
> White male, statutory sector (Interview 11:20)

That these senior managers were broadly at ease with the way New Labour policies were impacting upon community development practice, is understandable given that their material position would require this level of commitment. However, even those with conservative community development perspectives were uneasy about contradictions with core elements of practice, such as increasing marginalisation of small community groups as an impact of service improvement agendas (Interviews 1, 3, 16 and 19).

> A lot of the things Government want communities to get involved with can only be carried forward by larger well-established community organisations and not like what they do informal services like parent toddler groups or coffee mornings, but I mean stuff like that is really valuable because it brings people together and overcomes isolation.
>
> White male, statutory (Interview 16:16-17)

Congruent with the findings from the literature review (Banks 2004, Burgess and Herrmann 2010, Bowles, 2009, Hoggett et al. 2009), the interview data suggests that an instrumental approach to community development practice and accountability was undermining agency, inter-subjectivity, community ownership and trust as typically

expressed by small community-based voluntary community groups and organisations. Tightened hierarchical management structures, reflecting an 'ethics of distrust' (Chadwick and Levitt 1995, Banks 2004), meant that half of research participants had less scope to shape their own practices. These were from a mix of voluntary sector (Interviews 1, 6, 9, 12, and 19) and statutory sector perspectives (Interviews 3, 7, 11, 15, 16, 18 and 22). At one level, there were tensions between accountability towards Local Authorities (either as employers or as funders) and to communities (e.g. Interview 18:10, Interview 22:8). At another level service led approaches and instrumentalism were resulting in diminishing trust in community development practitioners from their managers. In the first part of the following narrative, the research participant was reflecting back to a time when practitioners worked in closer proximity to communities. The narrative resonates with Gramsci's concept of 'organic cohesion,' whereby there is a representational relationship between 'intellectuals' [or practitioners] and local people and knowledge means to feel the 'elementary passion of the people' (1971:418).

> I think ten or fifteen years ago we probably would have been based in a community centre. We would have been involved with most if not all of the activists) in the area, we would have known about them. We would have had a working relationship with them and we would have probably been able to develop good levels of trust and rapport because of the amount of face to face contact you would have and people feeling, as they should do, able to pop in and talk over things with members of the team.
>
> White ale, statutory sector (Interview 16:9)

As the narrative develops, it suggests that 'organic cohesion' had been replaced with 'organic centralism,' whereby the 'relationships between the intellectuals and 'the people' are reduced to a purely bureaucratic and formal order' (ibid). Here were pronounced boundaries between the community and the community development team and their interventions were task orientated, technical and ends led.

> Officers now tend to say they maintain contact but often people
> come to them and say 'we've got this problem we want help with a
> funding application' or 'we want help with resolving some conflict
> within the group' so it kind of tends to be more that a group will
> come to you when they need some assistance from a community
> development officer and it tends to be more technical task that they
> want you to do, so you do it and job done apparently. It's much
> less about the long-term nurturing of the relationship that you might
> have had or a much less of the face to face contact that you would
> have had if you were community based in a relatively small patch
> but I think that's bound to have an impact on the kind of relationship
> that people have.

<div align="right">White male, statutory sector (Interview 16:15)</div>

Here, the narrative suggests that the priorities of community development team were shaped by Government policy; there does not appear to be any local interpretation other than by the Local Authority officer himself.

> The workers have generally managed their own work programmes
> and I've let them get on with it…One of the challenges I have is trying
> to work out what should our priorities be, what work should we focus
> on and gaining value from the staff…What I'm trying to work out given
> what Government agendas are - what would be the most appropriate
> stance for us to take in terms of what should our community
> development service be about and what should be the priority issues
> and areas for us to work on?

<div align="right">White male, statutory sector (Interview 16: 9 and 15)</div>

As evident in the literature, 'low trust in public services and professionals' is characteristic of NPM systems (Hood, 1995: 94). Most participants who worked in the public sector (5 out of 7) said they were at odds with management expectations in relation to building trust with communities. Within managerialist and instrumental frameworks associated with NPM, it is argued that the 'impartialist voice,' that is one that represses or elides subjectivities, becomes dominant, whilst the spaces for trust to develop between professionals and 'service users' narrows (Banks 2004:168 and 173-5).

As discussed, concepts such as 'empowerment' and 'participation' were integral to New Labour's modernisation agenda and involved partnerships with the community

and voluntary sectors through CENs and LSPs. Yet, according to the findings of this study, LSPs were a focus for disempowerment. In particular they failed to accommodate the emotional and personal elements of participation and empowerment of practice as they are understood in community development literature and discourses. In the following example, the research participant is reflecting upon his secondment as an LSP co-ordinator. He contrasted this with his experience of working in communities and found it completely lacking in terms of the interpersonal elements. His narrative resonates with studies highlighting rationality and technicality in LSPs to be obscuring the expression of subjective experiences (Berry and de Oteyza 2007, SERRIC 2008, Gudnadottir et.al. 2007, Corry and Robson 2010). The research participant could not find space to develop the reflexive and interpretive capacities that he seemingly understood were integral to community development practice (see 6.2, Interview 11:15 above).

> I think actually that's where my failing was in the LSP because I didn't actually have effort and time or didn't pick up that I needed to understand the culture and the expectation of all the partners and therefore every time I came into a partnership meeting I hadn't anticipated that person was going to say that; I hadn't anticipated they were going to think that way. Whereas with time and effort in that arena or with those individuals, like you get in communities getting a chance to speak to people, because you know they are going to arise and you are going to get the time and freedom to do it, where as in the LSP I didn't have two seconds to scratch my backside because of the amount of work that was aimed at you and you didn't get the human time, which is a missing element which I think is important.
>
> White male, statutory sector, Interview 11:15

Those research participants who expressed critical/ community action perspectives expressed little or no faith in Government community policies and believed them to be derisory to community development practice (Interviews 6, 12, 14, 15, 17, 18 and 23). The Government's approach was perceived as a social planning model, on the one hand paying lip service to community engagement and using community development practice to supplant responsibility onto the community (Interview 12, 14

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and 15); and on the other creating intransigent conflicts around accountability that were undermining agentic practice and community action (Interviews 6 and 15). Conferring with literature that argues that a process of 'gentrification' (or class cleansing) was integral to New Labour's urban renaissance (Brownhill 2003, Hatherley 2011), this research participant believed that his efforts to empower local people were futile whilst 'a lot of people who were activists have been cleared out…distributed all over the place' (Interview 12:17):

> So you're trying to empower and enable local people to take part, but you're working in a backdrop where local people aren't stupid, and they know decision makers are making decisions…Fuck you, this is the decisions we are making and they do it and muster it all up in a cloud that they have consulted the local people about it. They're not paying any regard to what local people are saying 'cos they've got their own agenda and what they want is immaterial.
>
> White male, voluntary sector (Interview 12:17)

Also corresponding with critiques in the literature (e.g. Burton and O'Toole 1993, Lister 1999, Driver 2004, Morrison 2003b, Brownhill 2003, Shaw 2004, Burns 2006, Fremeaux 2005), the interview data suggests that the 'social inclusion' agenda resulted in marginalising certain community groups and emasculated identity-based politicised interventions (e.g. Interview 5:8-10 and Interview 24:14). Concerns surrounding contradictions between social inclusion and marginalisation cut across spectrum of community development perspectives, including those with conservative perspectives (Interviews 1, 3, 16 and 19). This research participant located an intensification of women's marginalisation by state policy to 2000, to around the time that New Labour launched its strategy for 'tackling social exclusion' (Social Exclusion Unit, SEU 2001).

> Since 2000 I think things have gone haywire and I think everything has been against us. This inclusion agenda which we believe in wholeheartedly but our project has the same ethos but it is a charity for women and I think that has worked against us and it is now how do we recover, that is the worst, how do we recover?
>
> White female, voluntary sector, (Interview 5:13)

It is widely argued that New Labour's concept of 'participation' trained people in technical rationality, obscuring critical thought and silencing dissent (Atkinson 2003, Shaw 2004, Ledwith 2005, Taylor 2007, Butcher 2007b). The interview data also identifies a dominant language of exclusion as leading to disempowerment by eliminating the interests of communities from partnership agendas (interview 5, 8, 9, 13, 21 and 24). The same technical and rational trends were permeating funding criteria for community development practice (Interview 17:19, Interview 8:10). A particular example was tightening of regulations for community learning involving a competency based approach, technical assessment criteria, instrumental quality standards, and an aversion to risk (Interviews 4:18, 10:12 and 12:23). This was perceived as an 'NVQ[47] mode of thinking' whereby processes of critical reflection upon theory and action in community development were substituted with a competency based approach (Interview 23:10 and 4:18). These findings confer with arguments in the literature (Craig 2004 in Shaw 2004, Jones 1989 in Banks 2010). One research participant highlighted the extent of the strain that the Government's requirements had placed on her informal education practice (also Interview 5:5-6). Her narrative suggests a shift was happening, from bureaucracy and managerialism towards centralisation and authoritarianism.

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[47] National Vocational Qualifications

It's a bit painful, it's massive, some of the things the learning consortium has had to do to learn how to tender out and receive tenders and have contracts that are 18 pages long in order to access funding. Then there's providing advice and guidance, which people had been doing anyway on an informal basis all along. You now have to get the matrix standard and you all of the staff have to have information, advice and guidance qualifications so it is not just little things about bureaucracy it is about fitting in with what the Government version is of a good quality training provider looks like.

<div align="right">White female, voluntary sector (Interview 10:12)</div>

Collusion with the conventions of technical and rational language was perceived to be preserving structural inequalities and reproducing pathological stereotypes that are shown to perpetuate false and naïve consciousness (Ruby 1980, McCarney 2005, Atkinson 2003, Wootton 1959, in Johnson 2008, Wright Mills 1959, Shaw 2004).

I am talking on a local level I can use that kind of language with other workers who think the same as me, but if I am talking on a strategic level I have to use the terminology that people are using and it almost sanitises the work…I think when you are working at a strategic level very often you are working with middle-class educated people who haven't got the faintest idea of what it is like to be living in those circumstances and almost blame the people who are in the circumstances themselves rather than society and social policies for those people being in that position.

<div align="right">White female, voluntary sector, (Interview 24:4-5)</div>

The following narrative highlights the everyday tensions faced by community development practitioners operating in the practice settings manufactured by New Labour. Here the research participant, against her better judgement, found herself having to collude with language of social exclusion in her attempts to bring about the changes she believes are necessary at a policy level.

So I have to use stuff like, 'how is this going to reach the most hard to reach' because that's the language they understand. But I don't think they really understand what it means to the person on the street but in order to change things if I have to use that language then I will use it, but it's not easy.

<div align="right">White female, voluntary sector, (Interview 24:4-5)</div>

The following research participant is reflecting upon her involvement in a sub-group of the LSP (the 'capacity building sub-group'). Her experience seems far from empowering. Hearing this particular narrative was challenging and uncomfortable for the researcher because at the time she had been responsible for co-ordinating the said sub-group. It suggested to her that she too had been colluding with language of technical rationality, to the detriment of her critical and dilemmatic capacities and indeed the very principles of anti-oppressive practice that she holds dear.

> When I started to come to capacity building group meetings, I was intimidated about the language…My medium of education to high school was in my own language, so then university was completely transformed into English and a three year degree was in English…I can speak conversation, but when it comes to that high level hierarchical jargon, I am not confident in myself…That is what I used to feel, the jargon used to frighten me.
>
> Black female, voluntary sector (Interview 8:10)

Another research participant perceived that a 'schism' was occurring between practitioners and academics, he used the example of workshop that both he and the researcher had attended to exemplify this. The event was held at Durham University (in 2007) and aimed at the community development field (this included voluntary community activists, practitioners, managers, academics and trainers). His perception of the workshop was that a dominant conception of professionalism being portrayed was constructing barriers to community members. He perceived that this was particularly affecting those who were working-class as they feared the notion of professionalism, whilst not realising that they were 'professional themselves' (Interview 19:16). His criticisms were directed at academics, including the researcher in this study.

> Also it is always unfortunate but whenever academics – and I am criticising you here – whenever academics get hold of a concept of working they can intellectualise it to such a point that the language they use means it is inaccessible to the practitioners.
>
> White male, voluntary sector, (Interview 19:16)

The research participant strongly believed that dominant concepts of professionalism were being imposed upon the community development field by intellectuals who were 'trying to justify their existence by using words, language, anagrams of one type or another' (ibid). He believed that by intellectualising professionalism, academics were creating unhelpful divisions between community development practitioners and participants of its processes. Whereas his belief was that the whole concept of community development needed to be rooted within the community rather than 'seen as a puppet intellectualising on it' (Interview 19:16).

A quarter (6) of research participants perceived a contradiction between New Labour's rhetoric of participation (democracy) and a centralisation of control by Government through Local Authorities (authoritarianism) (Interviews 9, 12, 14, 15, 17 and 21). The literature implies that the presence of community representatives within policy-making arenas created a set of new tensions with elected members (Banks and Orton 2005). Parallel tensions are evident in the interview data. The common practice of imitating the formal democratic system by CENs holding elections for representatives to the LSP must have added to the complexity and tensions (Carrahar et.al. 2008). Here, is the suggestion that rather than participation in LSPs broadening the possibilities for the democracy and the state, a parallel and conflicting system was created which threatened to weaken formal democracy.

> I have elected members who say no, no, no, that's not the way it
> works really; actually we are the people who make the decisions.
> Never mind that participatory democracy, actually we are elected to
> make the decisions. So even within the Government you have two
> sectors – you've got a Local Strategic Partnership which is made up of
> four sectors making decisions and then running alongside that you
> have local councillors who are elected and also Local Authority who
> are also making decisions

> White male, voluntary sector (Interview 4:16)

The interview data reflects contrasting views about whether New Labour was purposely retreating from its rhetoric towards a position of centralised control, or

whether the Government had not properly accounted for resistance from Local

Authorities towards its reforms and modernisations; these two positions, which reflect

organisational tensions between Local and Central Government are reflected in the

following narratives.

> I think there is a model and this is what I believe in; of bringing
> those two together the representative and the active citizen I was
> hoping that the Local Government Act was going to lead to
> exploring that model where there was more of an emphasis on
> equality for community partnerships and active citizens. I think the
> Government have got cold feet over that and the emphasis seems
> to be more on Councils having more control at local level.

White male, voluntary sector, (Interview 21:25)

> They've got a 'Community Engagement Strategy,' they've also got
> a 'Community Participation Strategy,' they've got all these
> strategies, you know, the councils, and they're all lovely on paper
> but in practice they don't pay any attention to them at all. I've
> quoted back at the bastards, 'you have written this, this is agreed
> by the Deputy Prime Minister's office, this is what you are saying,
> why are you doing this?'

White male, voluntary sector (Interview 12:17)

Regardless of the nuances of these positions involving struggles over Government

control and power, the interview data highlights that state policy was subject to

interpretation and/or subversion by different stakeholders. Those closest to local

structures of decision-making, such as Local Authorities, had the most power and

influence over what transpired in practice and their interpretations were related to the

nature of the relationship between Local and Central Government which were

sometimes defensive, sometimes offensive. Thinking beyond the New Labour

context, these lessons are applicable to whichever Government has control over the

state at any time, suggesting that the experience of the implications of policy on the

ground will always be filtered through the political relationships of Government and

between Central Government and civic organisations. Although the following

research participant seemed to comprehend there was a place for statutory

community development interventions, she believed that for both New Labour and its Conservative forerunners, it has been co-opted to service the cuts and economies made in public services. She is thinking critically about New Labour's 'best value' agenda and the legal duty placed up public bodies to 'inform, consult and involve local people in decision making to this end (Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007).

> You learn as a Country that has got this welfare system in place and can no longer afford to do it. So you are looking for terms and concepts that aren't going to be emotive, that are going to be wonderful, and that are going to have this lovely warm and wonderful feeling for people. But, at the end of the day, it is antithetical to what they are really meant to mean because you are not really focusing on the needs of the community, you are getting the community to respond to the needs of the state, and the community supporting the Government in achieving its objectives.
>
> Black female, voluntary sector (Interview 23:17)

Whereas the literature highlights the significance of critical and interpretive community development practices within the boundary space between communities and policy makers as a means of broadening and enlivening democracy (Shaw 2004); given that Local Government is a democratically representative form of voice and control by local people, it could be argued that this form of accountability couples with accountability to local people. However, such a stance would suggest an aggregative model of democracy whereby participation is discouraged other than through the electoral system (Schumpeter 1947). Given that New Labour introduced local structures such as LSPs and CENs, to bring communities together with policy makers, this suggests that their concept of democratic participation corresponded with a deliberative model of democracy (Rawls 1971, Habermas 1992, 1996 2001). Such a model requires and uses the boundary spaces between communities and policy makers wherein deliberation through open dialogue and reflexive interpretation can take place (Habermas 2001, McCarl Neilsen 1998:30, Martin 1999:20). According to the combined findings this research and other studies, as it transpired

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LSPs, apparently put in place to facilitate such a process, were not conducive to deliberative participation, neither to an interpretive approach to policy that would mobilise subjectivities. Instead, their initial appeal meant they were an effective mechanism to mobilise community development practice towards New Labour's agenda of centralisation and control, whilst immobilising critical and interpretive approaches.

7.4   MEASURING THE QUALITY OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PRACTICE

At the time of the interviews there was a general sense of the priorities of community development practice being determined by New Labour's community policies. As discussed, in contemporary community development there have always been tensions between competing interests of communities and state policy (e.g. LEWRG 1979). However, what is apparent from the interview data is that under New Labour these intensified as a result of instrumentalism, centralisation and increasingly complexity in formal and informal lines of accountability. Although a majority of research participants (14, 58%) believed in an ideal that community development should be primarily accountable to local people and communities (Interviews 1, 2, 5, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13, 15, 17, 19, 21, 23 and 24), attempting to maintain this (necessarily informal) focus proved increasingly difficult.

