Narratives of the in-between: teenagers' identities and spatialities in a north Wales town

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Abstract

This thesis considers the experiences of a group of (young) teenagers in a large town in North Wales, UK. Attention focuses upon their identities and spatialities in relation to their 'in-between' or ambiguous positioning between childhood, youth and adulthood. The research demonstrates how teenagers go about actively creating and negotiating their identities in relation to their 'age', traversing and transgressing boundaries and engaging in quasi or temporary rites of passage. Furthermore, the research explores the alternative social and cultural identities teenagers construct for themselves. Such identities become created and enacted through identification with others and particular spaces which take on a symbolic significance in the activities of the groups. By means of deconstructing the popular metaphor of 'the street' as a place for young people to hang around, the research explores the mosaic of micro sites that become (re)produced as part of the teenage landscape. Rather than focusing upon binary conceptualisations of adult domination and teenager resistance, the research demonstrates that relations between adults and teenagers, and similarly between colliding groups of teenagers are better represented as 'entanglements'. The thesis comprises a multi-voiced, multi-sited text, the main emphasis of the work being to explore the narratives and subjective experiences of teenagers. This was achieved through adopting a range of teenager-negotiated qualitative methods with a specific emphasis upon visual and mobile methods. Through placing teenagers at the centre of the research they were active in defining their own multiple identities and spatialities.

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Chapter One

Introduction

The past decade has undoubtedly witnessed exhilarating and productive developments within the field of children and young people's geographies (for summaries see McKendrick 2000; Holloway and Valentine 2000a; Aitken 2001; Matthews 2003; Gagen 2004). The aim of this thesis is to contribute to this burgeoning area of academic research through a specific focus on teenagers' geographies, a hitherto neglected age grouping within this field. The emphasis of the study is on revealing teenagers' own experiences in relation to identity and space. The research seeks to interrogate the 'in-between' positioning of young teenagers wedged between childhood, youth and adulthood. Exposing this space as an ambiguous yet inherently creative space enables us to explore the multiple and diverse ways teenagers actively negotiate and construct their own identities and spatialities. The study is located in a North Wales town and explores the experiences of a group of 14-16 year olds in relation to their free time or 'hanging out' practices.

The purpose of this chapter is to set out the direction of the thesis. The first section identifies the research context through exploring how children and young people's geographies have traditionally been located within the adult/child binary. This section problematises this binary and posits that teenagers have remained a silenced or excluded grouping within this dualism in two main ways: through their homogenisation under the mantle 'child' or 'non adult' and given their ambiguous position between the boundaries of the adult/child divide. The next section suggests that through adopting a Thirdspace perspective, an alternative space 'beyond' this binary can be created, through which teenager experiences of 'betweeness' can be explored. The chapter then moves on to consider how the research relates to, and moves beyond previous studies through demonstrating the thematic, theoretical, methodological and spatial facets of the work. Finally the chapter provides an outline of the thesis as a whole.

Teenage space in the adult/child binary

The use of binaries (or dualisms) within geographical thought is widespread and influences much of our thinking, for instance male/female, public/private, culture/nature, mind/body, adult/child (see for example Bondi 1990; Soja and Hooper 1993; Sibley 2001; Cloke and Johnston 2005). The adult/child binary construction has been pervasive in studies of children and young people's geographies however it has recently begun to be critiqued in a number of ways (see for example Skelton 2000; Matthews 2002; Weller 2006). The adult/child binary is particularly problematic when considering teenagers who occupy the awkward position within one category *and* between both. This positioning has profound implications in terms of research and practice and has excluded teenagers' experience.

Binary categorisations are problematic because they negate the heterogeneous identities and experiences of those within each side of the divide. With regards to the adult/child binary, the use of the term 'child' denies or disguises the multifarious ways childhood is constructed involving being a child, young person, teenager or youth. This is iterated by Wulff (1995) and Matthews and Limb (1999) who suggest that the terms 'children' and 'young person' are often problematically seen as synonymous and frequently applied as umbrella terms encompassing all those who are young or 'non-adult'. Teenagers become subsumed under the mantle 'child', thereby creating a void in work that considers their unique experiences. For instance, Matthews and Limb (1999) and Valentine (2003) have highlighted that geographical research and policy frequently concentrates on children as those aged between 5 and 16 years old (see for example *Every Child Matters*, DfES 2003). However, this broad-brush categorisation is unlikely to reflect the divergent needs or diffuse experiences of *both* younger children and teenagers. For example, as Weller (2006) comments, research that highlights the increasing amounts of time that children in western societies spend under supervision in privatised or commercial play spaces (McKendrick et al 2000; Smith and Barker 2000) is of little relevance to many young teenagers who are increasingly independent. Similarly, studies that focus on the outdoor place use of young children (for example Ward 1977; 1988; Hart 1979; Spencer 1995; Jones 2000; Thomson and Philo 2004) are likely to reveal different accounts than work with teenagers in terms of the activities, behaviours and boundaries of each age grouping. Moreover binary categorisations fail to recognise the differences amongst young people on the basis of

gender, race, sexuality and (dis)ability, in addition to the alternative social and cultural identities that they construct for themselves.

The issue is further complicated given teenagers' ambiguous positioning between childhood and adulthood straddling the adult/child binary divide. This issue is particularly salient in UK policy and legislation where little clarity exists as to where the boundaries between children, teenagers and adults actually lie. Whereas statutory requirements exist in relation to the age at which young people can do certain things, for example, leave school, give sexual consent, become criminally responsible and get married and so on, these definitions are complex and contradictory. For instance, a young person can become criminally responsible at the age of 10 but not give sexual consent until they are 16 and not get married independently or vote until they are 18 (Mizen 2004). The 'fuzziness' surrounding these boundaries is illustrated by Sibley (1995a), who highlights how classifications are often socially and spatially specific:

> '[The] child/adult illustrates a ... contested boundary. The limits of the category 'child' vary between cultures and have changed considerably through history within Western, capitalist societies. The boundary separating child and adult is a decidedly fuzzy one. Adolescence is an ambiguous zone within which the child/adult boundary can be variously located according to who is doing the categorising.' (Sibley 1995a: 34)

Through their uncertain positioning and straddling of binary divides, teenagers are often seen as ambiguous beings. This is acknowledged by Ruddick (1996) who describes the paradoxical situation of teenagers or adolescents:

> 'Adolescents, in the common view, are generally too old to be ascribed the power of 'nature' – we do not look at their activities with awe and wonder the way we do those of small children. Yet adolescents are generally considered too young to be considered reasoned actors in the sense of might consider adults.'
> (Ruddick 1996: 3)

Similarly, Skelton (2000) highlights the ambiguities experienced by many of her teenage participants in a study in South Wales. What is apparent in Skelton's work is the language used to describe the multiple discourses in which the girls are located:

> 'at once children (in full time compulsory education), teenagers (socially defined as difficult, moody, rebellious and trouble-making) and young people (celebrated as the future, full of energy and life)' (Skelton 2000: 82).

According to Weller (2006), teenagers, particularly young teenagers remain the neglected 'others' of research within children's geographies given their ambiguous location between childhood, youth and adulthood, not fitting neatly into either category and straddling the adult/child binary divide. Following calls to address the neglect of 'children' within geography (James 1990; Sibley 1991; Winchester 1991; Philo 1992), much work has been undertaken to raise the profile of younger children, concentrating on child-centred issues and promoting their voices within adult-dominated academic and policy contexts. Leading some to comment that children's geographies is now 'reaching critical mass; (Holloway and Valentine 2000a) or 'coming of age' (Matthews 2003). However, within this body of work teenagers still remain a neglected grouping.

A major contribution addressing the neglect of children's experience has been the development of the New Social Studies of Childhood (NSSC) within the social sciences (James, Jenks and Prout 1998) and its incorporation into geography (see Holloway and Valentine 2000a; 2000b). The NSSC forwards the insistence that childhood is a socially constructed phenomena that varies across time and space. Further to this, it challenges previous conceptualisations within sociology by asserting children as social actors in their own right, whose agency is important in the creation of their own experiences (Holloway and Valentine 2000a). Moreover, the NSSC recognise that childhood is not a universal category, but rather fractured along the lines of class, gender, race and so on (Holloway and Valentine 2000a). This thesis responds to these underlying philosophies by embracing teenage participant's own experiences, self-definitions and multiple identities. However, following Weller (2006), it remains cautious to the fact that the NSSC fails to recognise the diversity in young lives, subsuming children, young people and teenagers under the mantle 'childhood', thereby adhering to the adult/child dualism. In order to disrupt this adult/child binary and break open the space in-between this thesis draws on an alternative Thirdspace perspective. The concept of Thirdspace will be developed more fully in Chapter Two but the next section outlines its relevance to the study of teenagers' geographies.

Adopting a Thirdspace approach

As previously discussed, the adult/child binary is problematic when considering teenagers given that it subsumes their experiences under the mantle of (younger) children, and fails to acknowledge their ambiguous positioning between childhood, youth and adulthood. In order to overcome these tensions, this research adopts an alternative perspective that disrupts the dualistic confines of the adult/child binary. Thirdspace opens up the space between the binary dualism creating a new space in which alternative narratives can be heard, a space for teenagers' geographies. Embracing this Thirdspace way of thinking enables us to access the space of betweeness, as an ambiguous and yet potentially creative positioning within and between childhood and adulthood. As Bhabha comments, such a space;

> 'gives rise to something different, something new and unrecognisable, a new area of negotiation of meaning and representation' (Bhabha 1990: 211)

The adoption of a Thirdspace approach does not constitute a move to abolish adult/child relations altogether. Nor does it deny the inequalities of power that exist between the two categories. Instead it enables us to 'go beyond' (Bhabha 1994) and to recognise what exists within and between the binary categories 'child' and 'adult'. Engagement with the space also reveals the multifarious experiences and identities of teenagers. To summarise, Thirdspace is portrayed as:

> 'multi-sided and contradictory, oppressive and liberating, passionate and routine, knowable and unknowable. It is a space of radical openness, a site of resistance and struggle, a space of multiplicitous representations, investigable through its binarised opposition but also where *il y a toujours l' Autre*, where there are always 'other' spaces, heterotopologies, paradoxical geographies to be explored. It is a meeting ground, a site of hybridity and mestizaje and moving beyond entrenched boundaries, a margin or edge where ties can be severed and also where new ties can be forged. It can be mapped but never captured in conventional cartographies; it can be creatively imagined but obtains meaning only when fully lived.' (Soja 1999: 276)

Positioning the research ...

... in relation to previous studies

Although young teenagers can be recognised as a neglected grouping within children and young people's geographies, a small number of important studies have begun to explore their place use. This thesis seeks to complement these studies through demonstrating connections to and extensions beyond this existing corpus.

Research by geographers that has engaged with teenagers' activities in western public spaces has emphasised the dominant 'adult' restrictions that circumscribe their use of such spaces and subsequently young people's marginal positions in urban and rural areas (Sibley 1995a; Breitbart 1998; Valentine et al 1998; Matthews et al 1999; 2000; Skelton 2000). Valentine (1996a; 1996b) has shown that throughout history contradictory ideas about children and young people as either angels or devils, Apollonian or Dionysian (Jenks 1996) have produced different ideas about children's use of public space. On the one hand, discourses perpetuating young children as innocent 'angels' in need of protection has led to concerns about their safety in public spaces and fears surroundings the danger of strangers, in particular the risk of abduction by paedophiles or road traffic accidents (Valentine 1996a). On the other hand, the depiction of older children and teenagers as inherently deviant, unruly 'devils' has lead to concerns or 'moral panics'. Valentine (1996a) traces the origins of media moral panics to anxieties surrounding 1960s and 1970s youth subcultures such as Teds, Mods and Rockers (Cohen 1979; Shields 1991) as deviant working class males, focussed on creating havoc as a resistive stance to their economic status and class position. Within more recent times, high profile incidents like the murder of two year old Jamie Bulger in 1993 by two ten year old boys, and the recent shooting of 11 year old Rhys Jones in Liverpool by a gang of young teenagers has further prompted a maelstrom of media fury about the supposed lawlessness and unruliness of many young people (see also Lucas 1998; Matthews et al 1999; Aitken and Marchant 2003).

Against this backdrop of widespread panic about younger children's safety and the dangers posed by older children and teenagers, efforts to remove young people from public spaces are becoming more apparent. These include a variety of legislative and policy mechanisms such as increased surveillance and policing, CCTV cameras, curfews, dispersal and anti-

social behaviour orders (see for example Jeffs and Smith 1996; Matthews et al 1999; Collins and Kearns 2001; O'Neil 2002). All of which seek to remove and exclude teenagers from public space, or as Breitbart explains, 'de-limit their geography and enforce their invisibility' (1998: 306). A recent mechanism used to deter teenagers from specific areas is the 'mosquito', a machine that emits a high pitched noise only audible to young people. Adults remain unaffected, but younger people apparently find the device painful and can not tolerate to be near it and therefore vacate certain spaces within a range of this machine. Such interventions have the effect of producing a normative adult space or adultist spatial ordering (Valentine 1996a; 1996b; Hil and Bessant 1999), reinforcing the sense of powerless and marginalisation of young people and further dislocating them from the adult world (Matthews et al 1999). This has led some commentators, such as Featherstone (1991) to suggest a decline in the importance of local neighbourhoods in the lives of children and teenagers.

In contrast, many studies have focussed on the abilities of young people to actively resist such impositions and to carve out new or alternative spaces for themselves, especially in urban areas (Ruddick 1996; Hil and Bessant 1999; Matthews et al 1998; 1999; 2000), commercial areas such as shopping malls (Hil and Bessant 1999; Matthews, Taylor, Percy-Smith and Limb 2000) and rural areas (Tucker and Matthews 2001; Leyshon 2002; Tucker 2003; Giddings and Yarwood 2005). In addition there exists a diffuse range of international studies which also focus on the leisure activities of teenagers in outdoor contexts, for instance Lieberg (1995); Cahill (2000); Childress (2000); Panelli et al (2002); Vanderbeck and Morse Dunkley (2003); Wridt (2004) and Thomas (2005). Earlier efforts include a study by Lynch (1979) about teenagers in a range of international cities and van Vliet (1983), who looked at the 'home range' of teenagers in Toronto. Van Vliet's study is important as he introduces the concept of the 'fourth environment' that encompasses childhood or teenage spaces beyond the home, school and playground.

In particular, the work of Matthews and his colleagues directly responds to Featherstone's (1991) claim about the declining use of outdoor spaces by children and young people,

through demonstrating the importance of the 'street'[1] in the lives of young teenagers (Matthews et al 1998; Matthews et al 2000; Matthews 2002). By actively (re)claiming the 'street', these authors stimulate the need for further research into the spaces and places that comprise teenage landscapes. Matthews et al (2000) and Matthews (2002) draw on the concepts of Thirdspace and liminality in order to demonstrate how teenage spaces are 'won out' from the fabric of adult society. In doing so, they critique previous studies which have positioned the street as an inherently male domain (see for example Cohen 1979; Hall and Jefferson 1976), by emphasising the concurrent use of the street by females. Similar emphasis is apparent in Skelton's (2000) work that demonstrates the importance of street and youth club spaces in the social lives of teenage girls.

... thematically

These studies form an important platform from which to develop further work in teenagers' geographies. Whilst useful in initially informing the context of the thesis, inductive research generated new and alternative insights into teenage experience, enabling the research to extend empirically, theoretically and methodologically beyond previous work. From this interface, five main research themes emerged:

- *Teenagers' negotiations of their identities in relation to age*
- *Teenagers' social and cultural identities*
- *Identity spaces*
- *Collisions or 'entanglements' between teenagers and adults and between teenagers themselves*
- *The 'lived' spaces of teenage experience*

... theoretically

The research themes are informed by, and inform a theoretical framework that seeks to illuminate and engage with teenage identities and spatialities. The triumvirate framework incorporates ideas about liminality, neo-tribes and Thirdspace. Although other studies have

[1] These authors use the 'street' as 'as a metaphor for all public outdoor places in which children are found, such as roads, cul-de-sacs, alleyways, walkways, shopping areas, car parks, vacant plots and derelict sites' Matthews et al (2000: 63).

drawn on elements of these concepts in relation to teenagers (for instance James 1986; Matthews et al 2000; Matthews 2002), the theoretical originality of this thesis comes from weaving these ideas together as an alternative way of looking at teenagers' geographies.

Liminality is a concept used to refer to ages, identities and spaces that are 'in-between'. In this thesis, the notion is adopted to understand teenage experience in relation to their age and the process of rites of passage. The idea is particularly salient in emphasising the uncertainties and ambiguities inherent within this phase or the 'betwixt and betweeness' of teenage experience. Furthermore, through weaving ideas about liminality with cultural discourses about boundaries and borderlands, we are able to explore how teenagers are active in transgressing and traversing age-defined boundaries. Liminality and ideas about borderlands are useful in exploring teenagers' experiences of age however, the research is also about the alternative social and cultural identities teenagers create for themselves as part of this temporal, liminal phase. As a way of encapsulating the group aspects of these identities the framework incorporates ideas about neo-tribalism. Neo-tribes account for the fluid and fleeting identity practices teenagers engage in with each other across time and space and the effervescent feelings of 'being together'. Finally, the multiple identities of teenagers are brought together within Thirdspace. Thirdspace provides a way of thinking not just about the metaphorical positioning of teenagers between childhood, youth and adulthood, but also grounds their experiences in empirical spaces. Through adopting a Thirdspace approach, this research explores the creative and inventive ways teenagers actively (re)produce multiple spatialities as part of their hanging out practices.

... methodologically

As mentioned above a broadly inductive approach was used to generate research themes. This involved placing teenagers at the centre of the research in enabling them to describe and define their own experiences. In order to access these experiences a range of methods were negotiated with teenagers, which involved a strong emphasis on 'talk', visual and mobile methods. A multi-sited approach was adopted with initial stages based in a secondary school, before mobilising the ethnography to participate in teenagers' hanging out spaces. The research focussed specifically on the experiences of young teenagers, rather than incorporating 'adult' voices. This was a conscious decision as a way of making teenagers central to the research, exploring their own narratives and place use. Also as

away to avoid fashioning the research into an adult/child(teenager) binary conceptualisation.

... spatially

The research is based in a large town in North Wales, a previously un-researched area in terms of teenage spatial practices. The town occupies a geographically liminal position on the Wales/England border and in-between rural and urban areas. Similar to the teenagers involved in the study, the town is currently experiencing a phase of 'betweeness' or transition. Following the decline and closure of many of its key industries, the town suffered economic and social decline during the 1980s and early 1990s. Subsequent to this many funding initiatives were delivered to the area by the Welsh Development Agency and others. These funds were aimed at attracting new manufacturing to the town and regenerating many dilapidated areas in particular within the town centre. As a result, the main commercial area has been pedestrianised and investment has encouraged some major retail stores to locate there. The phase of regeneration however, is still in its infancy with many areas of the town still in a state of decline or abandonment awaiting redevelopment. Moreover, recent years have witnessed an influx of economic migrants coming to the area, mainly from Portugal and Poland. Whereas at the time of the 2001 census about 99% of the population of the borough was white, these figures probably do not adequately reflect changes in the ethnic make up of the town that has occurred over recent years. In terms of young people, figures in 2005 suggest that 24% of the 128,000 population was under the age of 19 (council report). From a personal perspective, this is the town where I grew up, where I was once a teenager engaging in my own forms of identity and spatial practice. A reflexive account of this and how it enabled me to negotiate the research and relations with participants forms an important part of Chapter Three.

Thesis outline

This thesis is a contribution to the understanding of the identity and spatial practices of young teenagers. As outlined above, a theoretical framework has been developed that weaves together ideas about age, social and cultural identities and spaces and places. Chapter Two therefore sets out this framework. The chapter is divided into three sections looking at liminality, neo-tribes and Thirdspace.

Chapter Three focuses on the methodology used to operationalise this thesis. The chapter comprises a purposely reflexive account, illuminated by various examples or 'moments' from the actual 'doing' of the research. The chapter focuses on the issues involved when working with teenagers, in particular the influence of 'place' on the research and the types of methods that can be used as a way of engaging teenagers and uncovering their experiences. The chapter is divided into three broad sections: planning the research, generating data and reflecting back.