> Then to make things slightly more difficult they poured out what is called 'local area agreements'… Now one of our community voices said to me, in the last ten years there have been sixteen strategies and policies that have come out that have affected her neighbourhood without any consultation at all and so the nature of things are changing.
>
> White male, voluntary sector (Interview 4:16)

Figure 7.13 shows research participants' perceptions of accountability according to their community development perspectives (as identified by the researcher), with the

areas of commonality between different themes highlighted in bold text in boxes. All three categories contained perceptions that practitioners should be accountable to local people and community groups.
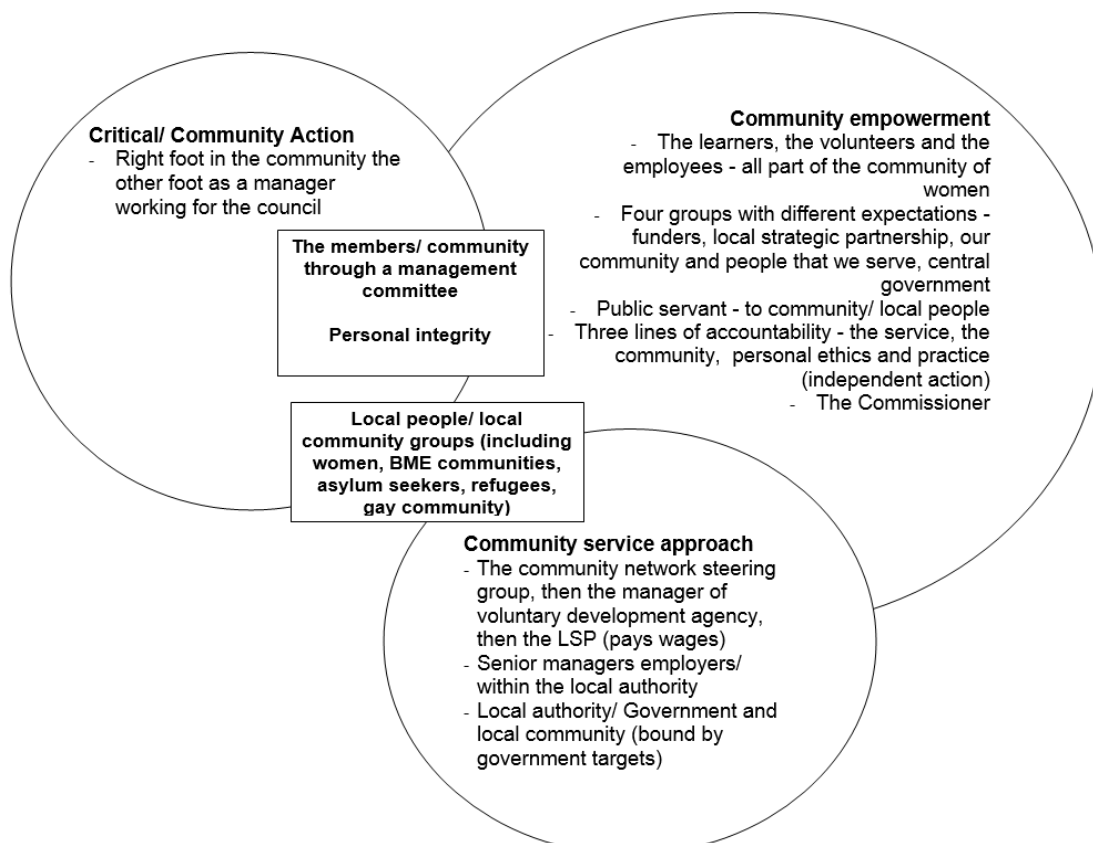

Figure 7.13 Research participants' perceptions of accountability by different community development perspectives

It is argued that accountability to service users is integral in a whole range of profession areas and that accountability to communities is what distinguishes community development from other professions (Banks 2004, T. Smith: 1980). What emerged from the interview data was more divergent and complex, although a majority of those in the voluntary sector (14, 88%) perceived their primary line of accountability to be to communities. For eight of these, this was achieved organisationally through a local management committee (Interview 2, 5, 6, 8, 10, 14, 18 and 24). The remaining three research participants were all employed in the voluntary sector. Although believing in primary accountability to the community as an

ideal; in reality they had more complex arrangements (Interviews 1, 4 and 13). One of these identified four groups with different expectations, their funders, the LSP the community and local people and Central Government (Male, voluntary sector 4:14) and this is similar in the following narrative of another.

> First of all I am a community network officer so I see myself as being accountable to the community network steering group, then the manager of [voluntary sector development agency], then the LSP, because it is the LSP who pay my wages really.
>
> White female, voluntary sector (Interview 1:12)

Two of those who worked in the statutory sector also believed they were first and foremost accountable to community and local people (Interviews 7 and 15). However, for one of these her funding was independent and directed through a multi-agency panel, thus involving complex lines of accountability (Interview 7:19). Those participants in management positions within Local Authorities were clear that their accountability lay with their employing authorities (Interviews 3, 16 and 11). Two of those in the statutory sector had dual accountability to their employer and to communities and were fully aware of the tensions and everyday dilemmas this created in practice (Interview 18 and 22). In the following example the research participant defied his line manager because he believed developing intersubjective relationships in the community was integral to his practice.

> Then I said to my Manager, 'next Tuesday I am going for a trip with refugees and asylum seekers.' My Manager's reaction was, 'No you don't need to go with them. Your work is about implementing strategy and how to improve services.' For me it was I have to be with them so they can know who I am, to build the trust with them. She didn't want me to go but I went, it was all about working in the community.
>
> Black male, statutory sector (Interview 22:8)

The following research participant believed that to be accountable to his employer and to the community required genuine partnership. In reality he understood that the

situation was more complex. He drew upon his own beliefs about what was important

in practice to weigh up the dilemmas as he is confronted by them.

> So in terms of my line management accountability it goes first to the
> institution but as I am tasked to develop internal systems and outside
> relationships I also keep myself accountable to that expectation as
> well and I think I have managed to make it clear within my team. So
> there are three lines of accountability in terms of management
> responsibility, then there is an ethic of what I believe in and what I
> practice really, which is independent action and learning so that
> actually has helped in tackling some of the difficult issues that came
> up.
>
> Black male, statutory sector (Interview 20:15).

Research participants were frustrated by a narrowing of spaces for independent and

creative community development exemplified by these lines of accountability each of

which had different bureaucratic and organisational demands. Their experiences

affirms a body of literature arguing that, despite its high level community

development rhetoric, space for politically engaged activism narrowed during New

Labour's administration (e.g. Atkinson 2003, Craig 2004, Ledwith 2005, Miller 2004,

Mayo 2004 and 2007, Mayo and Robertson 2004, Hoggett and Ledwith 2005, Shaw

2004, Shaw 2005, Taylor 2005, Smith 2006), This has been explicitly attributed to

instrumental accountability and the deleterious effect of New Labour's functionalist

model upon participation and engagement (also Interview 4:17, Interview 5:8,

Interview 9:13).

> On the negative side of community engagement, what would have
> once been independent and free standing and creative and energetic
> community based activity gets appropriated and then it just kind of
> part of the mainstream and it has no vibrancy to it and that's the big
> risk.
>
> White female, voluntary sector (Interview 10:12)

Whereas those with a critical perspective may have been more likely to anticipate

what emerged under New Labour, the interview data suggests that those occupying

the middle ground were most disheartened by what transpired in practice. Figure

7.14 shows that for majority (14, 58%) of research participants, spaces for the expression of what they believed to be important about the work were becoming limited. The majority, nine of these research participants were those with broad community empowerment perspectives (81% of this category). Four of these research participants were those with critical/ community action perspectives.

Critical/ Community action perspectives							Community Empowerment perspectives											Community service perspectives					
6	12	14	15	17	18	23	2	4	20	21	22	24	5	8	9	10	13	1	7	16	19	3	11
X	X		X	X			X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X				X		

Figure 7.14 Research participants expressing that spaces to convey their practice principles were becoming limited

The majority (12) of those research participants illustrated in Figure 7.14 are those employed in the voluntary sector, representing 67% of this category, including one community development manager with a community service perspective. This suggests that practice conditions in the voluntary sector were also tightening in response to New Labour's policies.

> What we struggle with is the good work that we do, which is good, is because we are a hands on and it is grass roots and I get really, really frustrated when we are spending loads of time at all these other things and yet we need to, so it's a contradiction really.
>
> White female, voluntary sector (Interview 5; 8)

A majority (21, 88%) of research participants' narratives expressed enduring tensions surrounding complex layers of accountability arising from competing community development interests. On the one hand there were the formal demands of policy makers, regulators and funders of community development practice that explicit policy be put into practice and evaluated. On the other were the informal day to day contingent demand of members of communities themselves experiencing the impact of targeting, labelling and resource limitations and with cultures often conflicting with

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the demands of politicians. Practitioners remained positioned in-between these interests, but with increasing layers of complexity and less room to manoeuvre.

> In terms of our community and people that we serve, they have a wide range of what they expect from us… at the grass roots, those who fund us and the stakeholders, like Central Government whose own particular policy and strategy expect too…so there are all kinds of tensions there all the time.
>
> Black male, voluntary sector (Interview 14:14)

Two research participants said they had experienced ill-health as a result of such tensions (Interviews 1 and 7, both female, voluntary sector). In both cases they were positioned between particularly complex layers of accountability arising from local partnership structures and were internalising the tensions faced in their everyday practice.

> I went off sick actually last year with stress for four weeks because I felt so frustrated because I am also the kind of person who can't switch off so I take work home and I find different ways, and things like that and I find the negativity and passiveness of that group is stuck in me.
>
> Black female, statutory sector (Interview 7:14)

In critical accounts of 'new public accountability' the interests of communities are shown to be submerged beneath the instrumental demands relating to centralisation, with managers 'having to balance' competing and contradictory demands (Banks 2004:106,149-151). A common challenge for those with dual accountability towards local communities and a Local Authority (either through employment or funding) was a disparity between Government targets and community needs (e.g. Interview 6:18 Interview 4:17, Interview 9:13, Interview 15:15, Interview 18:10 and Interview 19:11). In this example, the research participant was experiencing tensions between the demands of his employer and the expectations of a community with which he had an established a relationship based on mutual identification and trust, thus a sense of professional accountability towards them.

> I had my right foot in the community, working on BME groups in the community and I had my other foot as a manager working for the council….Leaders of the BME community would come to you because you could develop a trust with them and when you develop that trust you don't want to betray it. So they have expectations that you are going to do things for them to make their life better.

> Black male, statutory sector (Interview 18:10)

Two of the three that did not express such tensions surrounding accountability in their work were senior Local Authority managers (Interviews 11 and 16) who had little direct contact with community groups. Indeed, one believed managerialism was strengthening community development accountability:

> I'm evolving and my issues to do with monitoring and evaluation comes into that because I'm all for effectiveness, efficiency, all these horrible words we used to rage against in terms of community development is what I am beginning to focus on. If we are going to do something, it has to be relevant and meet certain aims and it needs to have an end game. You can't do it for doing its sake. I am not professionalizing, but I am into project planning now, I am into looking at where do we start, where do we get to we need to be very clear, regimented to some degree so it is sort of raging against some of the styles that I've used in the past.

> White male, statutory sector (Interview 11:11)

Half of research participants spoke of the significance of concepts such as ethical values or professional integrity in relation to the everyday tensions and dilemmas of accountability (Interview 4, 6, 8, 9, 12, 14, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21 and 23). The following research participant is reflecting upon a long career in community development in the statutory sector, which he ended in 2006. Generally, as demonstrated in this narrative, the lowest common denominator determining which way to act in practice was what research practitioners could live with personally (also Interview 8:12, Interview 12:13, Interview 13:10, Interview 24:9, Interview 20:15).

> I have coped with the tensions by being true to myself, feeling I have not over compromised my principles for the sake of the organisation – right until the end I challenged.

> White male, voluntary sector (Interview 21:24)

As reflected in the literature review, although dominant 'impartial, detached' perspectives attempt to circumvent or contain its emotional or relational elements, concepts of professionalism are shown to be rooted in the inseparability of the personal and the professional (Banks 2004). In an effort to maintain perspective and focus, aspects of personal ethics and integrity as they as emerge in the interview data will henceforth be referred to as 'personal belief systems.'

None of those who expressed community service perspectives referred to their personal belief systems in relation to accountability, suggesting they were operating within an impartialist ethical framework. Those who used their personal belief systems as their reference point for accountability included all of those with critical/ community action perspectives and almost half of those with broader community empowerment perspectives (5 out of 11, 45%).

> So yes there's been difficult situations Sue but I think maybe I've been bull-headed sometimes but I stick to the guns about your beliefs and what you should be doing.
>
> White male, voluntary sector (Interview 12:13)

A sense emerges from the interview data that, 'critical' practitioners were less likely to be mechanistic or literal in their interpretations and more likely to understand that there is more than one interpretation of state policy. As discussed, Shaw suggests that policy initiatives providing that community development practitioners are 'agents of a creative dialectic, indeed, she recognises that questioning and offering alternative interpretations of policy is in itself empowering (2005:6). However, the interview data also highlights that centralised managerial accountability and instrumentalism in relation to New Labour policy was restricting freedom of interpretation and expression in community development practices.

> Politicians' and officers' views were very often about things that are wider than that particular community or they would be about targets that Councils have got to hit and that creates a tension between what that community actually needs and wants and what the Council's view is, so I think there is huge tensions between Local Authorities and community development.
>
> White female, voluntary sector (Interview 6:18)

The interview data suggests that tightening practice conditions were encroaching on the personal and emotional well-being of community development practitioners, with a quarter (6) of research participants specifically stating that they were experiencing stress arising from the everyday tensions and dilemmas (Interviews 1, 4, 6, 7, 12, and 17). Three of these (Interviews 1, 7 and 17) were in practice situations where they had divided or dual accountability to voluntary management committees and Local Authorities. Out of the six, all but one (Interview 7) were employed in the voluntary sector and half (3) of these with critical/ community action perspectives (6, 12 and 17). If, as suggested from the interview data, voluntary sector contexts have generally tended to provide a greater degree of freedom and agency in practice, this suggests a tightening of conditions generally.

> There are some examples of really good practice but I don't think it is reflected across the Borough or an organisation. I think too often people lose sight of things because of the bureaucracy, because of funding requirements, the tick box culture - too often it is not benefiting the people it should be but they are meeting their targets in any case.
>
> Black female, voluntary sector (Interview 9:13)

This situation has been brought about by a tightening of funding arrangements making voluntary organisation funding from national or Local Government sources dependent upon meeting predetermined outcomes associates with the policies derived from social exclusion. In this way voluntary organisations have become mechanisms for the implementation of Government policy with little room for interpretation or manoeuvre.

7.3 ISSUES OF INTEGRITY AND IDENTITY IN A NEW LABOUR CONTEXT

Almost half (11) of the research participants narratives suggested that by 2007 they were struggling to remain true to their personal belief systems (Interviews 3, 6, 7,12,14,15,17,18, 21, 23 and 24). Over two-thirds (10, 42%) of participants narrated strategies or tactics they were using to protect what they felt to be important aspects of community development work (Interviews 3, 7, 12, 14, 15, 17, 18, 21, 23 and 24). Those with critical/ community action perspectives tended to avoid compromise at all cost, instead seeking and adopting a range of strategies to enable themselves to adhere to their practice principles. These ranged from confrontational or combative or strategies (Interview 12:9 and Interview 21:10, both male) or duplicitous strategies such as 'bending the truth' to funders so they could practice community development their own way (Interview 17 and 24, both female). Of course in so doing they were risking their professional integrity and also their organisational reputations. Those participants with community empowerment approaches tended to look for legitimate ways to challenge compromises to their practice principles. Those with community service perspectives tended towards non-confrontational or pragmatic approaches and were the most at ease with compromise. In the latter case, this is not surprising given that none of this group referred to their personal belief systems in relation to accountability or practice. Nevertheless, in the case of one research participant, where there were several anomalies in terms of pinning down her perspective and approach; she said she would 'bend the boundaries' to protect her practice principles. When prompted, it appeared that her 'subversion' amounted to defying rules that prohibited taking work home, and paying lip service to complying with an employment target imposed on her by the Head of Performance in the Council (Female public sector, interview 7:15-16).

Figure 7.15 illustrates the divergent range of approaches employed by research participants to deal with the tensions and dilemmas of accountability in practice. It

shows those with critical/ community action approaches using devious, combative and creative strategies to sustain their practice principles. Moving across the emancipatory and controlling spectrum the approach is more liberal, tending towards challenging through existing policies and systems. Toward the end of the spectrum the position adopted tends to be non-confrontational and compliant and leading to compromise.

	Critical/ community Action	Community Empowerment		Community service perspectives	
	6, 12, 14, 15, 17, 18, 23	4, 20, 21, 22, 24	5, 8, 9, 10, 13	1, 7, 16, 19	3, 11
Devious/ duplicitous	Bending the truth and becoming inventive "Using the Masters tools to dismantle the masters house" (reference to bell hooks)	Tick the boxes to get the money then using community development practice and principles			
Combative / confrontational	"Wheeling and dealing" "Infiltrating" "Like a fucking virus" "head-butting"	Getting into confrontation with manager if faced with compromise			
Creative	Different moves (like a dance) Being creative in challenge and thinking out of the box Finding spaces to work with small marginalised or minority groups Creative methods (Community Arts)	Use independence to support community group to challenge the service		'Bending the boundaries' to do work in the way they wanted to	
Legitimate Challenges/	Challenging, taking an independent stand and not being coerced or co-opted into different agendas Protest as a last resort - trying to work through dialogue Challenging from a management position in LA	Adherence to established CD values and principles Calling upon job description Go above manager to commissioner Using the language of policy makers to hold them to account Building evidence and referring back to what policy actually says			

	Critical/ community Action	Community Empowerment		Community service perspectives	
	6, 12, 14, 15, 17, 18, 23	4, 20, 21, 22, 24	5, 8, 9, 10, 13	1, 7, 16, 19	3, 11
non-confrontational			Has become more mellow and less confrontational Acting as a critical friend to kind of get on board and understand where they are coming from Not being too structured - finding a social entrepreneurial model	Building relationships with elected member/ officers Likes community consultations/ Dislikes conflict Pragmatism	
Compromising			Compromising organisational principles (women only)		Towed the line and concluded outcome was 'for the best' of the community (risk averse)

Figure 7.15 Research participants' strategies for avoiding compromise of personal belief systems

The following research participant's narrative contradicts the proposition of the 'ego ideal' and the pursuance of honesty and the 'ethical self' 'as something to be achieved' (Hoggett et.al. 2009:103). She believed that the concept of social inclusion implicit in European funding programmes to be endemic within capitalism, the tension being that she was 'actually empowering people to challenge the social system' (Interview 24:18). She was expressing a political position which is based upon a conflict model and is thus bound to contradict the politics of consensus. Her approach appears cynical in the ways in which she conformed to the demands of organisational accountability but this is pursued as a consequence of a critical understanding of the meaning of such accountability and in order to protect her own personal and professional integrity in terms of her understanding of community development work.

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> The urban funding application is part of the European economic strategy and part of that is about getting people into jobs and it is almost very mechanistic you have to cut your outputs down. The compromise is that I would say that to get the money but it is not really what I am going to use the money for, so I will tick the boxes but at the same time I'll use community development practice and principles to work with the communities.

> White female, voluntary sector, (Interview 24:18)

The following examples highlight the extent to which, non-confrontational or pragmatic approaches can lead to compromising core community development practice (Interviews 3 and 5). As exemplified in the literature and interview data, female-only space is central to transcending unequal gender dynamics which objectify women's experiences. However, such an approach is stronger among those with influences from liberatory traditions (e.g. hooks 2003). This research participant narrates how her organisation compromised the principle of female only space, claiming that opening up services to men will 'put the resource back into the women' (interview 5:6). Her narrative suggests that her organisation was operating on a redistributive social justice feminist philosophy (e.g. Fraser 1997), in contrast to an emancipatory one.