The thesis continues with four chapters built on empirical evidence obtained through research in the multi-sited study centred in the North Wales town. Chapter Four outlines significant findings from a questionnaire distributed amongst all 14-16 year olds in the school. In many ways this chapter serves as a preface to the empirical chapters that follow, outlining the experiences of a range of teenagers within the town. The following empirical chapters concentrate on the more in-depth work undertaken with a smaller group of teenage volunteers. By means of introduction to the teenagers involved in later stages of the research the chapter includes a biography of each participant detailing their age, friendship groups, the identity group they define themselves as belonging to and the main spaces they use to hang around.

Chapter Five explores the liminal age of young teenagers betwixt and between childhood, youth and adulthood with specific emphasis on the boundaries that become negotiated and contested by teenagers. The chapter encompasses the informal or 'quasi' rites of passage that teenagers engage in as well as the formal transition of leaving school.

Chapter Six looks at teenage practices of identity formation and identification with others through neo-tribal gatherings. The chapter focuses on five main groupings within the town centre: scallies, Goths, basketballers, skateboarders and Frontline Youth as well as a series of local neighbourhood groupings. The research highlights the ways in which groups are defined by teenagers in terms of their stylistic practices, ritual behaviours and spatial associations. The chapter illuminates the collisions or 'entanglements' that arise between competing groups of teenagers and the tactics various teenagers adopt to avoid such conflicts.

Chapter Seven involves a discursive wander through the teenage landscape of the town. Through an in-depth focus on the spaces and spatial practices of teenagers, the chapter highlights the creative and inventive ways that teenagers go about (re)producing spaces for themselves. The chapter encourages the reader to sojourn in a variety of marginal, transient, festival and performative spaces, all of which speak to the ideas of Thirdspace.

In Chapter Eight we reflect on researching teenagers' identity and spatial practices. The chapter concludes the research by demonstrating the main theoretical, methodological and empirical contributions of the research. In closing the thesis, a number of suggestions are made as to how this research can be used to stimulate future lines of enquiry within teenagers' geographies.

Chapter Two

Theoretical framework

This chapter seeks to build upon what has come before within children's geographies, creating a theoretical framework which provides an alternative lens to look at teenagers' identities and spatialities. The chapter sets out three theoretical approaches – liminality, neo-tribes and Thirdspace, which have been used to inform the empirical chapters that follow. Section One outlines the anthropological concepts of liminality and rites of passage. Through weaving this discourse with more contemporary cultural ideas about boundaries, borders and borderlands, this provides a lens to consider teenagers' practices in relation to their age. Section Two forwards the theory of neo-tribal forms of sociality as a way of looking at the alternative social and cultural identity groupings of teenagers. Through critiquing traditional youth subcultural forms of analysis, neo-tribes are presented as a way of looking at identities which are no-longer rooted in class based forms of resistance. Section Three, in bringing together many of the ideas within this thesis explores journeys into Thirdspace. In this section, the specific geographical or spatial elements of Thirdspace are considered, through an exploration of a range of spatialities (lived spaces, heterotopic spaces, margins, folded spaces) which speak to the idea of Thirdspace. This section provides us with a means of theoretically exploring the mosaic of micro spaces that become (re)produced as part of the teenage landscape.

Section One: Liminality, boundaries and borderlands

As detailed in the previous chapter, teenagers occupy an ambivalent state in-between childhood, youth and adulthood. One way of theorising about this teenage space of betweeness is through the anthropological discourse of liminality, which has specific application to age as a stage in the life course. This section foregrounds ideas of liminality as a way of conceptualising the in-between or liminal positioning of teenagers wedged between childhood and adulthood. The notion of liminality is embedded in the theory of rites of passage that in essence refers to the crossing of thresholds, borders or boundaries between juxtaposed elements of the life cycle. The section concludes by annotating liminal

spaces as conceptual 'borderlands'; empowered spaces from which teenagers can go about creating, constructing, subverting and transgressing boundaries as a means of identity formation.

Rooted in the Latin term *limen*, meaning 'threshold', in the broadest sense liminality can be said to relate to a state, person or space that is in-between. As an anthropological concept[2], it is associated originally with the work of van Gennep and his writings about the rites de passage (1909 [1960]). The idea was later adopted by Turner through his study of the Ndembu tribe in central Africa (1969; 1974). Liminality provides a theoretical frame in which to engage with both spatiality and identity, engendering it a productive lens through which to study teenagers' experiences. While the explicitly spatial dimensions of the concept will be explored further in Section Three, in this section I intend to focus on the non-geographical, teenage state between childhood and adulthood. By means of introduction, it is important to first situate the concept of liminality within the broader context of van Gennep's (1960) rites of passage.

Rites of passage as boundary experiences

Writing in France in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, van Gennep made a significant contribution to the study of anthropological rituals with the book *The Rites of Passage* (1909), translated into English in 1960. His interest lay in the patterns, which he termed *schema*, underlying everyday behaviour within tribal and agrarian societies. For him, life could be understood as a continuous cycle of regeneration involving the movement of individuals between fixed positions or events such as birth, childhood, marriage and death. He termed these schema *rites de passage*. This process was characterised by a pattern that could be divided into three phases: 'separation', 'margin' (or *limen*) and 'reincorporation', for which he also used the terms 'pre liminal', 'liminal' and 'post liminal'.

In the first stage, in the small scale societies studied by van Gennep, a person at a particular juncture in the life course is required to move on to another point – such as from childhood to adulthood. To do so, they are often required to undertake a series of initiation rites

[2] Liminality is not just an anthropological concept as Section Three will demonstrate it has also been used within cultural geography.

before they can occupy their new status. This constitutes the liminal or marginal phase. Liminality, therefore, is associated with the middle stage of the rite – a stage that describes a threshold or margin, at which activities and conditions are most unstable and uncertain. It is during this period that the person assumes an empowered, transitional identity. In the final stage of a rite of passage, the person is reintegrated back into society with a new identity.

Rites of passage in essence, involve the demarcation and crossing of a threshold between ages, states, or spaces, and in this way resonate with recent work in cultural geography and social theory relating to boundaries and borders (see for example Newman and Paasi 1998). Boundaries, by definition, constitute lines of separation or contact and may occur in both real and metaphorical spaces: between territories (Agnew 1993); groups and/or individuals (Sibley 1995a; 1995b); and identity statuses (Shields 1991; Hetherington 1998a). In contrast to the structural features of rites of passage delimited by van Gennep, boundaries and borders are socially constructed phenomena and therefore are open to processes of (re)interpretation, contestation, subversion, transgression and disruption. Unlike rites of passage theory which implies a one way, 'one-shot only' progression between statuses, *boundaries* in the conceptual sense can be (re)crossed time and time again. In this way, the concept of rites of passage, when intertwined with contemporary ideas about boundaries provides a useful way of understanding teenagers' identity in relation to their age and the passages they create and negotiate between childhood, youth and adulthood.

Historically, one of the most important rites of passage or boundary crossings described by anthropologists are the initiation ceremonies related to achieving adult status, often referred to as puberty or coming of age rites. These rites vary between cultures, but involve some kind of symbolic performance that marks a change in status for participants from childhood to adulthood. Such formal, physiological practices or ceremonies are rare within contemporary Western societies (Myerhoff 1982), instead teenage lifestyles become interjected by a series of 'status marking events' (Northcote 2006), including leaving school, the ability to marry, obtaining a drivers licence, political voting and legal alcohol consumption. While these are important boundary crossings (Valentine 2003) for older young people, they still (legally) pervade the young teenagers involved in this thesis – the exception being leaving school which is explored as an empirical rite of passage in Chapter

Five. The perceived lack of ritual transitions within young teenagers' lives has prompted Krenichyn (1999) to position them as *lost* in the landscape between childhood and adulthood. In contrast however, as this research will demonstrate, far from being 'lost', teenagers are actively involved in creating and enacting their own rites of passage or symbolic boundary crossings, between and within the realms of childhood, youth and adulthood. In this sense, boundaries become negotiated and disrupted while simultaneously being (re)created by teenagers themselves. While these may not be permanent or complete transitions (Crapanzano 1992) as implied by van Gennep's rites of passage, they constitute important aspects of teenage biographies as temporary, ephemeral or 'quasi rites of passage' (Northcote 2006) while still involving some process of boundary or threshold crossing or interaction.

Let us now turn to consider the liminal space from which these boundary crossing become negotiated and enacted by teenagers. Liminality, as the middle phase of the rites of passage process, itself constitutes a metaphorical boundary or borderland, a threshold between statuses, ages or places. The following passages will consider the anthropological lineage of liminality as interpreted by Turner, intertwining it with post-colonial ideas of hybridity and third space.

Liminality

As alluded to above, Turner (1969; 1974), and those who have followed (for example Shields 1991; Weber 1995; Hetherington 1998a), are most interested in the middle part of van Gennep's process – the liminal. It is from Turner's (re)construction that the concept has gained further salience in highlighting the innovative and transformation potential of spaces 'in-between'. As Weber, drawing on Turner's work comments, the liminal represents, 'the culturally dangerous, but culturally creative middle stage … where all the action (so to speak) during social transitions takes place' (1995: 527). By means of (re)iteration, given its association with 'social transitions', the concept of liminality has literal application to the study of age as a form of identity and in particular teenagers, occupying the paradoxically 'dangerous' and 'creative' space(s) between childhood and adulthood. For Turner, liminality is constituted through;

> 'a margin or limen, when the past is momentarily negated, suspended, or abrogated, and the future has not yet begun, an instant of pure potentiality when everything, as it were, trembles in the balance' (Turner 1982: 44).

At this interval, liminal subjects, or 'threshold people' as Turner (1969) calls them are located between cultures, literally occupying a threshold or borderland space, straddling, subverting, disrupting boundary lines of separation and contact. They are 'neither here nor there; they are betwixt and between the positions assigned and arranged by law, custom, convention and ceremonial' (Turner 1969: 95). Within the field of children and young people's geographies, in a similar vein to this thesis, Matthews et al (2000) and Matthews (2002) have drawn upon the work of post-colonial theorist Bhabha (1994) as a way of positioning teenagers between the cultures of childhood and adulthood, that is;

> 'set between the freedom and autonomy of adulthood and the constraints and dependency of infancy, neither adult nor child' (Matthews et al 2000: 65).