> Although it goes against the grain, the logic has been the money we are getting in for doing that makes life easier for the women… I will give you an example of that, a few years ago when we could get what we wanted from the college there was just no barrier on it. We just used to say our centres have been women only and we have stuck with that through thick and thin but when we went out in the community a lot of women were saying, 'Well I don't mind if there's a man on the course…' We didn't particularly like it and we never positively went to do with it, it happened accidentally really but the money we are making from them means we can give better facilities to women who go into child care.

> White male, voluntary sector (interview 5:6-7)

In the next example, the research participant, a community development practitioner/manager employed by a Local Authority had been working for over three years with

a community gardening group (Interview 3:4). At the point where the community group wanted to take ownership of a community building to run as a community centre, they were prevented from doing so by the Local Authority planning department. In her initial encounter with a local male activist who called their first public meeting, she was 'stunned' by his 'level of awareness' and knowledge about 'engaging all of the local people' (ibid). She then established a rapport with him and manages to dispel his initial mistrust of her. According to the research participant's narrative, the local activist at first had 'some very established pre conceptions' of her role as a Council Officer (p4). Her narrative suggests that his assumptions of Local Authority community development practice was compatible with the 'form of surveillance' evident in 1980s conservative models (Shaw 2005, Rose 1999 in Taylor 2007). What is again apparent is the relationship of power and control between the Local Authority and communities having framed the interaction. However on this occasion, contrary to her experiences with the working-class women she also trying to work with (i.e. Interview 3:6 in Chapter 6, 6.4), she managed to develop a congenial relationship with this man

> I mean we can laugh about it now' [but he said] 'I saw you sitting there at that table and said oh aye, [the Council] have sent their spies up to see what I am about.'
>
> White female, statutory sector (Interview 3:4)

Although the research participant's practice with the group was enduring, nowhere in her narrative is there a suggestion that the she had negotiated her role with them (e.g. Smith 1994). Neither is there any suggestion of making mutual identifications or even a relationship with other members of the group. Indeed her earlier narrative suggests that she is unable to transcend the dominant model of professionalism inherent in Local Authorities (Interview 3:6 in Chapter 6, 6.4). The research participant decides her role is a 'conduit for the conversation that the group had to have with the Planning Department.' This resonates with the practitioner roles of

'catalyst', 'facilitator', 'ally', or 'advocate' (Toomey 2009:181). However, as Toomey argues, any of these roles can oppress or empower depending upon the 'vision of the practitioner or practising institution' (ibid). As argued by Gaventa, 'power relations help to shape the boundaries of participative space, what is possible within them, who may enter, with which identities, discourses or interests' (2006:26). In this case, surrendering control of community buildings conflicted with the 'corporate consensus.' Community engagement with the statutory community development interventions understandable prioritised the interest of the state, while marginalising community interests (Shaw 2004). The research participant's obedience to her material position shaped what emerged in practice. It inhibited open dialogue or alternative interpretations of local state policy and ultimately prevented the group's self-determination towards ownership of a community building. The initial assumptions of the local activist were well-founded – perhaps he should have trusted his instincts and not let down his guard. That he did so suggests the power of the interpersonal relationship with the community worker influences the outcomes in practice.

Although initially feeling compromised and emotional, art the planning departments wholesale rejection of the community group's application, the research participant had 'ten minutes' on her 'soap box,' telling the Council they were playing 'lip service' to corporate statements about community engagement (p10). She then took 'a step back' to work out a positive way of managing the group's disappointment, this involved taking some of their ideas and 'finding them a safer way and a more practical way of being able to do that' (p10). Here her role switched from intermediary to an enabler or perhaps a 'rescuer' (Toomey 2009).

Apparently the research participant's only point of connection with the group was the male activist, suggesting she assumes his position of power within the group, who she referred to the activist an 'older gentleman' (p4). However, her representation of

his accent in her narrative (3.4 above) suggested he was working-class. Whilst this seems contradictory, it suggests her use of language reflected the normative social order inherent in the ideology of the Local Authority. Whereas the same research participant had been unable to establish trust with a group of local working-class women (who were probably more wise to her), she seemed to have identified who she believed represented the locus of power in the group and wooed him into trusting her. Other research participants' narratives also illuminated a tradition of collusion between Council officers and self-nominated community leaders that serve to maintain the normative social order (Interview 17:13, Interview 23:6-7).

The research participant acknowledged the limitations of her material position and given that she appeared to have no particular personal (or moral) convictions, she is broadly comfortable to work within the normative confines of the Local Authority (Interview 3:12). In contrast, another research participant, an ex-senior manager in Local Authority, opted to leave his employment rather than compromise his practice principles. He had been a Council employee for 30 years, but was opposed to their increasing authoritarianism and controlling function, declaring that he would like 'people employed in the public sector to actually put the servant back into public service' (Interview 21:13). His narrative suggested that his personal belief system and professional ethics were fused.

> Well, belief in myself and the values that I hold being constant if you like. I have had a lot of self-doubt but ultimately I have actually thought making a positive difference to people's lives is what is important and so I have coped I suppose with some of the tensions by doing what has been in my control to do. So ultimately for example when I had to make a choice about staying with the Council or leaving, I chose to leave – I couldn't stay.
>
> White male, voluntary sector, (Interview 21:24)

Here the research participant demonstrated the way in which space to make compromises and to make a difference as an individual worker was increasingly

limited or indeed, closed down under the New Labour policy blanket that demanded absolute accountability to Government intentions. In Banks' study, there is a similar narrative where a manager 'jumps ship' because if he hadn't 'it would have had a lasting effect on [their] own self' (2004:167). For Banks, the decision of this manager to leave is not 'about the stress of being a manager; 'rather it relates to their sense of vocation 'in relation to the way in which the job demanded he treated young people' (ibid). In contrast, the following research participant had an analytical understanding of what was happening and was operating from outside the Local Authority (although her example is from the late 1980s), so she was also position to develop a strategy for addressing it rather than just taking it personally or being drawn into untenable personal compromise. Here, she adopted an alternative strategy to respond to the collusion between Council Officers and 'community leaders' (Interview 23:6).

> The strategies we are inclined to use more and more is using the Masters tools to dismantle the masters' house and that is a very black feminist. It's bell hooks and that's in terms of looking at sexism and male domination that she talked about you use the ways in which men try and it has its connotations with slavery as well.
>
> Black female, voluntary sector (Interview 23:18).

In the context of community development practice in the late 1980s, the collective of Black women practitioners was able to 'chip away at the male power base' (ibid). Their approach resonates with Gaventa's concept of 'organic spaces' that have been created by 'less powerful actors' or simply 'natural spaces where people gather to debate, discuss and resist, outside of the institutionalised policy arena' (2006:27). The strategy the Black women devised was to develop cross sector alliances with those that knew that domestic violence cut across all cultural divides, such as the Police Office and 'white Councillors' (ibid). So instead of the old adage 'speaking truth to power,' the women engineered it so that power spoke truth to power and 'the

Asian men began to agree with it! And they said yes this is needed' (Interview 23:6).

As stated this was during the late 1980s when she believes there was more room to

manoeuvre, whereas this missing now (Interview 23:7). Here the research participant

is reflecting back to a time when it was much easier to create informal organic space

within which to form mutual identifications and to nurture self-determination.

> We used to have a group called Saheli, which is friend. Saheli is the
> most common used word and – and it is a female word. It was not a
> sort of a formally structured group, it was a support group for Black
> women and I prefer the term black to BME because I prefer the sound
> determination in that term and that sense of solidarity and there is a
> history to using the term Black in this country.
>
> <div align="right">Black female, voluntary sector, (Interview 23:6)</div>

The 1980s was a period where statutory community development perspectives was

based upon voluntarism and self-help, whilst critical approaches were dominant in

practice (Dominelli 1990, Green 1992, Miller and Ahmad 1997). The literature

suggests that it was also a time of collaboration and alliances and when feminist

social movements articulated a politics of difference (Ledwith 2009). The research

participants example also predates evidence of a deliberative model of democracy in

Government urban policy, but it was around the same time as the state had started to

reach out to extend governance into local community spaces (in Taylor, 2007).

In the following example, another research participant was reflecting upon how self-

determination based upon mutual identification was being systematically undermined

by dominant terminology and language. He perceived this to be emerging from

statutory policy making and academia and to be deleterious to critical community

development traditions based upon single identity politics. Here was narrating the

experience of another colleague, but which he also identified with. The narrative

suggests that this imposition of language was affecting gay men at a personal level,

where they were in danger of internalising it, thus diluting their identity.

> Years ago I used to be called queer, then people started to get a little pristine and they said homosexual then we found a word we were happy with which was gay and now the sexual health intellectuals are calling me a 'ham' – homosexually active man – for God's sake when are they going to stop playing with me? I am happy with the word gay, why don't they just use to word gay and there is a whole language derived around the holistic approach in terms of working with gay men in terms of HIV prevention and there is a language being used which has no relevance to the gay community.

> White male, voluntary sector (Interview 19:16)

What are loosely termed 'identity groups' are recognised as the basis for becoming self-critical, understanding the construction of our identities, for transcending boundaries such as race, class and gender and building mutual alliances (Ledwith and Springett, 2010: 105). The narrative above also corresponds with notions of 'communitas' or 'liminoid phenomenon,' being 'spontaneous, and inherently democratic in nature' (Turner 1969, Ward and Wild 1995:118, Turner 2012, Felder 2012, Vonnak 2012). Had New Labour's intentions been genuinely to empower communities and broaden participatory democracy, bypassing and then attempting to exclude identity groups would have been a contradictory strategy.

A third of research participants experienced tensions surrounding accountability arising from what they perceived as oppressive institutional practices (Interviews 1, 6, 7. 12, 14, 17, 18 and 23). These were particularly heightened for research participants when they identified closely with the communities they were working with (also Interview 7 and 22).

> Obviously felt I identified with their plea you know because they were arriving here, not because they wanted to but basically because they had to and because they were a product of a world crisis. They had to flee their country because, I mean the Czechs because of their race, because of the gypsy community and they were being discriminated, the Albanians were running away from the war and so forth, you know the Africans – so everyone was running away and they still are, for survival. You know because all the options in your life you would do anything to get away if it was a matter of survival.

> Black male, statutory sector (Interview 18:8)

Reflecting upon a period during 2000 when they were working with a local

management committee that was vehemently resisting to the participation of asylum

seekers, the research participant believed the decisions of his employer; the Local

Authority contributed towards the community prejudices and tensions.

> They made some incredible decisions without any thought about the
> implications and it was purely based on ignorance really. There was a
> cocktail of problems and they could have been avoided if they had
> paid more attention to people's cultural and ethnic backgrounds and
> understanding around the political scenario at the time.
>
> Black male, statutory sector (Interview 18:9)

Another participant worked in a Black led community association located in an local

area where he lived since childhood, experienced similar tensions in relation how the

Local Authority responded to mounting community tensions in the aftermath of the

'9/11 bombings' (also Interview 14:18-19)

> I am starting to question the whole ethics of how the system works. As
> a Black organisation you don't seem to be getting anywhere and so
> you start questioning that as a young person, they will start
> questioning that, the system but if community cohesion is going the
> right way they shouldn't be questioning the system they should
> question their own ability.
>
> Black male, voluntary sector (Interview 14:19)

He was faced with a dilemma, because from one angle, the prevailing view from

around 2,000 people who use the community centre on a monthly basis is that they

should take direct action through protest (Interview 14:15). His management

committee on the other hand were more complicit in relation to the Local Authority

and would only go down that route as a last resort. The approach to which he gained

common agreement was that of pursuing 'open dialogue' within communities and

with power holders (p15). He also believed that has the potential bring about more

than just a cohesive and integrated society. His vision of social justice is where there

equality and diversity of values, beliefs, religion and cultures, mutual respect, conversation with one another and open dialogue.

> If it is positive what you will have is much more, you know, you talk about cohesive integrated, you will have that but I am not sure how cohesive integrated society will have because people will still have their values, beliefs, religion and cultures but the whole element of respecting will increase, of being open to dialogue that will increase if community cohesion agendas are taken properly, of openness and being able to have conversation with one another, that will increase.

> Black male, voluntary sector (Interview 14:19)

Although this suggests that the research participant was working in a manner resonant with the intention of deliberative democracy, he saw this approach as just a strategy towards realising a vision of social organisation, an alternative being a more conflict based action as proposed by the community. Broadly, although he had reservations about the notions of 'cohesion' and 'integration' as they related to the Government's community cohesion agenda, he was embracing it positively as an opportunity to have an open dialogue involving Black communities and local policy makers. He was deeply concerned about the impact of the international political situation of local community relations, particularly the impact upon Muslim communities in the aftermath of events in New York 9/11 and London 7/7 (p17). He had insights and tacit knowledge, emerging from his personal and practice based experience about how the local cohesion and integration strategy could work. He believed that the Local Authority needed to work in genuine partnership with local management committees in the development of the strategy and that voluntary and community organisations needed to be at the forefront of implementation and delivery (p17). However, his efforts were completely frustrated by the Local Authorities interpretation and handling of the strategy. For example they were paying for private consultancy rather than drawing upon local knowledge and by funding organisations like the one that employed him to do the work. Whilst on the other hand expecting the Black led organisation to step in to help the Local Authority every time

they needed to make a public relations statement about community integration and cohesion in the City (p14).

Through community development practice, the organisation was demonstrating how they could work differently through holding public seminars on policy issues (such as education) with decision makers and local people. This involved informal conversation and open dialogue to facilitate a better understanding of different cultures and sharing information to build relationships and encourages participation (p19). However, the organisation was struggling to establish an open dialogue with the Council and the research participant could envisage a time when the community had to take adopt a different more conflict based position.

> The community will say okay then we will stop, we will stop any kind of conversation with the city authorities, we will take that stance.
>
> Black male, voluntary sector (Interview 14:19)

Among a cross section of research participants whose narratives suggested they were experiencing overt or covert racism operating in Local Authorities, five out of twelve North East Councils are represented (Interviews 6, 7, 12, 14, 18 and 23).

> [The Council] is very racist. We had instances with the office I worked in. A Black bloke had been forced out of the office because his colour and bananas left on his desk all the classic things about racism that you come across.
>
> White female, voluntary sector (Interview 6:14)

In parallel to the tensions surrounding institutional racism evident in the interview data, three research participants encountered resistance from Local Authorities when they tried to respond to issues of gender and power encountered in community development practice. All three women's identifications were strengthened by their personal experience of gender discrimination or oppression (Interview 1:4, Interview 17:12 and Interview 23:6). In every case it was male power holders that were obstructing female responses seen to be feminist.

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> Every woman I worked with was a victim of domestic violence and I mean every single woman and I tried to raise that on a strategic level. All the people I was trying to raise it with were men, they were managers, directors what have you and every one of them without exception their eyes clouded over and every single one of them without exception said 'what about male victims of domestic violence?'

<div align="right">White female, voluntary sector (Interview 17:12)</div>

To some extent these particular research participant's narratives vindicate the position of those who suggested that Local Authorities and their conservative practices were inhibiting the potential of New Labour policy to make a significant positive difference. However, what is also reflected is a local representation of Central Government's attempts to close down single identity group spaces as conveyed in the statement by Hazel Blears, the Secretary of state for Communities and Local Government in 2007 (Bourne 2007, Woods 2009). These narratives and the interview data generally also reflect an inherent tendency of New Labour's social inclusion agenda to elide issues of equality and social justice, in particular questions about structural of discrimination and oppression (Shaw 2004, Ledwith 2005, Fairbrother et. al. 2011).

7.5   MANAGING COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PRACTICE

The interview data suggests that as research participants came to have less agentic control over their practices, the impact reverberated in all kinds of personal and emotional ways. Yet the management systems in place at the time were entirely inadequate for dealing with the complexities and tensions surrounding evolving practice conditions. Research participants were encouraged in interviews and focus groups to engage in exploratory conversations around the key research themes and this emerged as a rare opportunity for them to reflect upon practice, situating this within historical and contemporary contexts and their own personal biographies.

At the time of the interviews, although a majority (14, 58%) of research participants had formal line-management structures in place, all but four expressed dissatisfaction with their line management processes. (Interviews 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10,11,13,17, 18, 22 and 24). Only two research participants (8%) clearly stated that their manager was experienced in community development (Interviews 5 and 11). Over a third (9, 38%) stated that their manager had no experience of community development whatsoever (Interviews 1, 3, 5, 9, 13, 15, 16, 22 and 24). Although fifteen of research participants (63%) stated that they had opportunities for reflection upon practice (Interviews 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. 6, 7, 11, 12, 13, 14, 17, 18, 20, 24), only in three (13%) cases was this part of formal management processes (Interviews 3, 5 and 11). Two participants specifically stated that their managers would be unlikely to recognise or value reflective supervision within community development management processes (also Interview 1:17 and Interview 13:18).

According to the literature, supervision of youth and community workers should be empowering for practitioners as a process that blends and extends 'knowledge and skills about critical inquiry and reflective practice' (Herman, 2012:119). It is intended to be as much about the supervisor or manager's learning as the community development practitioner's learning and development, thus reflecting the situatedness of the supervisory relationship (Tash 1967:84-85, in Smith 2007, Lave and Wenger 1991). A majority (13, 54%) of participants believed that reflexivity should be central to community development supervision and management processes (Interviews 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 12, 13, 14, 17, 18 20 and 24). As shown in Figure 7.16 these tended to be more towards the critical/ community action end of the spectrum.

Critical/ Community action perspectives							Community Empowerment perspectives												Community service perspectives					
6	12	14	15	17	18	23	2	4	20	21	22	24	5	8	9	10	13	1	7	16	19	3	11
X	X	X		X	X		X	X	X			X	X				X	X	X				

Figure 7.16 Research participants who believe reflexivity is integral to community development practice

Some specific critiques of line management were that it was 'meaningless' (Interview 6), did not discuss anything 'serious' (interview 22), and that the process was 'too management orientated' (Interview 17). The following research participant experienced her line management as technical and business orientated with a lack of any emphasis upon the quality of the practice:

> In my organisation nobody understands stuff on the ground except me really in that sense. They are all business people, they are academic they don't know. I am the most experienced person in the organisation about stuff on the ground. The supervision is very much around targets – are you doing this, are you doing that? There is not a lot around the quality of what I do.
>
> White female, voluntary sector, (Interview 13:18)

It is argued that New Labour's attempts to mainstream community development as a professional occupation operationalised a technical model and practitioners had to follow the rules (Banks 2010). In this light, the interview data unsurprisingly suggests that managers in Local Authorities tended to be biased towards technical performance management models. In one case, the research participant made a distinction between the purposes of line-management (a management tool) and external supervision (reflection upon practice) (Interview 11:18-19). In the other, what is termed 'quite a reflective process,' covering practitioners' training and support needs, amounts to an ends- led approach to 'agree objectives and targets' (Interview 3:10). Whilst satisfy the instrumental requirements of Government (Craig 2003), such an approach is limiting towards the personal, emotional and transformational

elements of community development practice that require reflexivity to maintain dynamism.

Although the following Local Authority manager had peer-supervision arrangements in place, this amounted to sharing technical skills and expertise with other professionals (Interview 3:10). The model of professionalism implicit here emphasises technical expertise in planning and service improvement (Green 1993, Smith 1996, Ledwith 2005, Smith 2006).

> There is a community of people involved in the same work…we would acknowledge a colleague perhaps from another organisation as having a particular field of expertise. For example, the PCT is acknowledged as having more experience of and being better at the evaluation and monitoring data analysis, data gathering type skills and I would look to them for support if we were undertaking something where we had to establish a base line or do some more robust evaluation, we would be looking for some practical guidance on that.
>
> White female, statutory sector (Interview 3:10)

The following research participant believed that the management of community development should consist of three components: technical management, personal development and support to do the job. In reality, management from her Local Authority employer amounted to an 'informal chat' (Interview 7:21). Although her manager was aware she has had time off for work related stress as a result of the tensions involved in developing neighbourhood partnerships, the response is 'don't take it personally' (Interview 7:22) . This is tall order given that practitioners invest so much of the personal in their practice, yet this demonstrates an absence of understanding on the part of the manager. This research participant was surrounded by particularly complex layers of accountability arising from funding and partnership arrangements (Interview 7:19). She used the expressions 'pig in the middle' (p22), and described herself as 'an add-on' to the Council (p5) to articulate her organisational position, suggesting that she was at once submerged in the conflicts and marginalised from the locus of power. Although the neighbourhood partnerships

she is employed to develop is constituted as independent voluntary organisations, they had been manufactured by the Local Authority and thus had no sense of ownership. Again there was an implication of Council Officers nominating community leaders.

> The partnerships were set up from the council so they didn't evolve naturally in the way that I see it. I think the councillors went out and asked people if they wanted to form and it does work. The way I see it is those groups don't feel it is theirs, they haven't got the ownership, I think they feel they are council led but they are not, they are all constituted independent groups.
>
> Black female, statutory sector (Interview 7:4)

For this research participant, technicism was represented by the partnerships being 'set up'. She believes that lack of 'ownership' involved misunderstanding on the part of community groups. Although she did not express it in these terms, to achieve such ownership, a more deliberative democratic process would need to be in place.

Perhaps in testimony to her lack of reflective supervision, the research participant spent much of her interview reflecting upon the prevailing tensions in her practice (Interview 7:4-8, 14 and 22). On a daily basis she was witnessing racism and class discrimination that paralleled her early life experiences (Interview 7:14). She used the term 'deflate' four times in the interview to express how her practice conditions were affecting her (p5, p6, p7 and p 22) and this is highly personalised. Things came to a head when there is a complaint about local children being referred to as 'black bastards' (p8). When she first challenged this, the response from some of the local people was, 'well why we can't call the chinkies (sic) and the pakis (sic)?' (p8). The Local Authority, as her employer, takes no responsibility for the situation, indeed she identified there was a level of collusion between the certain Councillors and one of the powerful characters in the partnership (Interview 7:7). The research participant is inevitably emotionally affected by the situation.

> I got really upset and I couldn't breath – after the meeting I was in
> the car – I couldn't to home either, so I telephoned my husband and
> I said I am so upset I can't drive, I need to go and have a beer,
> because I felt just really deflated.

Black female, statutory sector (Interview 7:22)

There was nowhere that this research participant could professionally deal with the personal implications of her practice other than to depend upon her husband and alcohol.

Across all of the research data, there was only one example where the research participant claimed that reflection was integrated into formal management processes. Although the following research participant stated that 'reflecting on practice is a very personal thing' (Interview 5:4), there is no indication in her narrative of the process being reflexive and introspective as it is conceived in the literature (e.g. Bolton in Banks 2007:140).

> I have never done a full time community and youth work course but
> what I did learn was reflecting on your practice and looking where you
> are going. The way we do it here is through some of the management
> techniques, certainly with all the staff, which is about supervision and
> appraisal and reflecting on their practice and taking workers through
> that process.

White female, voluntary sector (Interview 5:4)

In other narratives the concept of reflexivity in community development management was expressed more clearly, although it was their ideal rather than a concrete reality. Although there is a sense from the interview data of a lack of meaningful management of community development practice, research participants were generally clear about how these processes should or could work to improve the quality of their practice. This research participant said that 'good support and supervision' was rare in her then current experience and was 'more about what you are supposed to do, how are you doing it and what are your targets' (Interview 17:24). She also believe that managerial supervision should encompass ethical and

methodological consideration and the impact of social and political issues upon

communities, organisations and her practices.

> What I would want is an opportunity to talk about politics, ethics and
> methods of work and how I can transfer them into the work I'm doing
> now. To talk about social issues and what impact they have on the
> organisation and the people we are working with and the community
> we work in and how we can work together to do that and how I can
> develop my learning and my skills and knowledge on those.
>
> Female, voluntary sector (Interview 17:24)

In so doing she is suggesting a model of supervision which seeks to integrate the

personal, the political and the professional a manner that allows for contextually

situated dynamic work to emerge. Correspondingly, the following research participant

drew upon his spiritual and religious life to reflect and gain insights into his

community development practice. He believed that managerial support and

supervision should include these same elements of personal, emotional and

cognitive introspection, reflection and discussion.

> So it's looking at what are the real issues, what are the issues for you.
> How do you internalise them and if you do internalise them, how you
> deal with them. You are dealing all the time at 'head' level and at
> heart level, with emotions and arguments and debates and often very
> difficult ones, and very difficult issues to deal with yourself – often your
> own prejudices come into that.
>
> White male, voluntary sector (Interview 4:9)

These two research participant's narratives and that of Interview 7 express an ideal

model of community development management and supervision. Reading across

their narratives and other interview data, this entails an exploration of the following in

a self-conscious and mutually reflexive way: the issues arising from practice; the

methods the researcher has employed to respond to them; how the emergent

community issues relate to the political and social environment and to the

organisational context within which the community development practitioner is

operating in; how the identity, emotions and biases of the practitioner impacts upon

their practice; and finally, what learning can be drawn from the practitioners experience and their mutual reflections to inform future practice and action as it relates to themselves and the philosophy, policy and practice of their employing organisation. According to the literature, for the learning to be effective, the supervision would need to be situated within relationship of mutual trust and understanding between the community development practitioner and their manager (Lave and Wenger 1991). Such a model was not even remotely evident within the interview data, nor even substantial elements of it, at least not within the professional sphere of practice.

As discussed, 'professional knowing requires practitioners to access their tacit understanding knowledge' (Schön 1983, 1987 in Issitt and Spence 2005:9). Schön argues that without reflection upon practice tacit knowledge remains hidden, suggesting that practitioners are not entirely conscious that they possess this knowledge (ibid). The literature suggests tacit knowledge is implicitly incorporated into working practices and is derived from everyday practical experience of challenging discrimination and oppression (Knight and Robson 2007:1). The combined findings of this study suggest that locating and sharing tacit knowledge requires reflexivity and access to liminal or boundary spaces where there can be open dialogue, yet such spaces were found to be narrowing. The imposition of a technicist model of managerial supervision was tightening the bands of accountability and closing down opportunities and spaces for non-managerial supervision and collective worker conversation and discussion where workers might develop their full understanding of professional community development practice. For this research participant, a technical mode of practice coupled with an absence of space for reflection was seemingly deleterious to her tacit knowledge.

> I start to go downhill if I don't get any new ideas or, you know what I mean, you forget what you've learnt because you are doing things all the time so you are task orientated if you like and you are responding all the time and it is very rare that you actually get time out and you reflect on what you are doing.
>
> White female, voluntary sector (interview 1:16)

Practice that is not renewed by reflection upon personal professional experience and exploratory discussion is in danger of going stale and workers themselves in danger of demoralisation. In Banks study, although practitioners acknowledged the constraints of their position as Local Authority officers they maintained a 'critical edge' to their practice. (2007:145) The interview data for this study highlights that processes such as mentoring, practitioner dialogue and peer supervision were taking place outside of the sphere of professional practice. In four (17%) of cases the participants had made their own arrangements for reflection upon practice with colleagues or co-workers (Interviews 4, 12, 13 and 14) and in another five cases (21%) with friends outside of their workplace (Interviews 1, 6, 17, 20 and 24). Those with religious influences aligned processes of reflexivity in community development work with their spiritual practices (e.g. Interview 23: 43-49, Interview 4 and 20). For this research participant, as the only one in their organisation who understood community development, their source of reflective supervision was with a friendship group in her personal time.

> I don't have really non-managerial supervision apart from ['The Sisters']. [This is] a group of women who have an interest in and are practising community development workers in a range of organisations ... so those women are actually involved in lots of different kinds of networks and have access to other knowledge and information, which can sometimes prove useful so I have got a particular issue around community development. I know I can go and bounce things off.
>
> White female, voluntary sector (Interview 24:12)

All those research participants who believed that reflexivity should integral to community development practice (shown in figure 7.16) attempted to create spaces for this to happen but this was almost always outside to the professional domain of practice. That a fairly broad cross section of research participants had created their own spaces for reflexive introspection suggests a high level of tenacity in protecting the core principles of community development practice as understood by practitioners. However, although all this this is important for the maintenance of dynamic practice, because it is undertaken outside the professional arena, it fails to be recognised in evolving technical models of professionalism.

7.6 CONCLUSION: NEW LABOUR, THE THIRD WAY AND THE DEATH OF PLURALISM

The interview data suggests that community development practitioners were surrounded by complexities, contradictions and tensions arising from the New Labour policy context. The prevailing practice conditions were exemplified in relation to the strength of research participants' personal convictions, in particular their identity and identifications with communities. However, whilst remaining encourage by the high level policy rhetoric, even those with conservative perspectives were uneasy about contradictions emerging on the ground. Those most disillusioned by the ensuing practice conditions were those occupying the middle ground, with broadly liberal or pluralist community development perspectives.

In the first instance, instead of embracing the culture change implied in New Labour's modernisation and public service improvement agenda, Local authorities resisted it. At best, this implied paying lip service to community engagement and participation strategies. At worst, it reproduced paternalism and reinforced traditional professional (class) boundaries between practitioners and local people.   Community development workers inhabiting the statutory sector were unable to transcend this dominant model

of professionalism in their practice. Although statutory community development contains inherent tensions and that limit its transformational potential, this intensified because alternative models and approaches were neutered and immobilised through rigid interpretations of policy intentions and prioritising accountability to Local Authority management systems which were in turn inherently problematic with regard to the stated intentions of Government around equality and deliberative democracy. In terms of the trajectory of contemporary community development practice in Britain, the conditions under New Labour were unprecedented. Under such intransigent conditions, it was becoming untenable for community development practitioners in any organisational context to exercise fully or without compromise the four capacities required for principled practice in 'dilemmatic space' (Hoggett et.al. 2009). In the instrumental model of professionalism imposed by New Labour there was no room for the personal, emotional and reflexive elements of practice and only one interpretation of policy, thus no longer a choice between two or more 'unwelcome alternatives' (Banks 2013:99-100).

I think there was no longer a space for the subjective, (individual or community group) interpretation of policy and no longer space to discuss alternative meanings in policy. People had to leave when the Third Way simply went too far against their personal-professional understanding of their role and purpose.' unless the option was to leave (Banks' 2013:99). It was 'The Third Way' or no way!

What is implied from the interview data is an authoritarian model of community development professionalism whereby community development roles are imposed upon communities. Consent is gained by colluding with micro structures of power and inequality within communities and a thin conception of trust is shrouded in a paternalistic ethic befitting a range of practitioner roles (Toomey 2009). These roles can alternate so community representatives can be wheeled out but swiftly reigned back in again if they attempt to transcend the normative order.

Whereas LSPs could have been conceived as boundary spaces to open up dialogue between communities, policy makers and institutions; instead they were moulded upon Local Authority cultures and practices. The dominant positioning of Local Authorities in LSPs was exacerbated by tensions between elected members and communities and then by a raft of policies streaming from Central Government. As accountability shifted upwards, instrumentalism and centralisation intensified the conflicts for community development practitioners whatever the organisational context. These developments are exemplified in the language of rationality and technicality which was entirely contrary, indeed antithetical to New Labour's parallel rhetoric of empowerment and participation. Eventually, the interview data suggests that only one or maybe two interpretations of policy were deemed permissible that of Local Authority officers and elected members. The long term implications of tolerating such conditions are centralisation, authoritarianism and eventually, when resistance is exhausted, totalitarianism.

The narrowing of self-defining and freestanding spaces for association, participation, consciousness-raising and solidarity building or even self-help, is bound to lead to community tensions. Power and equality conflicts within communities was considered by the majority of research practitioners, and is considered in the community development literature to be the lifeblood of critical and empowering community development practice. Yet within a New Labour context, community tensions were becoming intransigent because there was no space for reflexive interpretation of the issues encountered everyday level in practice. Across the whole community development spectrum, the tensions encountered in practice mostly related to issues of power, inequality and control. However, how these were experienced by the research participants was dependent upon a number of variables including their perspective and the philosophy of the organisation they were operating in. Given that reflexivity, liminality and the personal and emotional

elements of community development practice were almost entirely polarised from the professional sphere, the harshness of their practice conditions under New Labour meant that it was increasingly difficult for practitioners to identify the locus of their everyday struggles. At another level, whilst institutional discrimination was compounding community divisions, the narrowing of ungoverned or liminal spaces was limiting the possibilities for mobilising collective agency to challenge structural injustice and structural inequalities.

New Labour's apparent lack of trust in critical community development processes may have precisely stemmed from these processes being seen to be rooted in personal and identity politics. Its efforts to broaden participatory democracy, whilst seemingly resistant to opening up critical spaces, presented New Labour with inherent contradictions. Attempts to contain the possibilities for divergence and conflict could have been precisely what led to a tightening of systems of management and accountability. However, growing disenfranchisement, particularly from those community development practitioners and commentator occupying the middle ground, must have created a serious dilemma in terms of maintaining public support for New Labour policies. As discussed, in agonistic pluralism, democracy is essentially an eternal power struggle and difference and power inequalities are integral to politics (Mouffe 1996, 2000a, 2000b, 2013, Jamoul 2006:32). If New Labour had been serious about widening participatory democracy as their rhetoric implied, or had prioritised this over questions of control and the imposition of linear policy imperatives, these findings suggest there was room for self-defining single identity groups and for constructive democratic community development practices in liminal spaces where identities could be temporally or simultaneously explored, contextualised and suspended.

8. THE POSSIBILITIES FOR REFLEXIVE, DYNAMIC AND ACCOUNTABLE MODEL OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROFESSIONALISM

8.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter concludes this thesis, with a reflective interpretation of what the researcher perceives are the implications of this enquiry within the current political context and for the future of community development practice. It argues that for community development practice to maintain dynamism and integrity in a state policy context it is vital that its personal dynamic is integral to forming conceptions of professionalism. Supporting the personal and relational elements of community development practice requires liminal spaces on the boundaries of communities, organisations and policy making where self-determination and the agentic capacities of the practitioner can be exercised. It is only under these practice conditions that the intersubjective relationships necessary for bilateral and horizontal accountability can be nurtured and developed.

In the interview data, reflexivity and introspection were found to be almost entirely absent from community development management processes. Through researcher's interpretation of the interview data combined with arguments presented in the literature, this chapter identifies dimensions of community development professionalism exemplified during the New Labour period. It suggests alternative possibilities for a more critical, reflexive and dynamic model of community development professionalism. Although this a concluding chapter it continues to draw upon selected research participant's narratives as they relate to taking some of the arguments presented in this thesis forward. In congruence with the thesis of reflexivity, the intention is not to attempt to come up with a fixed definition of professionalism or for the analysis to be final or complete, but to promote wider

interpretations and dialogue within the community development field about the possibilities of community development practice to maintain its dynamism and integrity, whilst being accountable towards communities *and* state policies.

8.2 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROFESSIONALISM UNDER NEW LABOUR

A central concern of this thesis has been to examine how values and principles such as equality, social justice, participation and empowerment are conveyed through everyday community development practice, the particular emphasis being up the relationships between practitioners and participants of community development processes. In community development work values are generally understood as 'ethical principles about how the work should be undertaken' (Banks and Orton 2005:107). Although there is variation on their 'precise configuration,' they generally include; social justice, equality, participation and empowerment and self-determination (ibid). A central premise of the thesis is that a dynamic interplay between the personal and professional is integral to the dynamism of community development practice. Resonating with other study of the same period (Banks 2007, Hoggett et.al. 2009), research participant's personal commitments and values were exemplified in the practice principles of the majority (21, 88%).

> I'm always going to carry my values which are not judging or making good judgement calls and about not being racist or sexist or whatever it may be and that is about carrying those with you. You are not just doing them because it's your job but it's what you believe in.
>
> White female, voluntary sector (Interview 13:5)

Although this personal/ professional dynamic is filled with passion, energy, creativity and commitment, it also where biases and prejudices are situated. The combined research findings suggest that whilst mutual identifications are shown to strengthen community development practice in terms of significance of interpersonal the

relationships in the practice arena, they are also the basis for personal and emotional biases. Whilst mutual identifications are shown to strengthen critical and emancipatory community development practice, when reflexivity is lacking, there is a tendency to 'over-identify' with values (Hoggett et. al. 2009). The tensions of self-defining community development practice in relation to the personal and emotional biases of the practitioner are of course problematic and these are also highlighted in the literature and the interview data (e.g. Toomey 2009, Henderson and Thomas 2002). A central argument emerging from this study is that professional frameworks should not attempt to contain personal and emotional biases, rather that reflexivity is required in management and accountability processes to sustain this inherent and necessary dynamic of community development practice.

The marginalisation of critical, interpretive and reflexive perspectives in contemporary community development policy discourses might have made it easier for the newly elected New Labour Government to co-opt those with broad based perspectives into their instrumental mode of professionalism (Hoban and Beresford 2001, Ledwith 2005). The combined findings of the study show that generally, the community develop field had welcomed New Labour's community policies recognising their own perspectives its participation and empowerment rhetoric, even those critical perspective believing that these new politics validated the role of communities and community development practice. What appears to be a slippage between critical community development theory as it is represented in the literature and the critical consciousness of practitioners, could well have contributed to a lack of criticality in relation to New Labour's policy and a tacit acceptance of instrumentalism. This emphasises the need for a better unity of community development praxis (Freire 1973, Gramsci 1971, Hooks 2000, Hill Collins 2000, Ledwith 2005, 2009, Issitt and Spence 2005).