Drawing on Bhabha's conceptual vocabulary, this space of betweeness becomes a space of ambivalence and hybridity: 'neither One nor the other, but *something else besides, in-between'* (Bhabha 1994: 224 original emphasis). This ambivalent, hybrid situation, according to Bhabha creates an empowered 'third space'[3], from which other positions emerge: 'something different, something new and unrecognisable, a new area of meaning and representation' (as in Rutherford 1990: 211). Through his use of these terms, Bhabha (1994) urges those who inhabit the third space to 'go beyond', to cross boundaries and to 'live somehow beyond the borders of our time'. This has particular relevance for the study of teenage boundary experiences and provides a lens through which we can explore their processes of crossing, transgressing, disrupting and going beyond and between the boundaries of childhood, youth and adulthood in the creation of new or alternative identities.

Another concept that Turner (1969) introduces in his work that has some bearing on issues of identity and boundary experiences is 'communitas'. For Turner, in periods and places of liminality, threshold people experience intensely affectual identification with each other known as communitas. According to Shields (1990), this shared sense of identity and

[3] Bhabha's (1994) concept of the 'third space' is similar to, yet also different from Soja's (1996) Thirdspace, although the differences will be given further attention in Section Three.

belonging forms a 'community of passengers' through which there is an experiential 'spirit of comradeship and fellowship'. Traditionally, communitas is associated with rites of passage rituals, but I would argue that it can also be found in some forms of teenage gatherings where transgressive practices of boundary crossings are marked by '[e]xperiences of ecstasy, solidarity, spontaneity and empowerment' (Hetherington 1998a: 113). Examples could include, gaining entrance to a public house or nightclub when under-age (see Chapter Five); engaging in under-age drinking or drug taking (Chapters Five, Six and Seven); participating in illegal raves (Richard and Kruger 1998) or setting up illegal campsites (Hetherington 1998b).

In the examples listed above, communitas refers to the affective and emotive aspects of being together. However, when considered another way communitas has the effect of homogenising liminal subjects as a 'relatively undifferentiated ... community ... of equal individuals' (Turner 1969: 96). In the case of teenagers, this fails to recognise the heterogeneous nature of teenage identities and their multiple paths through childhood and youth. According to Eade and Sallnow, in this way communitas has the effect of imposing a 'spurious homogeneity' upon phenomena which is culturally 'polymorphic' (1991: 5). Taking account of this, I want to suggest that the concept is more useful if (re)formulated as 'temporary communitas'. By doing so, it can be productive in characterising the spontaneous conditions of teenage identity practices and gatherings without subsuming them as a homogenous identity grouping. The 'polymorphic' or heterogeneous nature of teenage identities will be returned to in Section Two.

In many ways, the heightened experiences of communitas, or what I am calling 'temporary communitas' are brought together through the ambivalent condition of liminality, as a space of possibility and potential. Paradoxically however, such liminal, in-between or third spaces are also fraught with danger and struggle. Those occupying the space, are often seen as ambiguous, transgressive or abject and subjected to practices and discourses which mark them off as being different, dangerous others – initiated through their unstable identity position between two statuses or ages. This is illuminated by Douglas (1984), who highlights the ambiguity of liminality and simultaneous out-casting of liminal subjects:

'Danger lies in transitional states, simply because transition is neither one state nor the next, it is indefinable. The person who must pass from one to another is himself [sic] in danger and emanates danger to others' (Douglas 1984: 97).

The idea of something, or someone lying between states constituting an uncertain and disruptive entity is given further salience in the work of Sibley (1995). Drawing on Leach (1976), Sibley explains that problems arise when the separation of things into oppositional categories is unattainable, and leads to the creation of overlapping or in-between liminal zones, which are seen as sources of anxiety. For example, in figure 2.1, when uncertainty exists about where the edge of category A turns into the edge of category not-A, a liminal ambiguous zone is formed in the shaded in area as a zone of abjection.

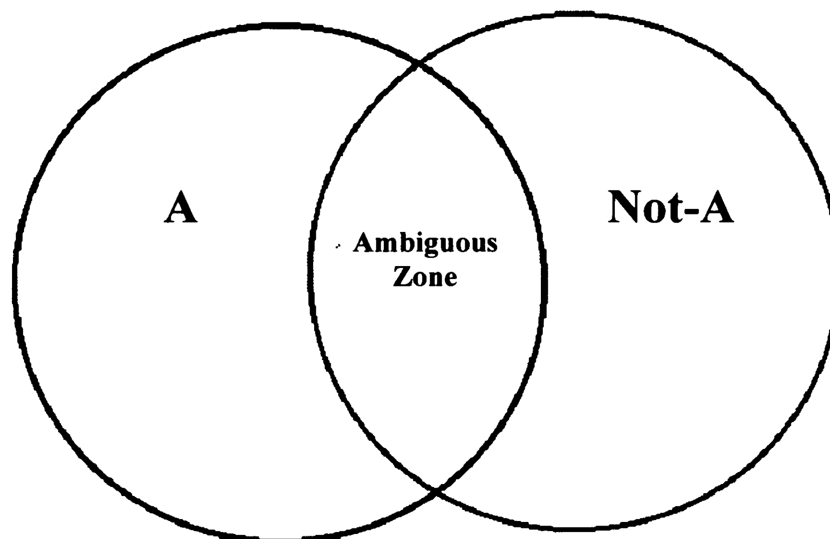

Figure 2.1 Venn diagram

As a response, at various junctures people's relationships with 'liminal others' become conditioned by fear, anxiety and nervousness. This was demonstrated in the previous chapter through the spatial discourses that perceive teenagers to be unruly and threatening 'devils' and seek to ensure their exclusion from public spaces through measures such as increased surveillance and policing, CCTV cameras, dispersal orders and curfews (Valentine 1996a; 1996b; Matthews et al 1998; Hil and Bessant 1999). This reaction to certain kinds of otherness or difference becomes bound up with issues of power and processes of boundary or border creation between self and other. In relation to teenagers, to paraphrase Valentine et al (1998), these are often boundaries of exclusion rather than exclusion defining what they cannot do or cannot be (see also James 1986; Sibley 1995a;

Holloway and Valentine 2000a; 2000b Vanderbeck and Morse Dunkley 2004). To quote Anzaldua (1987), whose work will be discussed in more detail later in this section:

> 'Borders are set up to define the places that are safe and unsafe, to distinguish *us* from *them*. A border is a dividing line, a narrow strip along a steep edge. A borderland is a vague and undetermined place created by the emotional residue of an unnatural boundary. It is in constant state of transition. The prohibited and forbidden are its inhabitants.' (Anzaldua 1987: 25)

To paraphrase Sibley, 'in all kinds of political, social and socio-spatial relationships, boundaries and borders then assume considerable significance because they are simultaneously zones of uncertainty and security' (1995a: 183). In this sense, boundaries, need to be viewed as:

> 'arbitrary dividing lines that are simultaneously social, cultural, and psychic; territories to be patrolled against those who they construct as outsiders, aliens, the Others; forms of demarcation where the very act of prohibition inscribes transgression; zones where the fear of the Other is fear of the self; places where claims to ownership – claims to 'mine', 'yours' and 'their' – are staked out, contested, defended and fought over' (Brah 2002: 198).

Paradoxically however, the boundary or border, as an in-between space also forms a space of *respite* for those perceived as dangerous or marginal beings. By means of discovering the discursive practices within this space of respite, it is useful to conceptualise liminal spaces as borderlands. Turner's concept of the liminal, although it provides valuable foundations for the study of identity creation (as in Shields 1991; Hetherington 1998a), it has undergone criticism for being a relatively 'apolitical space' (Weber 1995), void of the experiential narratives of liminal subjects (Myerhoff 1982). As Weber comments, Turner misses the 'conception and recognition of culture as a *political* contestation: the battle over narrative power, the fight over who gets to (re)tell the story and from which position' (1995: 532). For these reasons it is productive to intertwine ideas of the liminal as a space between childhood and adulthood with ideas about borderlands in order to (re)create political spaces from which teenagers can assert their narratives. In other words as empowered spaces from which they can multifariously engage in processes of boundary crossings between childhood, youth and adulthood as ways of initiating new and alternative forms of identity and ritual processes. Following Weber, occupation of a simultaneously liminal and borderland zone creates a 'narrative freedom':

> 'the border, porous and open, emerges as a zone capable of nourishing a rich grid of 'crisscrossed' ... multiple identities, a celebration of ambiguity as the *condition* of the postmodern self ... the space of real ... political ... potential' (Weber 1995: 532)

The empowering potential of such spaces can be qualitatively illuminated through the work of Gloria Anzaldua and her book *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (1987). For her, a borderland is the place where two borders, and therefore cultures meet or become divided and in which a liminal zone between here and there, us and them, inclusion and exclusion occurs. Anzaldua is a borderland inhabitant, embedded within the discursive space between not only the physical US-Mexico border, but also as a woman between cultures, races and sexualities. Although she is physically located at the geographical US-Mexico border, it is not the physical borderland she writes about, but rather the 'psychological borderlands, the sexual borderlands and the spiritual borderlands' of her experience (1987: unpaged preface). In this way, the borderland has become a prolific metaphor within cultural geography and cultural theory over recent years. As a discursive space it holds particular significance for this thesis as it focuses attention on those who occupy a marginalised position, such as teenagers – subjects who are metaphorically positioned at the edges, outskirts or margins of society. For these subjects, similar to Bhabha's third space, the borderland offers a symbolic, empowered location. For Anzaldua, in the borderlands a new consciousness emerges, an empowered consciousness of the *mestiza*[4]*:*

> 'I have no country, my homeland casts me out; yet all countries are mine because I am every woman's sister or potential lover. (As a lesbian I have no race, my own people disclaim me; but I am all races because there is the queer of me in all races). ... I am an act of kneading, of uniting and joining that not only has produced both a creature of darkness and a creature of light, but also a creature that questions the definitions of light and dark and gives them new meaning' (Anzaldua 1987: 80-81)

'This is my home
this thin edge of
barbwire.

But the skin of the earth is seamless.
The sea cannot be fenced, *el mar* does not stop at borders.

[4] Translated as a woman of combined ancestry

To show the white man what she thought of his
arrogance,
Yemaya blew that wire fence down. (Anzaldua 1987: 25)

Encountering Anzaldua here, at her 'home this thin edge of barbed wire' she suggests that just like the borders of cultural territory, metaphorical borders and meaning can also be transgressed. Whilst this space is, at times, a difficulty territory to inhabit, being fraught with struggle, the borderland can act as a flexible space from which to navigate the border and beyond. The empirical chapters of this thesis explore the ways in which marginalised teenagers venture both to and beyond the border, disrupting, subverting, transgressing and (re)interpreting the space.

This section has explored liminal spaces as a way of conceptualising teenagers betwixt and between the worlds of childhood and adulthood. However, through interrogating or (re)conceptualising these liminal spaces as borderlands creates a discursive space from which teenage narratives can be heard. Similarly teenage boundaries – in relation to childhood, youth and adulthood, inclusion and exclusion, us and them can be (re)crossed, transgressed and disrupted. The next section explores the multiple ways in which teenagers construct their identities and identification with others through concept of neo-tribes. Section three then examines these identity practices within the realm of 'Thirdspace'.

Section Two: Neo-tribes

The previous section has considered the liminal positioning of teenagers, wedged between childhood and adulthood and the contradictions and ambivalences this implies. Whilst the concept of liminality is useful for looking at the broad experiences of being a teenager and the feelings of ambiguity and marginality that accompany such a transitional state, the associated concept of 'communitas' is generally unhelpful in exploring the pluralistic identity practices of teenagers. Far from comprising a homogeneous grouping, teenagers self-organise into heterogeneous identity clusters. The purpose of this section is to establish a lens which will allow us to explore the multiple and dynamic ways teenagers go about creating identities for themselves and with others, and the group or 'tribal' nature of these elective identity clusters.

Subcultural analysis

Traditionally 'youth cultures' have been studied through subcultural analysis, originating in the work of the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) in the 1970s. For members of the CCCS the dominant focus of study were the *styles* of youth cultures which were seen as signifying resistance to class based structures, particularly for working class males. Aspects of British Marxist theory – the work of Thompson, Hoggart and Williams – were blended with continental influences in social theory – Gramsci, Althusser and Barthes – in creating a mutli-disciplinary structuralist approach in which class and culture became central strands (Malbon 1999). Through the group's seminal text *Resistance through rituals* edited by Hall and Jefferson (1976), researchers used empirical studies of subcultures such as Teds, Mods, Rockers, Skinheads and Punks as a way of explaining the forms of rebellion expressed by certain youth groups. The overwhelming emphasis was on resistance through deviant or 'spectacular events' rather than the everyday, mundane and banal activities.

The preoccupation with youth as deviant, spectacular and *male* also began to be critiqued by feminist researchers in the late 1970s and early 1980s (Valentine et al 1998). To this end, McRobbie (1994) one of the original members of the CCCS, and others began to focus on girls in their ordinary everyday lives; in both the outdoor public realm and domestic spaces such as the home, and in particular girls' bedrooms (McRobbie and Garber 1991). A further critique of subcultural analysis centres on the distinctly a-spatial orientation of much of the work, which tends to neglect the spatial attachments of cultural groups to specific sites. The spatialities of identity groupings are a prime focus of this thesis and will be explored further in the next section. Subcultural analysis is thought also to negate the more affectual or experiential aspects of 'subcultural' involvement including the ways in which, coming together as a group, however temporary and fragmented the group is, can provide individuals with a sense of belonging and identification, as well as a sense of individual identity or style (Sweetman 2004).

In an attempt to move away from conventional subcultural theory with its dominant emphasis upon class resistance to adult authority, this thesis draws upon recent work on neo-tribal notions of identity practices, alongside individualization theory. The framework engendered through this approach follows the thinking that teenage identity practices,

rather than being solely dependent upon sociological parameters such as class, ethnicity and gender, are instead examples of late modern lifestyles in which notions of identity are 'constructed' rather than 'given', and 'fluid' rather than 'fixed' (Bennett 1999: 599). Such a framework resonates with what was discussed previously about the potential of betweeness as a space which offers the potential for, to use Hetherington's words 'creating a new identity, or embracing marginality, and being openly provocative and different' (Hetherington 1998a: 15).

Reflexive modernity and neo-tribes[5]

For writers such as Anthony Giddens (1991, 1994) and Ulrich Beck (1992, 1994), identity has become increasingly reflexive. In pre-modern (and to some extent modern) social contexts, a person's identity was taken as given, relatively fixed and stable. In what the above theorists term 'high', 'late' or 'reflexive' modernity, however, identity is increasingly ambiguous and has to be worked at individually in the context of more or less freely chosen possibilities. Beck maintains that new ways of life now require people to 'produce, stage and cobble together their biographies themselves' creating their own 'individualised biographies' (1994:13). What is at stake here is a notion of the individual and a process of 'becoming individual' (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995; 2002). In part, this complexity reflects a freeing up of established patterns of transition. There is a sense in which transitions through the life course are now more open-ended and fluid, which has particular significance for teenagers in terms of the rites of passage talked about earlier and also their social and cultural identities.

Alongside the individualisation thesis proposed above, an alternative discourse has emerged which suggests that we are currently witnessing a resurgence of affectual based *group* forms of sociality and 'being togetherness' (see Maffesoli 1988; 1996; Shields 1992a; 1992b; 1996; Hetherington 1998a; 1998b). For these authors, contemporary social life is marked by 'membership in a multiplicity of over lapping groups in which the roles one plays become sources of identity' (Shields 1996: xii). In this way, rather than the processes of *individualization* proposed by Beck, Giddens and the like, Maffesoli argues that we are witnessing a period of *dis-individualization* – the 'losing' of self into the

[5] The term 'neo-tribe' is used to mark the distinction between anthropological tribes and postmodern (neo)tribes.

collective subject (1988: 145). As Sweetman (2004) summarises, where the reflexive modernization thesis suggests that individuals respond to this loss of ideological identities by grounding themselves in a reflexively constructed narrative of the self, Maffesoli asserts that a 'saturation of individualism' (1996: 64) is taking place, and that members of the sociality revel in the superficiality of the neo-tribal *persona* (1988: 148).

The contrast between individualism and neo-tribalism is, however, perhaps not as stark as it seems. Evans (1997) has suggested that neo-tribalism depends upon a highly individualised society where people are released from the chains of tradition and are therefore in a position to choose between the lifestyle alternatives offered to them. Hetherington, similarly considers it a dual process in that the reflexive form of individualism, which is no longer able to base itself in class cultures, regional identities or established gender roles, itself leads to a process of de-individualization as people seek to recombine in new forms of sociation based on 'political, cultural, sexual, religious and therapeutic identities' (1998a: 92). In other words, it is the collective identification and belonging afforded by neo-tribes that is used as a way of developing individual identity (Hetherington 1998a; Bauman 1992).

Bringing these two theoretical strands together creates a contemporary way for social theory to approach what has been termed 'post subcultural' analysis (Muggleton and Weinzierl 2003; Bennett and Kahn-Harris 2004) and can be used within this thesis to illuminate teenagers' social and cultural identity practices and formations. Moreover, the postmodern idea that groups within society are now characterised by heterogeneity and fluidity in membership similarly resembles a departure from standard sociological variables such as gender, ethnicity and class. Teenage hanging out practices are intensely sociable activities and therefore this thesis foregrounds the neo-tribal metaphor as a framework through which to look at the group identities teenagers create for themselves and with others. I will now go on to explain what is meant by neo-tribal sociality.

Neo-tribes

It is important to note that the tribes being spoken about here are not tribes in the traditional anthropological sense because they do not have the fixity or longevity of conventional tribes (Shields 1996). In contrast neo-tribal formations are characterised by 'fluidity, by

punctuated gathering and scattering' (Maffesoli 1988: 148). In this way they are better understood as 'postmodern tribes' (Maffesoli 1988; 1996), or 'neo-tribes' (Shields 1992a; 1992b; 1996), symbolised through temporary and fleeting, rather than ascriptive memberships (Bauman 1992). Neo-tribes may be collective phenomena, but an individual can choose which, if any, they want to belong to and when they want to leave (Hetherington 1998a). Neo-tribalism, according to Maffesoli does 'not conform to any single definite structure, and ... has as its sole *raison d'etre* the pre-occupation with the collectively lived present' (1988: 146). Moreover, they are usually localised gatherings, although sometimes may form through on-line communities transcending local spaces. In many ways this is synonymous with the ephemeral hanging out practices of teenagers.

These 'tribes' are inherently unstable, and not fixed by any of the established parameters of modern society; instead they are maintained through shared beliefs, styles of life and consumption practices (Shields 1992b). Unlike the structural categories of class-based identifications that afforded individuals a singular identity within the postmodern realm a person's identity becomes more fragmented and polysemic. As Maffesoli (1988; 1996) has suggested, the multiple 'identifications' of a person in a series of tribes are the multiple 'masks' of a postmodern 'persona'. These multiple identities, as Shields comments form a '*dramatis personae* – a self which can no longer be simplistically theorised as unified, or based solely on an individuals job or productive function' (1992a: 16). Similarly, Hetherington posits that where identity cannot be attached to singular uncomplicated subject positions, identity becomes about 'multiple location and performativity within that location' (1998a: 24). In this way, the position of identity is one that is 'topologically complex ... heterogeneous, folded, paradoxical and crumpled space in which a distinct singular position is not possible' (Hetherington 1998a: 23). Sociation within neo-tribes embodies and reflects this topological complexity of identity. The notion of crumpled, folded identities and their relation to spaces will be considered further in Section Three.