Both the interview data and the literature highlights that there were practitioners, managers and influential theorists in the community development field, who believed that instrumentalism could strengthen public accountability whilst improving the quality of community development practice (e.g. Interview 3:10, Interview 11:20 and Interview 16:9 and 15, Channon 2003). Whist the concept of 'organic cohesion', captures the personal, emotional, relational and intersubjective elements of community development practice (Gramsci 1971: 418), these findings suggest that 'organic centralism' occurred at the point when the National Occupational Standards were harnessed in a move by Government to encourage the community development field to plan and evaluate in relation to their performance management instruments (DCLG 2006). The indicators of 'stronger communities' producing a set of abstract values to impose upon communities in a form that could be measured and accounted for in the Government's terms.

Whilst a body of critical literature argues that community development concepts and values were co-opted in support of New Labour's fiscal agenda (e.g. Atkinson 2003, Shaw 2004, Taylor 2007); elements of the interview data questioned the very logic of framing community development practice principles within an abstract set of values, arguing that principles such as equality and social justice are always in danger of appropriation, thus needing to be subjected to constant reflexive and critical interpretation . (Interview 24:13, Interview 23:17). As expressed by this research participant, the concept of social justice is problematic in both its abstract and situated forms

> I have not tried to put across values of social justice I just don't think that it is something I want to do…Just look at social justice for example…one of the richest men in England is an Indian and the owner of steelmaking companies across the world. What would social justice mean to Mr Mittal and what would social justice mean to a white person who is from a working-class background? So can social justice connect with these identities or is it by taking away our identities would so that we start to look at social justice from a different perspective?

<div align="right">Black, male statutory sector (Interview 20:10)</div>

In resistance towards the notion of abstract values in community development practice, he had redefined his own practice towards a concept of 'independent action based on learning' (Interview 20:10). For him, this better reflected the process of a constant learning experience and also kept him on his 'toes' about who he was and that his self as an entity is perhaps a constructed from various ways he has learnt over the years so he should not become attached to it (ibid). He said that the 'whole idea of independent action and constant learning' kept him conscious of this aspect and that is what he tried to put across in his practice (ibid). He conveyed these concepts and principles by working with various groups, communities and religions, first to 'to help people learn' but also to find ways of challenging 'their own conception of who they are' (ibid). At the time of the interview this research participant was in the process of conceiving a project about challenging the very notion of identity and of self' in collaboration with a mental health group (ibid). In terms of taking the findings of this thesis forward, this research participant's revolving approach to practice embraces Ward and Wild's conception 'liminal people' that are between the structures of society and possess the capacity to temporality suspend their sense of self and identity (1995:25). Is suggests a model of community development professionalism the situates questions about the construction of the self and identity at the very centre of critical and reflexive practice and is an antidote what was essentially New Labour's free market economic approach (Robson 2000 in Ledwith 2005), because it challenges the whole notion of individualism.

In identifying the implications of this study of towards future debates and arguments surrounding community development policy, the researcher identified an analytical model involving five dimensions of professionalism exemplified during New Labour's administration, these are conceived as: a technical dimension, an enforcement dimension, an authoritarian dimension, and instrumental dimension and individualistic dimension. Although cutting across the interview data and intersecting, each dimension had specific characteristics and there was an implied continuum or progression from one dimension to the next.

The technical dimension of professionalism in a New Labour context, corresponds with that the emerged from the statutory expansion of community development work in the 1970s. It embraced instrumental accountability and technical knowledge, reinforced class structures and marginalised dissent. It was exemplified the technical and rational mode of participation that emerged from LSPs (Interviews 8:10, Interview 11:15).

As they related to the enforcement dimension of professionalism, practitioners constructed as objects of state policy. Issues of power and inequality within communities were bypassed, this reinforcing naive or false consciousness and 're-moralising communities' into the logic of Government policy (Shaw 2005:3, 2005). This suggests that individuals and communities were encouraged to survey and regulate each other, playing into the hands of far right influences through the portrayal of myths and stereotypes (Jeffs and Smith 2002, Shaw 2004, 2005). Remaining accountable to state policies whilst protecting core elements of community development practice was found to be the most problematic where they conflicted with the enforcement agendas of Government in relation to their implemented in Local Authorities (Interviews 3: 6,14, Interviews 16:7,17-18). In one example the community development team was specifically located within 'community protection' a department mainly concerned with enforcement issues,

such as community safety wardens and anti-social behaviour team, thus neutering any possibility of a critical exploration of the dynamic tensions between emancipation and social control.

The authoritarian dimension of community development professionalism reflected parallel characteristics to the enforcement dimension, but was more pernicious. Here, practitioner roles were imposed upon communities and consent was gained, not by bypassing or colluding with micro structures of power and inequality, but manipulating them. The authoritarian dimension of professionalism reinforced traditional notions of paternalism and trust in authority. Such was the level of control that resistance and dissent was not contemplated or at least not taken seriously. The authoritarian dimension was devoid of concepts such as agency, reflexivity or liminality. Although concealed beneath an impartial, detached ethical framework, principled morality was broadly absent. The elements of authoritarian dimension was best exemplified in the context of those Local Authorities where community development practice was conflated with an enforcement agenda, in particular where community development practitioner, whilst acknowledged there was some room for manoeuvre had no particular personal or moral motivations to transcend the normative confines of their professional role (Interviews 3 and 16).

An authoritarian dimension of professionalism is a perturbing concept, not least when it is applied to community development practice even in relation to its controlling and emancipatory spectrum. In her analysis of the 'new accountability' Banks draws upon Eichmann's testimony of his role in the holocaust 'having robbed himself' of his autonomy (Vetlesen 1994:111, in Banks 2004:177). In her search for explanations for the tacit acceptance of New Labour's instrumentalism, centralisation and then authoritarianism, the researcher was drawn to the role of the Dutch civil service in the Nazi German Government's occupation of Holland. She was particularly interested

in their interpretation of special instructions[48] that outlined the conduct of the civil service under occupation, including a clause relating to what to do if the occupying Government did not respect The Hague Convention' (1899, 1907) (Rein 2013:42).

> When performing their duties under occupation, civil servants must weigh very carefully the benefits of damage the occupations policies might cause to their fellow countrymen and so resign immediately should it be disadvantageous to their own people.
>
> Rein 2013:44

Upon being issued with the instruction for all Jewish Civil servants to be sacked or to resign from their posts (Rein 2013), they must have been faced with the mother of dilemmas. In attempting to interpret their actions, the literature implies that they did not necessarily share the ideological perspective of the Nazi Government and despite operating in the harshest of conditions, they possessed capacity to exercise agency and resistance (ibid). Given that the Civil Servants believed to resign would descend the country into chaos, they chose the former of the two unwelcome alternatives (McElligott et. al, 2003).

The particular case of Lentz, who was appointed Inspector to National Bureaux of Statistics provides a deeper insight to the tacit acceptance of New Labour's conditions. Although, Lentz had no particular political leanings, when instructed by the Nazi Government to develop a system of identity papers for every member of the Dutch population, he perceived it a 'natural extension of the need for order in modern society' and his quest for technical perfection flourished in a non-democratic state (McElligott et al. 2003). Even under death threats by the Dutch resistance, he did not comprehend the damaging implication of his work (ibid). In an account of Lentz's character after his death, the researcher found a chilling message for those who believed that instrumentalism strengthens community development accountability, or

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[48] The 'annwijzingen'(Rein 2013:42)

indeed anyone that has become task orientated to the exclusion of nurturing their personal and emotional self. In this respect it chilled her own blood.

> He was a dry perfectionist, driven by his work, who was largely estranged from the world around him. His work was in effect his life, and he could often be found working half the night. After his death, family and some former colleagues painted a different picture, one of a man who was both intelligent and charming, and who threw himself into his work as his marriage floundered. However, the image of one retreating into perfection at work when his social life is imperfect may be a case of reversing cause and effect.

McElligott et al. 2003:194.

In the ultimate reckoning of the Holocaust, it was not the Nazi Government that was held to account for war crimes but the individuals who carried them out. As noted by Jeffs and Smith, individualism requires individuals to 'place themselves at the centre of their plans and reflexively forge their own biographies' (2002:31). However, they also note that 'being blessed with such choice' means we are 'perpetually at risk of making an erroneous selection' (ibid).

> Fragmentation, we are told, leads to matters relating to meaning, identity and ethics being removed from the public domain and recast as the responsibility of the individual.

Jeffs and Smith 2002:15

In an occupation where practitioners are driven by their sense of vocation, there is a danger when the very personal and emotional aspects that are motivating them become alienated from practice. This is shown to be particularly likely where liminal spaces are narrowing and reflexivity is absent in frameworks for management and accountability. This could explain why half of interview participants who believed in the power of reflexivity were prepared to give up their personal time for this purpose. However, this poses yet another dilemma for community development practitioners: Do they allow the issues and tensions that are central to practice become

marginalised from the professional sphere? Or internalise them and process them in the domestic and social sphere? (e.g. Interview 7, pp 5, 6, 7, 14 and 22).

The findings of this study suggest that the marginalisation of reflexivity from community development management and accountability was derisory to all four of the capacities regarded as necessary for practitioners to operate in a principled way in 'dilemmatic space.' That is to 'contain uncertainty, ambiguity and complexity,' 'self-authorisation,' and being 'passionate and thoughtful,' or containing emotions without suppressing them (Hoggett et al. 2009:174). As the self of the practitioner became alienated from systems for community development management and accountability, their personal belief systems were the only reference point for professional ethics. Although this implies a level of practitioner autonomy, by its very nature community development practice is a mutual process and thus such agency and action should be taken collectively and collaboratively.

The final dimension of professionalism identified in as New Labour context is an individualistic dimension relating to a 'free market' model of community development (Martin 2003:1, Robson 2000 in Ledwith 2005). This dimension could potentially accommodate partial, situated ethics but in a New Labour context there was an absence of any legitimate framework of management or accountability in which to situate them. So pernicious were Government interests in the sphere of local community development practice, there was almost a total absence of liminal spaces to critically analyse policy from a practice perspective, or to mobilise collective resistance, dissent and action. Such was the harshness of the practice conditions and the marginalisation of reflexivity from the professional sphere of practice and indeed, it was no longer possible to identify the locus of power. The prevailing conditions, resembled Butcher's metaphor of 'permanent white-water' where things are moving so fast there is no time or space for reflection (2007b:59, 2013:77-78).

> There's constant things coming out, it's a big factor I come across…You know what it's like Sue in practice, you never get a friggin (sic) minute do you? You look at Council for example who produce strategies and policies till they come out of their ears and they push to do that in this Government all the time.
>
> <div align="right">White, male, voluntary sector (Interview 12:17)</div>

The autonomy of practitioners to determine their own practice could potentially flourish in an individualistic dimension of professionalism. However, in the absence of reflexivity in management and accountably there are no frameworks to evaluate or situate individual agency in relation to the emancipatory and transformational tenets of community development practice. The New Labour period witnessed community development practice become completely detached from its critical philosophical traditions, with practitioners becoming disempowered and acting out in ways that contradicted established core elements of practice.

The value of 'self-determination' in community development practice relates to individual and collective agency and its emphasis upon the 'importance of citizens taking control over the conditions of their lives' and 'securing greater levels of civic and political participation' (Butcher, 2007a:56). However, the concept of autonomy as it relates to 'rational, autonomous' individual agents' with the 'right and ability to make choices' is inherently Western concept and does not apply in cultures where the individual is perceived as 'one subordinate element within a complex web of inter-relationships' (Hoggett et. el. 2009:27). These considerations were expressed in the thinking and influences of one of the research participants. This was at a point in the interview where he reflected upon a specific time and place (1999), when he was particularly uncomfortable about how society was constructing itself, this was particularly in relation to ensuing tensions surrounding the imposition of Western individualism upon societies with a deeply rooted philosophical traditions of collective social responsibility and spirituality.

People had no sense of any social responsibility and that is an area that has always stayed with me. Personally I feel responsible towards not just human beings but to the entire existence. This is very much ingrained in my learning of religion in India. There is a strong sense of social responsibility in all religious traditions in India, whether it be Islam, Sikhism or Buddhism. So all these religious traditions they speak about social responsibility and a person is not just an entity. Buddhism for example speaks of a collective of individuals so you are an individual but you are also part of a collective so that distinction between collective and individual is false from the perspective of Buddhism. That has always stayed with me, especially since I started to look at religion from not necessarily from the point of view of belief, but point of view of how we live our life.

Black male, statutory sector, (Interview 20:5)

These events had framed not just his philosophy but his whole epistemological and ontological perspective and led him to question the very logic contained in the notion of an individual and collective dynamic. He put this into practice by placing questions about the construction of self and identity at the very centre of his community development practice.

In the interview data, those with community development perspectives towards the emancipatory end of the community development spectrum tended to have personal insights into particular aspects of discrimination and oppression that has been influenced by social movements and liberatory theory. As such, they possessed critical understanding of how power operates and of the intersections between different forms of oppression and domination. Their practices were based upon challenging the normative social order through: conversational group work, intersubjective identifications, consciousness-raising and stimulating critical incidents coupled with dilemmatic and reflexive capacities. Precisely from critical perspectives and by connecting experiences of oppression, lies the potential to identify the locus for self-empowerment and domination (Hill Collins 2000).

Had New Labour been genuine about strengthening the democratic state through community empowerment and participation, then it would have left some spaces

unoccupied for the creative and energetic expression of critical community development practice. However, the findings of this study suggests that it was precisely critical and identity based approaches that might have illuminated the absence of ethical and moral principles beneath a functionalist approach that New Labour was attempting to extinguish.

8.3   TOWARDS AN ALTERNATIVE MODEL OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROFESSIONALISM

The meaning of values, including those established by the Community Development National Occupational Standards,[49] like any other abstract concepts are highly contested. To suggest otherwise would be to adopt the positivistic approach that is so problematic for community development practice. As argued by Winter, 'language is not a private act,' it structures our consciousness and simultaneously our relationships with others (2003:14), therefore, for values to be useful or meaningful as ethical principles for community development practice requires them to be subject to criticality and reflexivity, and situated in relation to intersubjectivity (i.e. situatedness, Lave and Wenger 1991). There are parallel arguments surrounding the displacement of traditional ideas about ethics in practice based research (Fox 2003, Issitt and Spence 2005). For Fox, if practice based research is committed to transgression and difference, mobilised through reflexivity, and collaboration, then it is by all intents and purposes 'ethical and political' (2003:95). Applying the same principles to community development practice suggests that that its primary tenets of collaboration based upon inter-subjectivity coupled with reflexivity provide dimensions of legitimacy and integrity in professional accountability towards state

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[49] Life Long Learning UK 2009, FCDL 2015

policy. Liminality provides a third dimension of independence, absolutely necessary in relation to the accountability of community development practice to communities.

The deployment of reflexivity in community development practice is critical in tackling the politics of individualism rooted free market economics (Shaw 2004: Ledwith 2005). The narrative that follows highlight reflexivity in practice, although the research participant is at pains to point out that he did not derive these capacities from community development nor academic learning. Instead, they were insights from religious practices such as Buddhism, Hinduism and Sikhism where 'non-attachment' to the self is central (Interview 20:11). In the first instance 'non-attachment' as it was used here was interpreted by the researcher as it is conceived in an 'impartial, detached' ethical framework (Banks 2004:77). However, as her own insights developed, she interpreted 'non-attachment' in the subsequent narrative to represents the temporal, reflexive and analytical practice framework within which she was operating. As noted by Banks, reflexivity involves locating our own perspective in the discourse' and 'making aspects of the self strange' (2007:140). According to Mead's theory of temporality, the 'agentic dimension of social action can only be captured in its full complexity…if it is analytically situated within the flow of time' (Emirbeyer and Mische 1998:962). The approach exemplified here suggests the possibility for an alternative model of professionalism that transcends the dichotomy of 'impartial, detached' or 'partial, attached' ethical frameworks (Banks 2004:77).

> I think it is that continuity and to me reflective practice therefore is being able to step back in real time and being able to look at the interaction which is going on and see whether I am being in any way closing down myself or how I am, what kind of relationship is in operation in the social context. I think it is really an interesting area, quite a complex area of analysis which keeps going.
>
> Black male, statutory sector, (Interview 20:11)

This narrative seems to suggest that in community development practice, practitioners can self-regulates their use of self, not in an inhibited nor an egotistical

way but by suspending or revealing it appropriately at any given moment, thus subjecting their values and biases to public scrutiny. In community development practice, collective understanding emerging from self-as-subject includes reflexive use of the 'self' and identity of the community development practitioner. Reflexivity involves making ones self-awareness public, reflexive acts are not 'narcissistic or accidentally revealing,' but 'purposive' and 'intentional' and showing how the self is constitutive in the process and the product (Ruby 1977:4 in Hall 2003:27, 31). This suggests that it is possible for community development practitioners to be at once be subjects and objects of policy, whist remaining accountable to communities and state policy.

From critical perspectives we gain insights into the potential for sharing of little stories that reach into the consciousness of another individual and touch their humanity. The combined findings of this study highlight that sharing little stories can stimulate critical incidents, fracturing naïve consciousness and leading to critical consciousness (e.g. Interviews 17 and 23). As Griffiths suggests, 'this process can be at once deeply personal and profoundly political,' it contains the potential to reach across difference, making intersubjective connections and linking this to 'grander concerns like education, social justice and power' (Griffiths, 2003:81 in Ledwith 2009:694). Rather than waiting for the 'revolutionary moment,' the dialogue about organising human life can take place through everyday interpersonal interactions (Gramsci in Hoggett et al., 2009:16).

In order to begin to bring particular elements of these findings of this thesis back to the concrete reality of the researchers own practice, the model of feminist critical practice developed by the researcher in collaboration with other feminist community development practitioners is now revisited in a post New Labour community development context.

Following and intensive and far reaching process to develop and build the network (2008-2011), over the subsequent three year period (to 2014), NEWN carried out participatory action research to enquire about the everyday issues encountered by women and to mobilise collective action. This involved using a range of human rights and equalities instruments, including a model of de facto or 'substantive equality.' This involved creating environments where women could become empowered, identifying the underlying causes of discrimination and takin action towards 'real' transformation of institutions and systems so that 'they are no longer grounded in historically determined male paradigms of power and life patterns' (CEDAW undated). In the first instance, this process was based upon conversational small group-work methods and consciousness raising, involving of over 300 women and representative of 150 different organisations.

> I feel absolutely thrilled at the level of energy, enthusiasm and determination shown by those strong women. It felt like the good old campaigning women liberation days. At last tunes a way to confront welfare reforms etc. according to international Law.
>
> Action research participant, NEWN 2014c:16

Figure 8.17 is an image of a 'story box' made by Black young women and girls. It expresses the multiple levels of discrimination and oppression they face and the ways in which a feminist Black women led organisation is working with them to challenge the cultural and structural barriers. As an illustration of the effects of the critical community development processes upon the young women's consciousness, the notion of 'fairness' now popular in Government policy rhetoric is used to highlight the inherent contradictions played out in the subjective reality of these young women's lives.

Figure 8.17 Model made by young Black women and girls to depict issues affecting their lives and how the barriers can be removed[50]

Notice also the picture of George Osborne (on the left), currently the Chancellor of the Exchequer (2010-), displayed there to symbolise the deleterious impact of austerity measures upon already unacceptable levels of gender inequality faced by women (NEWN 2013b). Combined with statistical evidence to highlight increases in women's inequality, the ensuing research report captured the divergent experiences of women in the North East, their personal stories represented in a 'collective narrative' or 'unique biography' with transformational potential (NEWN 2013b, Hill Collins 1990: xi-xii, in Smith 1997, Ledwith and Springett, 2010). Such was the energy and sense of solidarity generated by the action research, that people from across the North East (women and men) fundraised for a delegation of six women to

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[50] Used with permission from the Angelou Centre, Newcastle upon Tyne.

present the findings to the United Nations Convention for the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination (CEDAW) in Geneva, prior to their examination of the UK Government in July 2013.[51] The funding was raised predominately from a social event: 'We're the women: words, music and songs for CEDAW' (12th May 2013). A creative, energetic and far reaching and unified response emerged as a result of a female centred approach to tackling inequality. This supports arguments in favour targeting other than the 'excluded,' including the 'social participation' of those with 'social and cultural capital' (Jeffs and Smith 2002:19-20). Amongst NEWNs supporters and allies are University lecturers, journalists, Trade Union organisers and human rights lawyers, singers, artists and TV personalities.

Given that the NEWN members were bolstered by having the means to exercise their collective agency in holding the Government to account on its policies surrounding women's inequality, their actions transgressed the portrayal of women as the victims of policy as represented in the story box (figure 8.17). Congruent with Mo Griffiths' concept of the 'little stories' that link 'voice to narrative making that vital connection between the deeply personal and the profoundly political,' a dynamic action research approach connected the everyday experiences of local women and girls to national and supranational influences (Griffiths, 2003:81 in Ledwith 2009:694, Shaw 2005).

In terms of maintaining the dynamism of community development practice, the findings of this study suggest that the exercise of agentic capacities including reflexivity requires the identification of or creation of liminal spaces in which to develop creatively. It is only where these conditions are present in practice that we can make intersubjective identifications and ignite critical incidents that lead to critical consciousness. Any future development of professional frameworks for community

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[51] Established by the United Nations (UN) General Assembly in 1979, the CEDAW Convention is often referred to as the Women's International Bill of Rights - http://thewomensresourcecentre.org.uk/our-work/cedaw/ [accessed 26.11.15]

development learning, management and accountability needs to acknowledge these essential elements.

8.4   THE CURRENT CONTEXT FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The Labour Party ended its 18 years in opposition by a landslide victory in 1997, with 418 (42%) seats, the most the party had ever held (42%, 418 seats). By the 2005 general election their majority was reduced from 179 to 66 seats. Then amid much discontent among Labour Party supporters surrounding the Iraq war and low approval ratings upon his performance generally, Tony Blair announced his resignation as Labour Party leader and Prime Minister on 10 May 2007.[52] Despite regaining 97 of those seats at the General Election in May 2010, The Labour Party moved back into opposition when a coalition Government formed between the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats. A Conservative Government was elected in May 2015. Whereas New Labour afforded community development practice 'more policy recognition than ever before' (Ledwith 2005:15, Pitchford 2008), at the time of writing, the term 'community development' has almost disappeared from the lexicon of state policy. All that remains is the 'positive encouragement' of 'autonomous community activities, unfettered by state support, and conceived as a means of replacing elements of a shrinking welfare state (Banks and Butcher 2013:8).

The Coalition Government swiftly reduced financial support for community development infrastructure. In April 2011, the Office for Civil Society decreased the number of its national voluntary sector partners from forty to a maximum of fifteen (later reduced to nine, partly through mergers). The Community Development Exchange (CDX), an independent UK-wide membership organisation for individuals, organisations and networks involved in community development was one of the first

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[52] During a speech at the Trimdon Labour Club in Durham.

to lose Government funding and as a consequence of this it closed in March 2013 (Mair 2012). The Federation for Community Development Learning, a UK wide membership networking organisation that supports community development through advancing and promoting 'good quality' Community Development learning and practice at local, regional and national levels remains in operation at the time of writing (FCDL 2015).

Community Development Foundation (CDF), a charity and non-departmental public body was also scrapped by the Government in 2010, along with 192 other Government 'quangos,' Whilst CDF recovered by establishing itself as an 'independent' social enterprise (Mair 2012), at the time of writing two out of three of CDFs funding sources are from Government programmes.[53] One of the 'strategic partners' who also survived the 2011 Government spending cuts is 'Locality.''[54] In the same year, it was awarded a £15 million Government contract to train 5,000 'community organisers' to 'play a major role in delivering the Big Society' (O'Reilly 2011). It is argued the notion of 'The Big Society,' prolific around the time of that the Conservative and Liberal Democrats were conjoined in Government, was based upon the White Paper, 'Strong and Prosperous Communities' (2006), extending New Labour's trend of devolving power to localities by allocating responsibility to neighbourhoods (Henderson and Vercseg 2010:148, McMullin 2010, Mayo and Robertson 2013). It resonates with Murray's (1990) proposal for 'authentic self-Government,' with all of its imposed 'homogeneity of values' and 'barely concealed authoritarianism' (Deakin, 1990, 1999:79).

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[53] The funders are Office for Civil Society, Cabinet Office Department for Work and Pensions and The Big Lottery http://cdf.org.uk/content/funding-programmes/ [accessed 14.11.15]
[54] In April 2011, the British Association of Settlements and Social Action Centres (bassac) and the Development Trusts Association (DTA) merged to form Locality (IVAR 2011). Locality claims to be a leading nationwide network for community-led organisations www.locality.org.uk [accessed 22.6.14]

> The Big Society is about a huge culture change. Where people, in their everyday lives, in their homes, in their neighbourhoods, in their workplace don't always turn to officials, Local Authorities or Central Government for answers to the problems they face but instead feel both free and powerful enough to help themselves and their own communities.
>
> Prime Minister David Cameron 19th July 2010 (Cabinet Office 2009)

Although the tradition of 'community organising' is based upon radical principles (Alinsky 1972), it is clear that critical concepts such as 'consciousness raising', 'critical dialogue', 'equality' and 'anti-oppressive practice' are absent from its contemporary lexicon (Coote 2010, Mills and Robson 2010, O'Reilly 2011, Mayo and Robertson, 2013). Alinsky's vision was an 'organisations of organisations' embracing youth groups, small businesses, religious and trade unions (Ledwith 2005:88). These 'People's Organisations' were based on the use of 'power, action and justice to fight racism, poverty and isolation' and used 'inventive, creative, non-violent conflict and disruption,' locating the power of those experiencing poverty to 'force' institutions to change (ibid). Although 'People's Organisations' were not intended to be philanthropic or a social service, the 'iron rule of organising' exemplified in the mantra 'never do for others what they can do for themselves' (Alinsky 1969), must have proved compelling for those with conservative interests. It is argued that like other Government programmes, the Big Society' is concerned with mobilising voluntary effort to compensate for cuts in public services devoid of an analysis of power and inequality (Coote 2010, O'Reilly 2011, Mayo and Robertson, 2013). O'Reilly highlights the contradictions inherent in the Government's Community Organiser programme.

> Many communities are experiencing the big society as a synonym for replacing vital public services with unpaid and less accountable workers. It is hard to see how Government-sponsored organisers would be in any position to build communities' power to challenge this.
>
> O'Reilly 2011:2

Despite the contradictions and inherent tensions, the community organising model, popular with the former Coalition Government found support among those concerned about increasing inequalities and the narrowing of any realistic possibilities for resistance.

> For some, the radical rhetoric of the CO model is perceived as a lifeline in a sea of despair – offering to release a powerful new force to fight for long overdue social justice.
>
> Mills and Robson 2011:12

Shaw, writing in the aftermath of New Labour, draws upon Sennet's 'spectre of uselessness' that is haunting community development practitioners as the boundary between consumption and politics dissolve (Sennet 2006 in Shaw 2011:131). For Shaw, increasingly community development practitioners are seriously 'alienated from any real sense of social and moral purpose (Shaw 2011:131). She argues that such was the extent of the incorporation of community development into managerialism that it created 'a serious crisis of critique' to the point where its discourses have become 'colonialized and managed;' it is 'difficult to think beyond its limitations, let alone imagine alternatives' (Shaw 2011: 132). Suggesting that this situation produced the conditions for the 'era of austerity' and the 'Big Society,' Shaw likens the processes of ideologically controlling the community development work agenda to a virus that has infected its very being, to a point where:

> …people have become apologetic, silenced or embedded in its logic without realising it is too late.
>
> 2011:132

The National Coalition for Independent Action (NCIA) emerged in 2005, 'advocating that the right to dissent is integral to a democratic society (Waterhouse and Scott 2013). Ten years on in November 2015, as an 'action of defiance,' NCIA closed down to 'make space for new forms of opposition to the stifling co-option of voluntary groups as servants of the state and private sector

interests' (NCIA website 2015). An NCIA enquiry into local activism and dissent

is found it to be mainly 'fragmented, fragile and small scale,' with 'actions by

individuals coming together, being the backbone and reality of resistance.'

(Waterhouse and Scott 2013). Similar trends were identified in the interview

data.

> I think when you look at action now in this country, direct action where
> it is like the bairns are working against the motorways, travellers. You
> know you haven't really got anything in mainstream society fighting it.
> It is quite swallowed up. It sounds quite depressing.

> Male, voluntary sector, Interview 12:21

Waterhouse and Scott argue that there is a task to be done in terms of joining

together 'the myriad of habitats springing up for such actions' (2013: 5). Their

analysis is that resistance is not modelled upon established forms of collective

community action or social movements, but individualised expressions of agency and

dissent.

> There was an absence of professionalised voluntary agencies in local
> struggles. Some professionalised umbrella groups were uneasy or
> ambivalent about the landscape but could not find a way to express
> this, let alone protest or find alternatives, and found themselves
> captured by funding regimes. However, there are examples of
> individual workers within co-opted voluntary agencies doing their best
> to keep the integrity of their relationship with clients and local people.

> Waterhouse and Scott 2013:5

Austerity is not the only feature of the changing context for community development

practice, the explosion in social media contains the potential to have a wider reach

and influence but is also testimony to the expansion of individualism (Wilson and

Taylor 2004:19). At the point that this thesis was conceived Facebook and other

social networking tools did not exist. It now has 864 million daily active users

(September 2014) with more than a third of the UK population visiting the site every

day (Facebook website 2014). Although social media is a very useful mechanism for

connecting people, human contact is an advantage in developing intersubjective relationships, sharing experience and knowledge and 'enabling people to talk to Government and create policy' (Wilson and Taylor 2004:19). The multitude of people who activated Facebook's tricolour filter to show solidarity in response to the events in Paris on 13 November 2015, demonstrates that social media does hold the potential to mobilise mass outrage in response to unexpected events 'moral shocks' (Jasper 1998:409 in Hoggett et al. 2009:83). However shared outrage is not a measure of grounded intersubjective understanding of inequality and injustice (Ledwith 2009: 689). Nor does it necessarily involve practical activism. It is therefore devoid of reflexivity. It is argued that social media does not 'hold critical dialogue' and so debates are become swiftly polarised (Wilson and Taylor 2004:19). This that suggests that a danger of attempting to mobilise solidarity through social media is rather than breaking false consciousness, might reinforce and perpetuate it.

The term community development has recently re-appeared in the Government's lexicon, in a 'Community Development Handbook' (2014) produced by the Government's Digital Service (part of the Cabinet Office). The stated purpose is to 'help people develop and manage communities of practice across Government,' the focus being those working 'in digital roles or working on digital products and services' (Government Digital Service 2014:1). The section on 'trolls and troublemakers' in the 'Community Development Handbook' suggests that 'communities of practice' are a mechanism manage dissent within the civil service.

> You do occasionally have to deal with individuals who are disgruntled
> about something. They may have their own particular 'hobby-horse'
> issues. They may return time and again, often disrupting or
> dominating other community activity.

<div align="right">Cabinet Officer 2014:7</div>

'The handbook and accompanying 'community development strategy' is 'part of creating an exceptional civil service - less bureaucratic and more skilled, digital and

unified' (Government Digital Service 2014). Its author is working on the Government's 'identity assurance programme,' claiming this to be 'a new service that will give people a secure and convenient way to sign into Government services' (Wreyford 2014). The implication of this particular deployment of the term community development requires a wider critical discussion. However, as argued by Cox, the concept of 'communities of practice' has become re-appropriated and commodified as a managerialist tool, whereas it was quite clearly originally based upon face to face relationships (2005:534). Increasingly 'communities of practice' are simply 'a virtual community for the benefit of the organisation' (ibid). Yet Lave and Wenger's (1991) concept of 'situatedness' and the centrality of relationships in learning and knowledge development suggest that real human interaction is necessary.

The Department for Communities and Local Government (DLCG) has endured two changes of Government since New Labour, claiming 'to give more power to local people to shape what happens in their area' (DCLG 2015). However, in the name of increasing 'transparency, productivity and innovation' by 'radically' reducing bureaucratic reporting' and 'centrally driven targets,' the incoming Coalition Government abolished Local Area Agreements (DLCG 2010). National Indicators were replaced with an agreed single list of data requirements in October 2010 (Sandford 2012). Although the overarching theme was removing bureaucracy and centralised targets, amid swathing cuts to Local Government and public services the demand for performance measures surrounding value for money is as important as ever (Banks 2013).

New Labour's attempts to impose communitarian principles upon society may have heralded the way for the current climate of austerity and also for more neo-liberal restructuring of health, welfare and social care. The 'Health and Social Care Act' (2012) is an extension of the previous Labour Government's 'neo-liberal reforms of the public sector,' particularly in terms of attracting private providers 'into statutory

health care at the expense of public providers' (Speed and Gabe 2013:564). Upon gaining power, the Coalition Government, under the auspices cutting of the public deficit, introduced austerity measures and cuts to welfare benefits, public services and Local Government of staggering proportions (Prideaux 2010, Slay and Penny 2012, O'Hara 2014). 'The Welfare Reform Act' (2012) marked the 'biggest overhaul of the benefits system' since the 1940s (Local Government Information Unit website 2014). This includes cuts and changes to welfare benefits and new responsibilities for Local Authorities. These include service requirements relating to things such as: Crisis Grants, Universal Credit, Council and Housing Tax Benefit, (including the much eschewed 'under occupancy charge' or "bedroom tax").

Deakin's predictions that such measures could lead back to the conditions of the Elizabethan Poor Law, whereby the welfare of the poor is left to the discretion of the community are evident in the latest radical reform of the welfare state. It has propelled 'hundreds of thousands of people' into 'extreme financial destitution and in some cases mental breakdown' (O'Hara 2014: 3-4). Two thirds of a million public sector jobs have been lost, the majority in Local Authorities, yet there are also implications for Local Authorities and other agencies in dealing with the consequences welfare reform upon local communities. Voluntary organisation, whilst bearing the brunt of the cuts are immersed in responding to the repercussions of austerity measures and welfare reforms upon people's everyday lives (NEWomen's Network 2015). Supporting those in crisis, whilst being expected to do 'more with less' means those surviving organisations born out of radical social movements have lost their strategic and campaigning edge (NEWN 2013b:22).

> We regret that the current pressure of our work to keep services provided for women has left us struggling to give time to proactive involvement in [networking and information sharing]. It has also curtailed our campaigning work. We seem to have to focus on the immediate path forward rather than the strategic future arrival point. We are working with women with more multiple needs needing more support. Their needs are more concerned with their own and family wellbeing rather than prioritising campaigning.

> NEWN 2015:15

In 2014 an estimated £75 billion had been wiped from public expenditure with more cuts to come (O'Hara 2014). In the forthcoming Spending Review (to be published on 25.11.2015), The Institute for Fiscal Studies estimates that Local Government spending could be cut by around 27%, bringing the total cuts to 'unprotected departments' to around 50%,over the period of the three spending rounds undertaken by George Osborne (Johnstone 2015:1). As a result of austerity measures vital public and community services have been eradicated or pared down and it is argued that the Government's ultimate goal is not about reducing the public deficit, but to reduce the size of the state permanently (O'Hara 2014:3-4).

Charles Murray's solution of 'encouraging' the 'underclass' back into the 'working' sectors of society was to withdraw welfare from the 'under-deserving poor' in contrast to the 'deserving poor,' such as the 'aged, disabled or infirm' (Murray in Prideaux 2010). For the Coalition Government, there seems to be no such discrimination.

> The burden of reducing Britain's deficit is falling predominately upon people who get vital support from public services and welfare; the unemployed, low income earners, the very elderly and the young – and perhaps most of all – disabled people.

> Slay and Penny 2012:3

The myth of generational transmission of poverty endures, 'often a symptom of deeper, more complex problems, any of these problems are passed on from one generation to the next' (Government website 2014).

> I want to talk about troubled families. Let me be clear what I mean by this phrase. Officialdom might call them 'families with multiple disadvantages'. Some in the press might call them 'neighbours from hell'. Whatever you call them, we've known for years that a relatively small number of families are the source of a large proportion of the problems in society. Drug addiction. Alcohol abuse. Crime. A culture of disruption and irresponsibility that cascades through generations. We've always known that these families cost an extraordinary amount of money…but now we've come up the actual figures.

David Cameron, 15th December 2011

Although conceding that the UK is one of the 'richest countries in the world' where 'inequality is rife,' the current Government wants to ensure that 'interventions provide a fair deal for the taxpayer' (DWP: 2012:2). Its social justice strategy does concede that 5.3 million adults in the UK, at any one time, experience three or more of six areas of disadvantage (education, health, employment, income, social support, housing and local environment) (Levitas 2012). However, the bedrock the strategy is its 'troubled families' programme, amounting to £448 million and targeting '120,000 families living particularly troubled and chaotic lives' that it is claimed are costing the tax payer £9 billion per year, around £75,000 per family (DWP 2012:8). Because in the name of cutting bureaucracy there is an absence of data, the numbers of families was extracted from New Labour's 'index of multiple deprivation' and national estimates taken from the Family and Children's Study (Levitas 2012). The Government's 'troubled families' team added new criteria of 'unemployment, truancy and anti-social behaviour' and then asked Local Authorities to populate the list with names and addresses of real people, which they duly did (Hern 2013:1). A complaint was made by Glasgow University about research to inform the 'Troubled Families' agenda (DLCG 2012) breaching ethical guidelines designed to protect vulnerable individuals from being 'harmed or exploited' (Ramesh, 2012:1). DCLG upheld their position on the grounds that this did not constitute 'formal research,' instead falling into the category of 'dipstick/informal information gathering,' meaning that Louise Casey (the 'Troubled Families Tsar') was free to bypass the Government's ethical

guidelines (ibid).The Welfare Reform Act 2012 and further legislation in 2013, made it permissible for Local Authorities to share information with the Department of Work and Pensions and 'other parties' involved in the delivery of the 'troubled family' programme (Law Commission 2014). In relation to the deployment of community development practice as a form of surveillance as happened during the restructuring of the welfare state in the 1980s (Dominelli 1990, Green 1992, Shaw 2004), given that the Government now has licence to intrude into the lives of those living in poverty such purposes are redundant.