Through his various works Maffesoli (1988; 1996) argues that we are moving towards an 'empathetic sociality' (1996: 11), where what is important is not some abstract, idealised goal, but rather the *feeling* of 'undirected being-togetherness' (1996: 81) engendered by one's involvement with a social group. As he describes, 'postmodernity has tended to favour a withdrawal into the group as well as a deepening of relationships within these

groups' (Maffesoli 1996: 89). In this way, tribes can be said to exhibit similar characteristics to Turner's concept of communitas as described in Section One. The sense of 'collective effervescence' or 'shared sentiment' which 'is the true social bond' (Maffesoli 1996: 43). As described previously, rather than characterising all teenagers as a unified, socially undifferentiated grouping, it is more useful to draw on the emotive and experiential elements of communitas, which can lead us to formulate teenage hanging out practices as 'temporary sites of communitas'.

Within the context of tribalism, particular places, things or behaviours come to assume an iconic significance, acting as expressions of group solidarity. As Maffesoli describes,

> 'In the solitude inherent in all urban areas, the icon is a familiar image – a sort of group 'uniform' (brandy, punk, retro-look etc) – that acts as a point of reference and becomes part of daily life ... It allows for the recognition of oneself by oneself (1988: 150).

For Shields (1996), such 'consumption for adornment' becomes not merely the means to a particular tribal lifestyle, but the enactment of the lifestyle itself. Despite the criticisms of subcultural analysis and its emphasis on 'style', it is clear that iconic markers are still apparent and important for these contemporary identity groupings. However, as Shields (1996) has mentioned the emphasis is on stylistic sensibilities as an enactment of the lifestyle, rather than purely as a form of resistance as Hebdige (1979) and other subcultural theorists would have us believe. The icons, or 'identity markers' which teenagers use as a way of performing their own tribal identity, and for identifying others will be explored further in Chapter Six.

A further concept that Maffesoli presents is that of *proxemics* in describing the spatiality of neo-tribes. For Maffesoli, neo-tribes not only involve social relationships between individuals but also relations to specific spaces and places. In this way identity formation and identification with others becomes a spatially situated process (Hetherington 1998a). Neo-tribes are frequently formed amongst those who are similarly located within a particular space or place: such as customers at the local coffee shop, students in a particular class, or night clubbers in the same club (Malbon 1998; 1999; Bennett 1999). This can also be a virtual spatiality amongst internet websites and discussion groups. These neo-tribes

then organise their identities and spatial territories through their shared practices and action of 'being together'. In this way, particular sites take on meaning as they become socially central to the neo-tribe. These can either be sites that are already established, or others that become adopted through the practices of a group. The sites take on a symbolic significance around which identities are constituted and performed. The geographic spatiality of identity will be considered further in Section Three, however it has been useful within the context of neo-tribes to fore ground Maffesoli's concept of proxemics and examine how neo-tribes come to associate with sites of centrality.

Empirical studies using the concept of tribes have focussed on, amongst other things, New Age travellers at Stonehenge (Hetherington 1998a; 1998b), dance and clubbing cultures (Malbon 1999; Bennett 1999) and living in shared households (Heath 2004), but other examples, according to Shields could include 'mall jamers at mundane city centre malls ... knots of friends, groups who appear to be clones of one fashion-style or another, interest groups and clubs' (1992a: 14). Although many of the studies involve 'older' young people or adults, the concept of neo-tribes has not previously been applied to the identity groupings of (young) teenagers.

In parallel, other authors in the field of youth studies have drawn on the notion of 'microcultures' (Wulff 1995, Matthews et al 1998) to describe the cultural identity groupings of young people. Microcultures are similar to neo-tribes in that they concentrate on the 'flows of meaning which are managed by people in small groups that meet on an everyday basis', and emphasise the combinations of personalities that make up the groups, the locations they make their own, and events they share (Wulff 1995: 65). However, the concept does tend to suggest a more static (although not permanent) identity than the fleeting, temporary associations formulated through neo-tribes which are based on fluid memberships. Similarly, Wulff (1995) and Matthews et al (1998) mention little of the affective and experiential 'being togetherness' of tribal forms of sociality. Neo-tribes therefore provides an alternative way of theorising about the identity practices of teenagers. The two concepts, do however dovetail in their opposition to the 'subcultural' ideas of the CCCS in which young people were seen as 'passive' recipients of adult values, with their activity limited only to rituals of resistance (Matthews et al 1998). In contrast, within the

microcultural framework emphasis is on agency and the ways in which individuals actually form or influence their cultural identities (Wulff 1995).

Critique of neo-tribes

The work of Maffesoli (1988; 1996) has been critiqued in a number of ways. Firstly, whereas his concept of *tribus* (tribes) denotes a departure from structural influences such as class and gender, according to Hetherington (1998a), it is not this straight forward. For him, the plurality of identity choices now available creates uncertainty and conflict as well as inventiveness. In place of denying the relevance of class altogether, Hetherington suggests that we consider class, and other factors such as gender and ethnicity alongside neo-tribes:

> 'Contrary to Maffesoli's own suggestions, neither class nor gender determines all that we do in our lives but they do still have some hold over us' (Hetherington 1998a: 53).

A second weakness with Maffesoli's work is that it largely lacks empirical contextualisation. As I unpack in more detail in Chapter Six, the 'neo-tribal' gatherings that characterise teenagers spatial and identity practices provide an empirical texturing to some of Maffesoli's notions and conceptualisations. A third critique that can be levelled at Maffesoli is that he neglects to consider issues of contestation that may occur between neo-tribes and other (dominant) groups within society. Given that such groups centre their identities on sets of beliefs, shared lifestyles and territorial practices, it is inevitable that these practices will at times be at odds with the practices of other groups. As Hetherington argues:

> 'Identity is about both similarity and difference. It is about how subjects see themselves in representation, and about how they construct differences within that representation and between it and the representation of others. Identity is also about both correspondence and dissimilarity. Principally, identity is articulated through the relationship between belonging, recognition or identification and difference' (Hetherington 1998a: 15).

In this way the processes of boundary creation become important in the relationships between neo-tribes. This becomes particularly relevant when, as in the case of this thesis, a space is occupied by variously complementary and *competing* neo-tribes and identity

clusters. Let us now move to consider an alternative way of thinking about the collisions and conflicts, or power relations, between not only competing neo-tribes, but also teenagers and adults, which can be thought of as 'entanglements'.

Entanglements of power

Many of the studies outlined in Chapter One focussed on the abilities of teenagers to actively resist adult imposed orderings of space and to carve out new and alternative spaces for themselves (Breitbart 1998; Hil and Bessant 1999; Matthews et al 1999; 2000; Skelton 2000; Matthews 2002). However, within these examples there exists a lingering discourse that conceptualises teenagers' spatial activities as part of the binary process of adult domination versus child or teenager resistance (Gagen 2004; Thomas 2005). In other words, dominant adult practices dictate and produce space with teenagers finding ways to manoeuvre through space and resist adult control. In this way, adult practices can be seen as de Certeau's (1984) strategies and teenagers' resistance as tactics:

> 'strategies are able to produce, tabulate, and impose ... space, [the] operations that take place, whereas tactics can only use, manipulate, and divert these spaces' (de Certeau 1984: 30)

> 'A strategy assumes a place that can be circumscribed as *proper (propre)* ... a 'tactic' on the other hand ... cannot count on a 'proper' (a spatial or institutional location) ... The place of a tactic belongs to the other. A tactic insinuates itself into the other's place, fragmentarily, without taking over its entirety ... The 'proper' is a victory of space over time. On the contrary, because it does not have a place, a tactic depends on time – it is always on the watch for opportunities that must be seized 'on the wing'. Whatever it wins, it does not keep. It must constantly manipulate events in order to turn them into 'opportunities' (de Certeau 1984: xix).

This particular spatiality of power, however, has received criticism from Massey (2000) for its closed view of space and spatial-political relations. Whilst not denying the importance of the creative agency of young people in their acts of resistance, this binary configuration resembles a model of power that essentially, to use Massey's words, 'opposes the strategies of the powerful to the tactics of the little people, those who resist' (2000: 280). For

Massey, this approach is problematic in two main ways given its philosophical and political implications. According to her, philosophically the conceptualisation preserves the structures of 'big binaries', which have already been problematised in Chapter One. Secondly, politically it is disputable as it over estimates the 'coherence of 'the powerful' and the seamlessness with which order is produced' (2000: 280). Considering these two issues together, Massey posits that in fact, the spatiality of power is far more 'fraught, unstable and contingent, as well as multiple' (2000: 280).

In a similar vein, Ruddick (1996) in her work on homeless teenagers in Hollywood offers a more productive view of tactics, proposing a space between de Certeau's (1984) tactics and strategies. For her, similar to the teenagers in this thesis, tactics can be seen as one of the ways young people make fleeting, transitory use of spaces that have been strategically organised by other actors. However, for Ruddick (1996), it is precisely through the precious and transitory use of spaces, for example sleeping on a park bench, that homeless young people gain a 'relative permanence' in particular places. As she describes, '[r]ead through the eyes of de Certeau, the precariousness of their existence has produced their tenacity, or more particularly their day-to-day employment of *tactics* that confound the *strategies* of the production and control of space.' (Ruddick 1996: 59).

Taking these two narratives together, we can begin to view the spatiality of power as more complicated than the domination/resistance, adult/child, adult/youth dualisms might initially lead us to believe (see also Pile 1997). Instead, what we are dealing with is a far more messy and complex, *entangled* form of power that leads us to deploy such closed binaries (Sharpe et al 2000; Massey 2000). Sharp et al (2000), drawing on Foucauldian discourses of power illuminate the 'entanglements' or 'knotted threads' of power and forward an alternative way of thinking about spatial relations. According to Foucault (1980), power can exhibit both positive and negative dimensions, operating in ways which can be at once 'repressive and progressive, constraining and facilitative, to be condemned and to be celebrated' (Sharp et al 2000: 2). In this way, power cannot be viewed solely as an attribute of the dominant, it is not always and everywhere a power *over* people. Power comes from doing (Foucault 1980) and can therefore also be found in the abilities of those who resist, enabling them to become *empowered* in the very act of resistance. For Foucault (1980) and Sharp et al (2000), power must be analysed as something which circulates

within and between actors as various knots and entanglements. Considering this, young people are not only circulating between the threads of 'adult' power, but are always in a position of 'simultaneously undergoing and exercising this power' (Foucault 1980: 98). Therefore, teenagers' use of space can be seen as entailing more that just tactics of resistance to dominating adults. Whilst this is not to deny the influence of 'adult' discourses and restrictions placed upon teenagers, this thesis demonstrates that teenagers' use and occupation of space is more *productive* than this, with teenagers themselves actually (re)producing social spaces or (re)inscribing normative meanings on the urban landscape, even as they resist adult spatial control (Thomas 2005).