Alongside the politics of austerity, it is argued that hegemonic forces have gathered popular consent for the neo-liberal politics of authoritarianism, dominance, discrimination, oppression and dehumanisation at alarming speed (O'Hara 2014). Now that foodbanks have become entrenched in the UK's welfare landscape, a new stereotype has appeared in the guise of the 'foodbank scrounger' combined with calls for closer surveillance involving the sharing of personal data between agencies, to root out the culprits.[55]

> In addition to the challenge of client dependency, is one of overcoming the issue of 'cheating' or 'abuse' of the system. One distributor…provided the example of a family who had obtained one voucher from them and then another from a health visitor and they had then received a call from the Foodbank querying it. This example shows how the model's processes work to prevent misuse of Foodbank vouchers but also highlights the importance of robust administration systems in order to pick up on these instances.

> Lambie 2011:29

This stereotype is purported, not by the media, but by an academic institution. In what at first seems to be a radical critique questioning 'what the presence of foodbanks says about society and welfare provision' (Lambie 2011:33), we have a

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[55] 1,084,604 people were given three days emergency food and support by foodbanks in 2014/15 (Trussell Trust website 2014, 2014).

classic example of Gramsci's concept of hegemony in action. As these myths and stereotypes permeate and saturate every channel of popular and social media, public discontent with the current and previous administration is targeted against the most vulnerable in society, immigrants, asylum seekers, Muslim women, 'benefit scroungers' (O'Hara 2014). Yet, the authoritarianism of the New Labour as it was exemplified in its immobilisation of critical community development perspectives combined with Conservative the impact of austerity measures appears to have neutered possibilities for mobilising a Gramscian counter hegemony (Gramsci 1971:195).

8.5 FUTURE POSSIBILITIES FOR REFLEXIVE AND DYNAMIC COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PRACTICE

The eleven years since this thesis was conceived have witnesses significant social and political transformation: two changes of Government, further dismantling of the welfare state; austerity, a chain of international events that started with the Iraq War in 2003, an explosion of social media connecting people across the globe, but generating a perpetual flow of hegemonic discourse (propaganda) that pervades our lives like never before. In 2015, it is not just the volatility of the state that is of concern but the precarious state of humanity, including the totalitarianism of the human mind. If we think about all this too globally, it is easy to become adrift on a 'sea of despair' (Mills and Robson 2011:12), particularly as even the community organiser element of community development practice has disappeared from the Conservative state's policy lexicon.[56] However, it is possible to remain focused upon recovering the long established principles of liberatory informal education as they are conceived in critical community development practice: conversational group work;

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[56] In the summer of 2015, the programme in its current form came to an end (Locality website 2015).

sharing emotions and experiences and telling the little stories that reach out and touch humanity, making intersubjective identifications, stimulating critical incidents, consciousness raising, solidarity building and making alliances across difference. And not forgetting that human affection is our only true weapon against fear and terror (Waterhouse 2015).

The narrative that follows is another example from the researcher's practice, this time involving a relationship developed through practice with a woman who identifies her self as an artist activist and survivor of non-state torture (NST).[57] It is used here to highlight aspects of an open and process-based approach to community development practice, in action. In particular how the researcher reflects her long established influences from liberatory education and feminism in her everyday practice. It also demonstrates that whilst creating and stregthening single identity community groups, community development practitioners needs to locate the submerged voices of those who are searching for mutual and intersubjective identifications from the most marginalised and isolated of situations.

My first meeting with the woman artist activist and survivor was in May 2013, at the national launch of the 'Shadow Report – Women's Equality in the UK: A health check' (WRC 2013) produced by the CEDAW Working Group, a coalition of 42 women's and human rights organisations from across the UK. This was in preparation for the examination of the UK Government by the United Nations CEDAW Committee in July 2013.[58] When the woman artist activist had first encountered NEWN (in July 2011), she was not a member of any women's organisation but alone and trying to speak out and raise awareness about this extreme form of violence that was not at the time

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[57] I have the expressed permission of the woman artist activist to draw upon her narrative in this thesis.
[58] Women's Resource Centre (WRC) Provides infrastructure support, information and capacity building to voluntary and community organisations working to improve the status of women - http://thewomensresourcecentre.org.uk/ [accessed 26.11.15]

recognised in the UK. As such, she was finding it very difficult to make identifications

with women who shared her experiences because their voices were also submerged.

She came across NEWN, first in some training she attended in 2011, travelling from

London to Newcastle. Here she tells how as a result of these experiences,

particularly the relationships formed with the women from NEWN affected her:

> I had travelled to Newcastle to attend a workshop meeting about
> CEDAW. There I met the amazing and inspiring women from the
> NEWN. I spoke in this meeting as a Non-state torture survivor and as
> an artist activist, that non-state torture was not recognised as a
> specific form of VAWG [violence against women and girls] in the UK
> and as such women and girls have no specific socio/legal recognition
> that they can suffer torture violence in the private sphere by private
> actors and there is no specific caring support in our communities that
> recognises them. Then at Portcullis House in London, I was invited to
> the launch of the WRC [Women's Resource Centre] Shadow Report
> prior to the UK CEDAW examination in Geneva. It was just so so
> encouraging. There, I met Sue who deeply understood the issues and
> difficulties I was encountering in my activism. We exchanged emails
> and I went home feeling heard and not so alone.
>
> Endorsement for National Equality and Diversity Awards, April 25, 2014[59]

At that first meeting in Portcullis House, having no prior knowledge of non-state

torture and initially I struggled to find an opportunity of making an intersubjective

identification. However, by listening attentively to the woman's story I was able to

locate and draw upon my own experiences of activism as a kinship carer.

Although not to compare with the intensity of her situation, my experience and

that of other kinship carers also involved feelings disempowerment and isolation.

In order to break these feelings and being driven by a passion to avoid others

having similar experiences, I had been using community development skills to

mobilise peer-based action research (Conqueror and Robson 2011, First

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[59] The National Diversity Awards 'a prestigious black tie event,' which celebrates the excellent achievements of grass- root communities that tackle the issues in today's society' - http://www.nationaldiversityawards.co.uk/ [accessed 30.6.14]

Contact Clinical 2013). Whilst listening to the issues and difficulties that the woman artist activist was encountering, I located and drew insights from my own and other submerged voices. Those experiencing intense feelings of disempowerment or fear surrounding their children and grandchildren in situations of physical, emotional and sexual abuse. Although as kinship carers were battling with the state on a different front, our issues were still deeply personal and emotive. Although I did not mention my circumstance to the woman artist activist because that would have diminished her story, I was able to identify with her through my own feelings of disempowerment and our shared discourse of survival.

On that day in Portcullis House, we conversed about ethical issues in relation to locating submerged women's voices and she told me about two women in she met Canada, also activists against NST who were exploring alternative methods, such as 'kitchen table research' (Sarson and MacDonald 2015). I remember clearly where we were standing that day, in quite a crowd but creating a tiny liminal space. I also recall the powerful sensation when you just know that you have touched souls with another human being. I imagine that this is what Gramsci conceived by feeling the 'elementary passion' of the people (1971:418).

Two months later we had the opportunity to cement our relationship when we were part of the UK women's delegation to the United Nations in Geneva. By working within frameworks for human rights and substantive equality and through the relationships formed with women nationally and internationally as a result of this, the woman artist activist was able to name of the reality of what she 'personally endured and therefore what other women and girls have endured' (ibid). From that point onwards, she was able to speak her story nationally and has since done so, internationally, including at the United Nations in New York and in Vienna.

> It helped me know I can empower my-Self and that women who have suffered greatly can rise in activism together to work for their human rights.

<div align="right">Endorsement for National Equality and Diversity Awards, April 25, 2014</div>

Although the duration of our conversation was probably no longer than five or ten minutes, her narrative suggests it contributed to the conditions for her self-empowerment. How contrary is this to the conditions created by New Labour for wholesale community empowerment? A fundamental difference is that in organic or created spaces less powerful participants and actors can locate their 'power within' or their 'sense of self identity, confidence and awareness' (Gaventa 2006:24). Whereas in New Labour's 'community empowerment' model, the only available spaces were invited spaces, implying a one dimensional model of power, or 'power over' (Ibid: 27). The feeling of 'power within' as it relates to awakening critical consciousness is a pre-condition for 'power with' and for collective action (Gaventa 2006:24, 27). This turn opens up possibilities for 'synergy' and dynamism emerging from partnership, collaboration, collective action and alliance building and for expanding collective consciousness (ibid: 27). This example, like the other examples of critical incidents highlighted in this study demonstrates that is by community development practitioners revealing their fragile, vulnerable and human selves in practice that makes way for the public expression of the subjective experiences of those participating in community development processes.

Such is the harshness of the current socio-economic and political climate we can no longer wait for the arrival of a revolutionary moment, it is here and now. The struggle for organising human life, indeed redeeming humanity, needs to be waged at every possible opportunity for social interaction (Ben Zion 2009:16). As illustrated in the earlier example, this could be through everyday encounters, starting a conversation,

listening attentively, encouraging people to share their stories and share them again, this is the basis of self-empowerment and building a counter hegemony.

> The simple act of listening to people's stories, respectfully, giving one's full attention is the beginning of the process of personal empowerment. The stories we tell and how we make sense of the work around us can be told and retold as we learn to question given truths.

<div align="right">Ledwith and Springett 2010:104</div>

This is not to suggest that community development practitioners should be the sole protagonists of a counter hegemony. To do so would require a regrouping and even if there was a collective will for that, there is an absence of any obvious infrastructure to support that to happen (apart from the Federation for Community Development Learning, FCDL).   The community development field, including practitioners, trainers, academics and policy makers could be a catalyst for an emancipation of thoughts and minds. However this would require a willingness to recover the dynamic between practice, theory and policy, creating liminal spaces and collective commitment to challenging the hierarchies of knowledge to prevent further slippage.

The election of left wing exponent Jeremy Corbyn as Leader of the Labour Party and Leader of the Opposition with a landslide vote in June 2015 has brought fresh hope to those with left-wing political perspectives for another 'new politics' (Coppola 2015). Corybyn's discourse of compromise and consensus chimes with a deliberative model of democracy and its notion of moral consensus and that we all free and equal citizens (e.g. Rawls 1971, Habermas 2001). However, such notions bypass the indeterminacy of 'the people' as exemplified in changes in borders and immigration and those whose voices are submerged or silenced (Espejo 2011:7). Yet these considerations are fundamental in relation in the how the current international political situation is impacting upon human interactions at an everyday level.

What would have made for a stronger democratic foundation for New Labour, would have been for them to strive for a dynamic relationship between 'organic' and 'invited' spaces where less powerful participants and actors could have invited the power holders to debate issues surrounding 'legitimacy and resistance' and 'co-option and transformation' (Gaventa 2006:27). Such a model would have allowed for a three dimensional model of accountability: one community development practitioners to communities; two community development practice to state policy; and three state policy to communities. For Labour or any political party with aspiration for statutory power, other than by authoritarian or totalitarian means, strengthening the democratic legitimacy of the state requires polices that place trust in community development practitioners and in the possibilities entailed in people being able to act collectively and creatively with the freedom to re-imagine the very conception democracy and alternative forms of social organisation.

The findings of this study suggest that community development practice is best placed between 'community as policy' and 'community as politics,' with tensions and power struggles being eternal and inherent to democracy (Shaw 2005:7, Mouffe 1996, 2000a, 2000b, 2013, Jamoul 2006). If we conceive people, communities and politics as constantly in a state of becoming; full of tensions and conflicts but also surprise, creativity, energy and innovation (Espejo 2011), then the point where these meet could be the locus for accountability of community development practice to communities and state policy. As has been argued throughout this thesis, such positioning requires temporal and enduring agentic, critical and reflexive capacities and practicing experiencing liminality together.

Community development practice should not just be concerned with broadening democracy: but expanding its very conception; imagining the type of political and social order we should strive for; acknowledging the crucial role played by passions

and emotions in securing allegiance to norms and values on the left or the right; and constituting forms of power that are compatible with a democratic state of well-being (Espejo 2011, Mouffe 2000a, 2013). As community development practitioners, in order to be accountable to the state and to communities we must avoid being partisan in relation to political parties. Not to be detached of impartial, but contributing to the conditions where their policies and interests can be critically scrutinised by communities.

This study suggests a slippage between critical community development theory and practice slippage exemplified in practitioners believing in that New Labour were offering *more* space in which to manoeuvre. As a result of this slippage, by the time they realised that natural space for people gather to debate, discuss and resist, outside of the institutionalised policy arena had mainly closed down, it was too late to influence the emerging policy agenda. By then centralisation, instrumentalism and then authoritarianism had too much of a stranglehold on community development practice conditions and by the time practitioners stopped to look around, they too inhabited the dominant discourse. As discussed, the implications of such conditions being tolerated is totalitarianism. This highlights is the need to develop a better unity of praxis and for academics, community development practitioners and activist for whom these issues are a matter of survival, to practice experiencing liminality together (Hill Collins 2000, Issitt and Spence 2005)

8.6 THE RESEARCHER'S PERSONAL REFLECTIONS ON HER RESEARCH JOURNEY

This research journey has been both confining and liberating. Confining in terms of the discipline, self-motivation and hard-work involved in sustaining self-funded academic study. Liberating in terms of the level of freedom I have enjoyed in framing

my own research questions and then with academic guidance, how I chose to pursue them. For me, this has been in achieved in a way that has been of upmost significance to my own unfolding interpretation of what constitutes reflexive, accountable and dynamic community development practice.

With the hindsight of knowing what had to be endured and sacrificed to complete this study, I would have more carefully reviewed my position when I became a kinship carer to my new-born grandson under difficult family circumstances in October 2008. That combined with my passionate commitment to expanding critical community development practice is what sustained and motivated through this journey. Having already collected and transcribed 24 in-depth interviews, I felt an overwhelming sense of accountability towards colleagues and peers in the community development work field. I hope that in spite of my inherent personal and emotional biases, that I have been reflexive and critical and thus done justice to their stories.

The study emerged into an enduring journey amid ever shifting boundaries and turbulence in my work and my personal life. My personal situation, coupled with my professional determination to complete this thesis, corresponds with the sentiments expressed by Mary Parker Follett.

> Life is not a movie for us: you can never watch life because you are always in life…The 'progressive integrations,' the ceaseless interweavings of new specific responses, is the whole forward moving existence; there is no adventure for those who stand on the counters of life and match samples.

1924:133-34 in Smith 2002

Perhaps in defence of self-help approaches to community development practice, it is testimony to the strength of peer networks of kinship carer's that I was able to transcend my emotional and practical difficulties and continue with my studies. If it were not for the campaigning side of the kinship carer movement and the self-

motivated activists within it, my Local Authority would never have been held to account over financial allowances and I may not have been able to afford to take the necessary time away from paid work to complete this thesis.

My study highlights a slippage between community development theory and practice which could well have contributed to a lack of criticality in relation to New Labour's policy and then a tacit acceptance of instrumentalism. This suggests a need to create more liminal spaces for reflexive and critical discussion upon the dynamics between theory, policy and practice in a way that transcends the hierarchies of knowledge and power. Such approaches might encourage a better unity of praxis, thus widening the possibilities for dynamism, emancipation and transformation. For my part, it has been an enduring struggle to locate my own subaltern voice among those encountered in the literature and theory and then to situate it centrally within an academic thesis.

My hope is that I have fashioned this thesis in a way that can be accessible for practitioners and relevant to policy makers. But most of all, I hope I have expanded the possibilities for grounding conceptions of community development professionalism within communities themselves and without further compromising its dynamism.

1.1	**Key question: How can Community Development work sustain the dynamism of professional practice** (when issues of accountability, trust and reflexivity are appear to be so complex and difficult to pin down)?		
RELATED QUESTIONS		**SOURCES OF EVIDENCE**	**METHODS**
1.1.1	What makes a 'dynamic' community development worker?	– Community development theory from 1970's – Professional standards for community development work – Fieldwork perspectives on contemporary community development practice	– Literature review and analysis of theoretical perspectives – Critical review of professional standards – Interviewing community development practitioners – Narrative analysis of interviews
1.1.2	What distinguishes Community Development Work from other professions	– Professional values and principles of community development – Fieldwork perspectives on community development practice – Current community development practice in different organisational contexts	– Literature review and analysis – Interviewing community development practitioners in different organisational contexts – Narrative analysis of interviews
1.1.3	How has Urban Policy used and impacted upon Community Development discourse? What are the implications for key practice concepts such as empowerment, participation and community action?[60]	– Government policy in relation to community development and urban regeneration/ renewal since 1970s's – Fieldwork perspectives on contemporary community development practice in regen/ renewal – Contemporary community development practice in relation to urban policy	– Literature review of development of Government policy – Textual analysis of policy – Interviewing community development practitioners involved in regeneration and renewal programmes – Narrative analysis of interviews
1.2 Key Question: Can reflexive Community Development practice be made accountable and to whom[61]?			
RELATED QUESTIONS		**SOURCES OF EVIDENCE**	**METHODS**
1.2.1	Who/ what determines the quality of community development work?	– Community development literature on the evaluation of community development work – Contemporary Government policy in relation to community development/ urban regeneration/ renewal	– Comparative analysis of theoretical perspectives from literature review – Comparative analysis of theoretical and policy perspectives from literature review

[60] Specifically as used in relation to the concept of social capital
[61] When accountability is experienced as is so complex in terms of private and professional self, the user individual and group and the pay-masters/policymakers

		– Fieldwork perspectives on community development practice – Measures for community development practice within different contexts	– Interviewing community development practitioners in different contexts[62] – Narrative analysis of interviews
1.2.2	Is there something about a subaltern and a feminist position that encourages reflexivity[63]?	– Action research theory – Feminist research theory – Feminist community development field work perspectives	– Literature review and analysis of theoretical perspectives – Interviewing community development practitioners – Narrative analysis of interviews
1.2.3	What is the relevance of liminality to reflexivity and accountability in community development work?	– Literature on liminality – Community development field work perspectives	– Analysis of definitions of liminality and relevance to community development – Interviewing community development practitioners – Narrative analysis of interviews – Practitioner focus groups (feminist practitioners/ mixed – Comparative analysis of interviews and focus group data

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[62] Community voluntary sector, different public sector, regeneration

[63] And something about masculinity that discourages it?