Through their performative association with specific places, day after day, weekend after weekend, young teenagers go about (re)inscribing the social and cultural landscape of spaces, (re)creating the normative geography or ideology. This claiming or (re)invention of spaces has specific political connotations, 'claiming a turf' which can manifest itself in alternative, entangled forms of domination and resistance between competing and colliding identity groups. In this way, space becomes 'actively and continually practiced [through] social relations' (Massey 2000: 282). Drawing on Massey (2000: 282-283), this creates an alternative spatial imaginary to the previous view (a) which involved adult-domination, young person-resistance that configured power as a 'central block under attack from smaller forces', in contrast, view (b) which envisages entanglements between alternative teenage identity groupings, whilst also between teenagers and adults resembles 'a ball of wool after the cat has been at it, in which the cross-over points, or knots or nodes, are connected by a multitude of relations variously of domination and resistance and some only ambiguously characterisable in those terms'.

Through adopting an entangled approach the identities of the 'resisters' and simultaneously the 'dominators' shift and multiply (Massey 2000). This alerts us to the contradictions in teenagers' interactions with normative 'adult' space, as well as their resistive practices. It also creates a space to explore how teenagers themselves, through their identity practices and engagement in neo-tribes (re)produce categories of meanings of social domination. This symbolises a departure from emphasis on the importance of teenager resistance, to consider teenagers' production of identity and social relations. It is important to remember however, that these entanglements are thoroughly spatial and indeed inherently

geographical (Pile 1997; Allen 1999; Sharp et al 2000). The geographical nature of space is the focus of the next section, as a way of bringing together ideas about identity and space in Thirdspace(s).

Section Three: Journeys into Thirdspace

The previous parts of this chapter have drawn upon theories of liminality and neo-tribes to highlight the formation of identities. The purpose of this section is to demonstrate that identity, as well as being about rites of passage and identification through neo-tribes, is also about spatiality. In part, this means that identity involves identification with particular spaces or places. It also means that certain spaces act as sites for the formation and performance of identity (see Hetherington 1998a). This thesis is interested in both these processes and explores them in relation to teenagers in the empirical chapters that follow. In this section, the conjoined issues of space and identity will be developed in more theoretical terms through the lens of Thirdspace.

Thirdspace can be presented as a theoretical, cultural and epistemological position, from which we can develop an understanding of teenage identities (located between the adult/child binary) and the geographical spaces teenagers use to create new identities and identifications with others. In excavating this journey into Thirdspace and its relation to teenage identities and spatialities, this section has been divided into two distinct, yet related parts. Borrowing subtitles and theoretical insight from Soja (1996), attention will first focus on '*The spaces that difference makes*' and then on '*Notes on the 'margin''*. *The spaces that difference makes* (re)iterates the potential for adopting a Thirdspace perspective when looking at the teenage space of betweeness. As I argued in Chapter One, teenagers occupy the silent or marginalised space(s) between the adult/child binary. Through adopting a Thirdspace mode of thinking, the binary becomes disrupted and subverted, creating a space and 'giving voice' to teenagers. From this space of 'radical openness' although fraught with 'perils as well as possibilities' (Soja 1999), teenagers are able to create and narrate their own experiences. *Notes on the 'margin'* invokes a tour of the geographical spaces and places that become associated with the identity practices of teenagers and others who are seen as marginalised within society. I deliberately put inverted commas around the term 'margin' as its definition will later be problematised.

However, for now it provides a useful way of talking about spaces that engage with the peripheral or marginal consciousness. The purpose of the section is to explore the significance of sites for identity formation and identification with others, the formation of sites as spaces of resistance, and the crumpled, folded topology of spaces (and identities) that disrupt the Euclidean binary of centres/margins.

The journey into Thirdspace will involve visiting many different spaces – from Lefebvre's *Lived Spaces* (1991); Foucault's *heterotopia* (1986); bell hooks' *homeplaces* (1990); and within cultural geography, marginal spaces, liminal spaces and paradoxical spaces (Rose 1993). Although subtle differences exist between each spatialisation what is important, I argue, is that they all attempt to capture something of the *uncertain* character of spaces. In this way, I shall show that they all resonate with the concept of Thirdspace. The common strand threaded between them is the significance they have for the creation of resistant identities and the challenge they present to conventional modes of spatial thinking. That the spaces are all similar and yet, at the same time, different speaks to, and from Thirdspace, and it is this ambiguity that keeps the concept open and inclusive, rather than 'bound by authoritative protocols' (Soja 1999: 162).

Let us now begin our adventures ...

The spaces that difference makes

There is no singular definition for presenting ways to think about space and spatiality within the realm of Thirdspace. Instead the concept is (re)produced and (re)presented through an 'open-ended set of defining moments', each contributing new insights to the spatial imagination (Soja 1999: 260). This section navigates through an assemblage of 'defining moments' through the discourses of writers who speak to, and speak from, the realm of Thirdspace. It is intended that such discourses will inform and aid our understanding of teenage identity and spatial practices. Let us first re-visit Soja's (1996) concept of Thirdspace and its relevance to teenagers' geographies.

Thirdspace presents the potential for expanding the scope of our geographical imaginations about the spatiality of life. To achieve this, Soja urges geographers and other spatial thinkers to 'set aside the demands [of modernist spatial thinking] to make an either/or

choice and contemplate instead the possibility of a both/and also logic, one that not only permits but encourages a creative combination of postmodernist and modernist perspectives' (1996: 5). For Soja, this means building on, and moving beyond a Firstspace perspective which focuses on the 'real', material world, and a Secondspace perspective conceived in the realm of the imagination, to meet a Thirdspace of multiple 'real-and-imagined', or perhaps 'realandimagined' places (1996: 11). These real-and-imagined places are created through the 'recombinational and radically open perspective' that responds through critique to binaries (1996: 5). For Soja, echoing Lefebvre (1991), two terms are never enough: it is a fruitless task to attempt to combine thought and action into just two oppositional processes (Firstspace/Secondspace, adult/child, domination/oppression, centre/margin). Instead there is always a third term, an-Other set of choices (with Other capitalised to emphasise its importance) that disrupt, disorder and reconstitute the binary into a form that is *more* than just the sum of the two parts. In this 'trialectic' relationship, the original binary is not dismissed entirely, but instead subjected to a process of restructuring that draws upon both categories to open up new alternatives.

Thirdspace speaks to teenagers' experiences hidden between the adult/child binary. Studying teenagers through a Thirdspace perspective therefore enables us to disrupt and subvert the dominant adult/child binary that has characterised academic research and policy. Through the creation of an Other space, teenagers are effectively given a voice and are therefore able to narrate and create their own identity and spatial biographies. To add further salience to this, Soja (1996) draws on feminist and post-colonial theorists to conceptualise Thirdspace as a space of 'radical openness' which becomes *chosen* by those marginalised through forms of oppression as a speaking position. In this way, Thirdspace becomes important in the creation of new identities and identification with others. For instance, bell hooks, an African-American writer and social critic (1990), identifies marginality as much more than a 'site of deprivation', for her, it is also a site of 'radical possibility and openness', a space for the creation of identity. Although she speaks as a radical woman of colour, her words embody a critically postmodern cultural politics that resonate with multiple forms of oppression and inequality, for example, race, class, gender, sexuality, age, nation, culture and so on (see West 1990). hooks' most spatial material is contained within the book *Yearning: Race, Gender and Cultural Politics* (1990), in particular the essays *Homeplace: A Site of Resistance* and *Choosing the Margin as a Space*

of Radical Openness. The key tenet of hooks' work is the political implications of her emphasis on *choosing* to occupy the space of the margins, as a space from which to 'build communities of resistance' that disrupt the binaries of race, class, gender, age and all other oppressive categories (Soja 1990). As she describes through the following passages:

> 'As a radical standpoint, perspective, position, 'the politics of location' necessarily calls those of use who would participate in the formation of counter-hegemonic cultural practice to identify the spaces where we begin the process of re-vision ... For me this space of radical openness is a margin – a profound edge. Locating oneself there is difficult yet necessary. It is not a 'safe' place. One is always at risk. One needs a community of resistance.' (hooks 1990: 145)

> 'This is a response from the radical space of my marginality. It is a space of resistance. It is a space I choose ... This is an intervention. A message from that space in the margin that is a site of creativity and power, that inclusive space where we recover ourselves, where we move in solidarity to erase the category colonized/colonizer. Marginality as a site of resistance. Enter that space. Let us meet there. Enter that space'. (hooks 1990: 152)

In these passages there are many glimpses of a different way of thinking about domination/marginalisation, centres/margins (as will be explored below). While containing traces of both centres and margins, process of domination and marginalisation, hooks also stretches these imaginations into 'Other' spaces that are radically open, spaces of resistance. For hooks, it is not a form of marginality that is given up or lost as part of moving towards the centre. Instead, it is a site a person chooses to remain in because it offers the possibility to imagine and create alternatives. As the above narratives reveal, it is a difficult and risky space, filled with 'contradictions and ambiguities, with perils and new possibilities' (Soja 1999: 97), but in these ways it creates a Thirdspace of political choice. Through adopting a Thirdspace perspective, the potential exists to create new spaces of resistance, 'of being and becoming, spaces of personal and collective communication, participation and actualization' (Routledge 1996: 415).

Hooks' work resonates with that of post-colonial theorist Bhabha (1994), who we have already encountered in relation to the in-betweeness of teenagers, occupying a hybrid 'third space'. Although not an explicitly spatial concept, Bhabha's third space echoes the chosen marginality of hooks, as he locates himself within a liminal space. As he describes in an interview with Jonathan Rutherford:

> 'Within the notion of cultural difference, I try to place myself in that position of liminality, in that productive space of the construction of culture as difference, in the spirit of alterity and otherness' (as in Rutherford 1990: 209)

According to Soja (1996), Bhabha's notion of *hybridity* provides another example of trialectical thirding-as-Othering. For Bhabha:

> 'all forms of culture are continually in a process of hybridity. But for me the importance of hybridity is not to be able to trace two original moments from which the third emerges, rather hybridity to me is the 'third space' which enables other positions to emerge. This third space displaces the histories that constitute it, and sets up new structures of authority, new political initiatives, which are inadequately understood through received wisdom' (as in Rutherford 1990: 211).