APPENDIX 2: ORIGINAL PLAN FOR INTERVIEWS AND FOCUS GROUPS

SELECTION OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS (ALL ENGLAND)			
	National	**Regional (outside of North East)**	**Local (outside of North East/ not in same region)**
Governmental perspectives	– Minister from Home Office – Minister from Office of Deputy Prime-minister – Civil Servant from HO. – Civil Servant from ODPM – Department of Health – Department of Education and Industry	– Government Office representative (Neighbourhood Renewal) – Government Office representative (Health) – Government Office representative (Education and Industry)	– Leaders of Council – Head of Regeneration (officer level) – Executive of primary care trust – Principle of local College
Non-Governmental perspectives	– 2 Key Universities interested in regeneration (Sheffield Hallam and Bristol) – Urban Forum representative – National Black Training/ Education (BTEC) representative	– Regional Development Agency representative – Learning and Skills Council Perspective – Regional voluntary sector representative – Regional Black Minority Ethnic Network representative	– Chair of Local Strategic partnership – 3 members of Community Empowerment Network[64] – Representative of BME organisations – Representative of women's organisation

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[64] **Considering race, class and gender perspective**

SELECTION OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS (ALL ENGLAND)			
	– Development Trusts Association representative	– Gender perspective from regions (?)	– Representative of large voluntary organisation (e.g. local Barnardo's Project)
	– Oxfam (re-gender) representative		– Representative of neighbourhood grass-roots community group
FOCUS GROUPS	FOCUS GROUP ONE – 12 participants	FOCUS GROUP TWO and THREE – 8 participants	FOCUS GROUP FOUR AND FIVE – 12 participants

APPENDIX 3: PRACTITIONER INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Your background and involvement in community development work

a) Could you tell me a little bit about your own background, for example, where were you born?, where did you got to school etc?

b) Tell me how you got involved in community development work?

c) What areas of work have you been involved in?

2. Your motivations and thinking about the purpose of community development work

a) What motivated you to get involved in community development work?

b) Was there anything about your own personal life that influenced you to get involved?

c) For you, what are the main purposes of community development work?

d) If there were one thing that you considered to be most important about community development work what would it be?

3. Your practice methods

a) Does your own background, your sense of who you are and what group you belong to influence your practice in any way?

b) What type of work is most useful and most productive for you in expressing your purposes in your work/ practice?

c) How do you do this?

d) Equality is commonly understood as an issue for community development work – do you think race, gender or class or any other equality issues impact upon your work in any way?

e) Does this have any relevance to your personal identity and identifications ('who or what do you identify with)?

f) Do you find some groups easier to work with than others? Explain?

4. The issues and problems you encounter in practice

a) When do you find it most difficult to express your purposes and beliefs in your work?

b) Are there times when you have to compromise your beliefs?

c) Have you ever been actively prevented from undertaking work which is most relevant to your beliefs and purposes?

d) Who was involved in this?

e) How did you deal with it?

f) Is this the way that you would usually deal with problems and conflicts?

5. Your opportunities for community development learning

a) Do you think it is important for community development workers to take up learning and training opportunities?

b) Have you taken up any opportunities recently?

c) What are they?

d) How did you experience them/ how would you judge the quality?

e) Do you have opportunities for support and supervision (either managerial or non-managerial)?

f) Do you take them up?

g) What type of future learning opportunities would you like?

h) (If relevant) Does your employer provide support you to take up learning and training?

6. The structures for community development practice

a) Do you think the interests/ expectations of local people, different groups, other community development workers, employers, funders, partners and policy makers in relation to community development work are the same?

b) What are the differences/ where are the tensions?

c) Where do these different interest/expectations s leave you as a worker?

d) How do you deal with the differences?

e) What has priority?

7. Policy influences and impacts upon community development work

a) Are you aware of any recent policies that impact upon community development?

b) What are they?

c) How do you think these polices will impact upon community development work?

d) Is community development work going in the way that you think is important?

8. Other issues relating to community development work and/ or this study

a) Is there anything that I have missed out?

b)   Is there anything that you want to say?

c)   Is there anything that you want to ask me?

Date

Address

Dear Name,

Participation in Ph.D. research study into community development

I am writing to enquire if any of your members in the North East would be interested in participating in my Ph.D. research study which is entitled:

> "Identifying the possibilities for effective measures of community development whilst maintaining the dynamism of professional practice"

I am aiming to include twelve people who identify themselves as full-time community development practitioners and are working in the North East of England. I am particularly interested in those who are involved in the national policy context, through national infrastructure organisation. In order to make the study representative of different voices, I am seeking to have a mix of males and females, Black practitioners and a range of people working in the voluntary and statutory sectors. The sample needs to comprise mainly those who are community based but can include some in management positions.

The commitment will involve participating in a face to face semi-structured interview between April and June 2007 focusing on the practice and conditions of community development work. The interview should take a maximum of two hours. During September 2007 I will be conducting small focus groups with the participants in a North East venue and in November 2007 feeding back the findings at an event to include the participants and other community development practitioners.

Please could you forward this letter to relevant members. Anyone who is interested in attending can contract me by emailing susan.robson1@durham.ac.uk, or on my mobile 07813 109 215, or returning the enclosed reply sheet to me by 31st March 2007.

Yours Sincerely

Sue Robson
School Applied Social Science
University of Durham

Circulation:

Community Development Exchange
Urban Forum
British Association of Settlements and Social Action Centres
Federation of Community Development Learning
Ubuntu

I am a full-time community development worker in the North East and I am interested in participating in your Ph.D. research project, 'Identifying the possibilities for effective

measures of community development whilst maintaining the dynamism of professional practice'.

Name…………………………Job title……………………………….

Agency/ Organisation……………………………………………………..

Address……………………………………………………………………..

………………………………………………………Post Code………………

Telephone…………………………………

Mobile……………………………………..

Email………………………………………

National infrastructure organisation(s) I am involved with/ am a member of:

…………………………………………………………………………

Please return to Sue Robson, School of Applied Social Science, Durham University

APPENDIX 5: RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS' CONFIRMATION LETTER

Date

Participants address here…

Dear name

Participation in Ph.D. research study into community development

Thank you for agreeing to participate in my Ph.D. research project. This is to confirm that we have arranged an interview on:

Date, Time. Venue

The interview will take approximately two hours and cover the following areas:

- o Your background and involvement in community development work
- o Your motivations and thinking about the purpose of community development work
- o Your practice methods
- o The issues and problems encountered in practice
- o The structures for community development practice
- o Your views on policy influence and impacts upon community development work
- o Identity, power and equality issues in community development work
- o Your thoughts on community development learning
- o Other issues you want to raise with me about the study

If you have any further questions or need to rearrange the interview, please contact be by email susan.robson1@durham.ac.uk or on my mobile 07813 109 215.

I have enclosed a statement of confidentiality and consent. Please could you sign this and return to me in the SAE enclosed.

Yours Sincerely

Sue Robson
School Applied Social Science
University of Durham

APPENDIX 6: RESEARCHERS STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY AND ETHICS

This research will consist of individual interviews with community development practitioners, focus groups with research participants and a final meeting with research participants and other interested parties to disseminate findings and get feedback.

- This research is self-funded and there are no other sponsors involved in the study other than Durham University. Should this position change, I will notify the research participants immediately.
- In order to maintain confidentiality evidence gathered in this study will not attributed to specific individuals and I will disguise the identity of research participants.
- The material gathered will only be used in my Ph.D. thesis and associated articles. Should I wish to use the data for any other purpose I will seek consent from research participants first.
- If research participants consent, I will tape the interviews and take some notes. Notes and transcripts that are stored electronically and will not be identifiable to individuals and I will retain the tapes. At the request of individual research participants I will dispose of the tapes and transcripts when I have completed my study.
- I will provide an electronic voice file of your interview upon request.
- I will feedback the key findings from the interviews at the focus groups for the purpose of involving the research participants in analysis, identifying shared understandings and meanings, and differing perspectives.
- A summary report from the focus groups will be provided to all of the research participants prior to the final event.

The research will conform to the ethical systems and procedures of the University of Durham and 'The Statement of Ethical Practice' for the British Sociological Association (March 2002, updated May 2004).

Sue Robson (researcher)

Signed:

Date:

Research participants consent

I have read the statement on confidentiality and ethics and agree to participate in the research. If understand that I can withdraw from participation in the research at any stage and will inform you of my intention to do so.

Participant name:

Signed:

Date:

APPENDIX 7: PH.D. FOCUS GROUPS PLAN

Two x 2 hours sessions

1. Purpose

For the researcher share emerging findings from the interviews and for the participants to assist with taking the analysis and thinking about the research further.

2. Presentation

30 minutes on flipcharts, covering the following:
- o Methods and scope of interviews
- o Purposes of community development
- o What makes a 'dynamic' community development worker?
- o What distinguishes Community Development Work from other professions?
- o How has Urban Policy used and impacted upon Community Development & what are the implications for key practice concepts such as empowerment, participation and community action?
- o Who/ what determines the quality of community development work?
- o How is reflexivity in community development work encouraged?
- o Summarising points of agreement and points of conflict

Facilitator seeks questions for clarification (keep to about 5 mins)

3. Facilitated discussion

The discussion will last up to 1.5 hours and focus upon the following theme:

Professional & accountable

Passionate & Inspired

How can we bring these together?
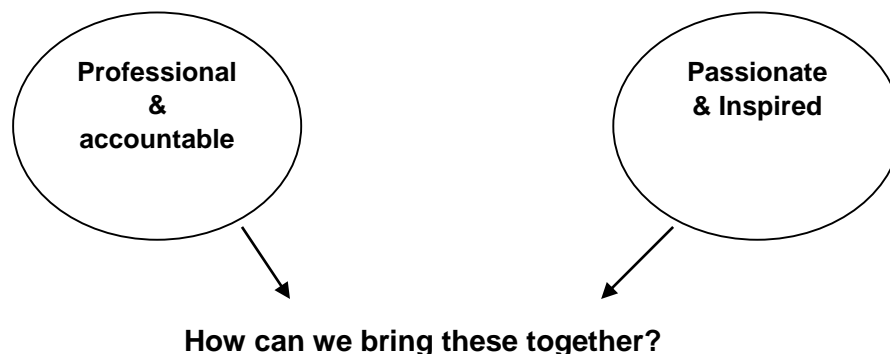
Some prompts for the discussion will be as follows:
- All participants admitted passion for their work that was mainly informed by different ideological perspectives (religious and political) – is it possible to accommodate passion in a professional approach?
- Is it possible to get a universal approach to community development – is it a good thing?
- How can differences and conflicts be accommodated in a new approach to community development?
- How do we nourish and sustain passion?
- What sort of organisational forms and structures do we need?

- What relationships do we need with each other in the field? What relationships do we need with the community

The focus groups will be recorded for transcription.

4.   Facilitators notes
- There will be between 6 to 8 participants at each of the focus groups.
- The focus groups will be recorded and for transcription so it is important that people do not talk over each other
- Sue will not be part of the discussions, she will be taking notes on key points so there will be no need for the facilitators to take any notes
- Sue may at times interject with prompts for the discussion
- Facilitators will ensure participants remain focused and that everyone participates.
- Although the focus groups are small there is likely to be a range of different and potentially conflicting positions among the participants.
- It is not necessary for participants to state their individual positions in relation to community development; it is more important that the discussions focus upon how we accommodate the differences and conflicts that have already been identified from the interview data.

APPENDIX 8: EVALUATION OF PH.D. FOCUS GROUP (15.6.09)

Q1. How do you rate the following logistics of the event?						
Answer Options	Poor	Adequate	Good	Very good	Excellent	Rating Average
Amount of notice given	0	0	0	3	2	3.4
Organisation of the focus group	0	0	0	5	0	3
Length of the event	0	0	3	1	1	2.6
Hospitality	0	0	3	2	0	2.4
Timing of the event	0	0	3	2	0	2.4
Pre-focus group information	1	0	2	2	0	2
Location	0	1	4	0	0	1.8
Venue	0	3	2	0	0	1.4

Q2. How would you rate the content of the focus group?						
Answer Options	Poor	Adequate	Good	Very good	Excellent	Rating Average
The style of the presentation	0	0	0	4	1	3.2
The length of the presentation	0	0	0	4	1	3.2
Level of feedback of emerging findings	0	0	0	4	1	3.2
Facilitation of the focus group	0	0	0	4	1	3.2
Quality of the discussion	0	0	1	2	1	3
Level of opportunity to express your views and thoughts	0	0	1	4	0	2.8
Ground rules exercise	0	0	1	4	0	2.8
Length of time to discuss the findings	0	0	2	3	0	2.6

Clarity and focus of the discussion	0	1	1	2	0	2.25

Q3. What did you like best about the focus group event?

- The opportunity to 'indulge' in our professional views of CD, also to see/hear from others of similar mind.
- The discussion and identification of key issues
- Always good to share views with like-minded people, and it was interesting to hear the feedback from interviews
- The opportunity to discuss the concepts and values behind community development - we are usually too busy trying to stay in business to think much.
- The discussion group

Q4. Is there anything I should change for the next time?

- Not much, perhaps a more pleasant room, however it was nice and quiet and uninterrupted, perhaps expand the time in the session slightly
- Be clearer at the beginning what you want to get out of it
- Maybe we were to alike and there was a lot of consensus - some different views might have sparked a debate

Q5. Do you have any reflections on the focus group you want to share/ or anything else you want to say?

- More thinking needs to be done about the whys and hows of community development - and this needs to be got across to people who commission community development work - or at least what they think is community development work
- Very positive, great to have the opportunity to contribute
- Thanks for the invitation - I enjoyed it and good luck with your analysis / final report
- Not really - it's been good to take part and I've enjoyed the informal approach. Best of luck with the Ph.D. Sue

Exploring the possibilities for developing effective measures for community development - Sue Robson, Durham University

Key areas of enquiry

There are two main areas of inquiry. The first is the question of professionalism. The second draws out from practitioner perspectives issues of equality, identity and personal agency within a range of community development perspectives.

Research themes

- Distinguishing community development work from other professions;
- The dynamic of community development work;
- Contemporary urban policy and the discourse of community development;
- Reflexivity, accountability and community development practice;
- Determining the quality of community development work;
- Issues of power, equality and identity in community development practice;
- Liminality and reflexivity in processes of accountability.

Where is the dynamism in community development?
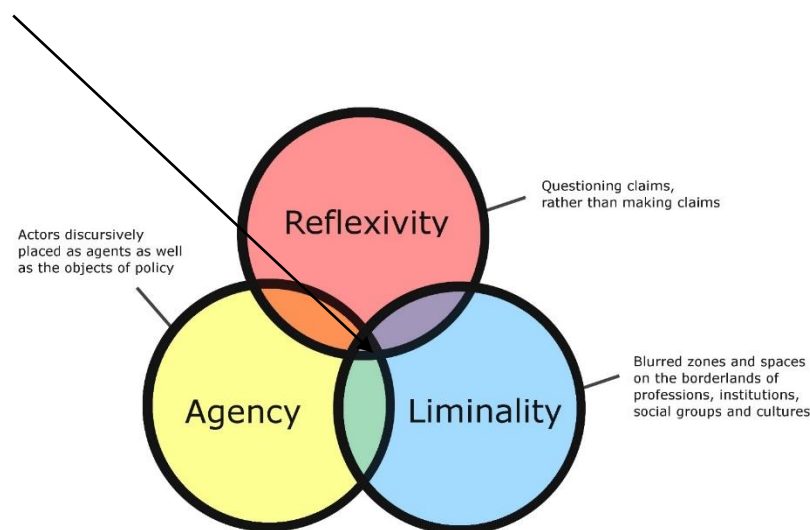
Methodology

The study is based in the literature of community development, sociology and participative methodology. Semi-structured interviews were conducted in 2007 with sample of twenty-four community development practitioners in the North East of England. Three small independently facilitated focus groups were held in 2009 specifically to share the findings from the interviews to enable research participants to take the analysis of the research findings further. Sue's methodology is based upon an interpretive, reflexive approach which applies community development practice methods to the research process. An analysis of Sue's own experience, belief systems and assumptions is integral to this. An examination of how she related and responded to the research participants according to her own definitions and identifications is central to the interpretation and analysis of the data. **For more information email sue@suerobson.co.uk or telephone 07813109215**

APPENDIX 10: PROFILE OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANT BY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PERSPECTIVE

No	Date of interview	Focus group	Position	Sex	Ethnicity	Sector	Perspective on CD	Score
15	16.7.07	4.6.09	Practitioner	Male	white	Public	Conflict	0
6	23.5.07	8.7.09	Manager	Female	white	VSC	Conflict	0
23	26.8.07	8.7.09	Manager	Female	Black	VCS	Conflict	0
12	12.6.07	No	Practitioner	Male	white	VCS	Conflict	0
14	2.7.07	No	Manager	Male	Black	VCS	Conflict	0
17	17.4.07	No	Practitioner/ manager	Female	white	VCS	Conflict	0
18	31.7.07	No	Senior Manager	Male	Black	Public	Conflict	0
21	13.8.07	4.6.09	Senior Manager	Male	white	Public/ VCS	Conflict/ pluralism	0.5
20	3.8.07	8.7.09	Practitioner	Male	Black	Public	Conflict/ pluralism	0.5
24	27.8.07	8.7.09	Manager	Female	white	VCS	Conflict/ pluralism	0.5
2	30.4.07	No	Manager / Practitioner	Male	Black	VSC	Conflict/ pluralism	0.5
4	14.5.07	No	Practitioner/ manager	Male	white	VCS	Conflict, pluralism	0.5
22	14.8.07	No	Practitioner	Male	Black	Public	Conflict/ pluralism	0.5
5	15.5.07	8.7.09	Manager	Female	white	VCS	Pluralism / conflict	1
8	31.5.07	No	Practitioner/ manager	Female	Black	VCS	Pluralism / conflict	1
9	1.6.07	No	Practitioner/ manager	Female	Black	VCS	Pluralism / conflict	1
10	4.6.07	No	Practitioner/ manager	Female	white	VCS	Pluralism / conflict	1

No	Date of interview	Focus group	Position	Sex	Ethnicity	Sector	Perspective on CD	Score
13	12.6.07	No	Practitioner	Female	white	VCS	Pluralism / conflict	1
1	27.4.07	No	Practitioner	Female	white	VCS	Pluralism	1.5
7	25.5.07	No	Practitioner	Female	Black	Public	Pluralism	1.5
16	30.7.07	No	Manager	Male	white	Public	Pluralism	1.5
19	31.7.07	No	Manager	Male	white	VCS	Pluralism	1.5
3	**01.5.07**	**4.6.09**	**Manager**	**Female**	**white**	**Public**	**Consensus**	**2**
11	**8.6.07**	**4.6.09**	**Manager**	**Male**	**white**	**Public**	**Consensus**	**2**

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