To summarise, this section has focussed on Thirdspace in relation to forms of marginalised identities. It is now useful to go on and explore the types of spaces that become occupied, (re)appropriated, contested and claimed by these identities. How certain, what we shall call 'marginal' spaces, become important amongst groups creating their own, following hooks (1990) spaces or geographies of resistance (see also Pile 1997). What is central to these geographies is that they comprise what Soja (1996: 157) terms the 'micro- or site-geography' of Thirdspace: the empirical spaces of Thirdspace. The following passages will take us on a journey through Lefebvre's Lived Spaces, 'marginal' spaces, liminal spaces and Foucault's heterotopia. These 'spatialisations' are not just physical arrangements, but also spatial patterns of social action and everyday routine, as well as historical conceptions of space, combining to form what Shields terms a 'socio-spatial imaginary and outlook' (1999: 146). The section has been called 'notes on the 'margin'' as this goes someway to describing the nature of the spaces that we are studying. It is important to emphasise however, that in locating these settings, it is not the actual physical sites that constitute Thirdspaces, but rather, the ways in which we come to think about, speak about, and imagine them. As Soja highlights, Thirdspace comprises;

> 'a knowable and unknowable, real and imagined lifeworld of experiences, emotions, events and political choices that is existentially shaped by the generative and problematic interplay between centres and peripheries, the abstract and concrete, the impassioned spaces of the conceptual and the lived, marked out materially and metaphorically in *spatial praxis*' (1996: 31)

Notes on the 'margin'

Lived spaces

Underwriting Soja's Thirdspace is Lefebvre's 'spatial triad' of spatial practices (perceived space), representations of space (conceived space), and representational spaces (lived space), which form the central pillars of his text *Production de l'espace* (1974) translated as *The Production of Space* (1991). Spatial practice refers to the production and reproduction of places appropriate to social relations, so includes for example: 'building topology, urban morphology and the creation of zones and regions for specific purposes ... places for this and that' (Shields 1999: 162). This is not a particular form of 'space', instead it is produced through everyday 'human' practice. Representations of space, or 'discourses *on* space' refer to the abstracted theories and philosophies such as planning, geography and cartography. Spaces of representation, 'discourses *of* space', or 'Lived space', are spaces as directly *lived* or experienced through its users, 'not represented (or conceived). When compared with the abstract space of the experts (architects, urbanists, planners), the space of the everyday [lived] activities of users is a concrete one, which is to say, subjective, a space of 'subjects' rather than of calculations' (Lefebvre 1991: 362).

Lefebvre's triad, between the perceived, the conceived and the lived resembles Soja's (1996) Firstspace, Secondspace and Thirdspace (although the similarities between spatial practices and Firstspace have been questioned; see for example Shields 1999; Merrifield 1999). According to Soja (1996), Lefebvre was the first to describe, discover and explore a conceptualisation of Thirdspace through 'Lived Space'. In moving beyond the dualisms confined in spatial practices and representations of space, Lived space (or Thirdspace) is both, at the same time, distinguishable from other spaces (real/imagined, Firstspace/Secondspace, perceived/conceived) and a 'transcending composite of all space' (Soja 1999: 62). As Lefebvre describes, Lived space;

> 'is alive: it speaks ... it embraces the logic of passion, of action and of lived situations ... it is essentially qualitative, fluid and dynamic' (1991: 42).

Lived space is the 'dominated ... space which the imagination seeks to change and appropriate' (1991: 39). Often linked to the 'clandestine or underground side of social life' (ibid: 1991: 33), it engages in alternative discourses of space and 'new modes of spatial

praxis', what Shields posits as 'that of squatters [and] illegal aliens ... who fashion a spatial presence and practice outside the norms of the prevailing (enforced) social spatialisation' (1999: 164). Such settlements are seen by Lefebvre (1991) as 'appropriated space' through which certain sites are removed from the dominant spatialisation (site of hegemonic forces) and 'returned to the realm of 'communitas'' (zone of revolution) (Shields 1999: 165). In this way, making or 'taking' a space for oneself or one's group, creating a turf (Thrasher 1927) is an inherently political project. The creation and occupation of such sites however, is rarely permanent. Instead they comprise what Hakim Bey calls temporary autonomous zones:

> 'the uprising is 'temporary.' In this sense an uprising is like a 'peak experience' as opposed to the standard of 'ordinary' consciousness and experience. Like festivals, uprisings cannot happen every day - otherwise they would not be 'nonordinary.' But such moments of intensity give shape and meaning to the entirety of a life. The shaman returns - you can't stay up on the roof forever - but things have changed, shifts and integrations have occurred--a *difference* is made.' (Bey 1991: no page).

From Lefebvre's lived space and the associated concept of 'appropriated space', alongside temporary autonomous zones, much can be drawn that is of relevance to teenagers' identities and spatialities. In this way, they provide a useful opening to this passage 'notes on the 'margin'' as a starting point from which we can begin to think about ideas of the everyday (or for teenagers weekend and after school days), the (re)appropriation or claiming of sites, and political practices of resistance.

It is now useful to explore the importance of such sites in achieving the formation of identities or identification with others. As was described in the previous section, neo-tribes differ from conventional tribes in that they are not fixed or established communities, but instead comprise a multitude of fleeting, temporary gatherings. Space (or proxemics) comprises a vital part of the formation of these groups, with certain sites becoming associated with certain clusters. In this way, sites have a social centrality, in that they provide a focus for the articulation of identities, and create a sense of belonging and togetherness (see Shields 1991; 1992b). The concept of social centrality is important in understanding the relationship between space and identity. For Shields, social centrality involves gatherings at key sites that provide a 'wilful concentration which creates a node in the wider landscape of continual dispersion' (1992b: 103). In other words, particular

settings take on a symbolic significance around which new identities are created and performed (Hetherington 1998a). Examples of such sites can be found weaved throughout the empirical chapters of this thesis, and also in studies about: Stonehenge and New Age Travellers (Hetherington 1998b); Greenham Common Women's Peace Camp (Cresswell 1994; 1996); Notting Hill Carnival (Jackson 1988); shopping centres (Shields 1992b); night clubs (Malbon 1999) and protest sites (Routledge 1996), amongst others.

Homeplaces

In most instances, the places in question are likely to be socially central for those perceived as 'marginal' or oppressed within society – such as the teenagers in this thesis, lesbians (Bell and Valentine 1995) or New Age Travellers (Hetherington 1998a; 1998b). Such spaces facilitate opportunities for those with few other places to go to create new identities and identifications with others as a form of resistance. In this way they allow for the creation of what bell hooks calls 'homeplace' (1990). For hooks, 'homeplace' refers to;

> 'the one site where one could confront the issue of humanization, where one could resist ... where we could be affirmed in our minds and hearts despite poverty, hardship and deprivation, where we could restore to ourselves our dignity denied to us on the outside in the public world' (1990: 42).

This conception of 'homeplace' offers a useful way of understanding the experiences and meanings attached to specific sites by people (such as teenagers) who are marginalised within society. The sorts of spaces chosen are also likely to be 'marginal'; (re)appropriated from the fabric of everyday life. It is therefore around this dual process of marginality that new identities and identification with others are created, expressed and (re)ordered. I shall now go on to explore, how the idea of a 'margin' is more complex than it may first appear.

Margins

In continuing our journey into Thirdspace, let us now trace the emergence of 'margins' in cultural geography. A preoccupation with this spatial metaphor has infiltrated the geographical discourse for a number of years, influenced by the cultural turn in the social sciences and an earlier shift towards making space central to questions of social theory (see for example Ley 1976; Relph 1976; Tuan 1977). The emergence of post-structuralism in geography also prompted geographers to seek out and 'empower' both spaces and social

groups that had been neglected by earlier geographical traditions (Murdoch 2006). This assertion by Murdoch, emphasises the dual usage attributed to the concept of margins, referring to both marginal social groups and the marginalised geographies or spatialities of these groups. The two categories are distinct and yet intimately connected and form the central point of this thesis: teenagers as marginalised social groups (re)creating, (re)appropriating, (re)claiming spaces on the 'margin'.

Within the realms of post-structuralism space has come to be seen as socially constructed, infused with a multitude of competing spatial representations and linked to political struggles of inclusion and exclusion. It therefore follows that the characteristics of particular places are not intrinsic to that site. Instead, they are constructed sociospatialisations or imaginary representations that give a space its particular significance (Shields 1991). Space is always open to interpretation and contestation by different groups and individuals, many of whom are attempting to question and (re)define the meanings and boundaries of particular spaces (see for example Keith and Pile 1993; Sibley 1995a; Cresswell 1996). Through this process, certain sites come to be seen differently – they take on representations which may be at odds with traditional or ideological representations. They become contested sites as in for example Cresswell's studies of graffiti in New York as a spatial 'discourse of disorder' (1992) and Greenham Common Peace Camp (1994; 1996). Thirdspace represents the embodiment of these new spatialised politics of difference in that it throws open the spatial imagination, empowering us to challenge, subvert, resist, and (re)appropriate space for ourselves.

While much research in cultural geography emphasises the importance of marginal spaces for the constitution of marginal identities, according to Hetherington (1998a), what a 'margin' actually might be, remains rather under-theorised. In the opening chapter of *Places on the margin* (1991), Shields locates 'marginal' spaces within a 'social periphery', or on the 'periphery of culture systems' (1991: 3). In positioning the margin in relation to other spaces and practices, he draws on the work of Stallybrass and White and their book *The Poetics and Politics of Transgression* (1986). From here, Shields (1991) notates the relational dualism between 'high' and 'low' within the system of cultural classification. As Stallybrass and White explain:

> 'the human body, psychic forms, geographical space and the social formation are all constructed within interrelating and dependent hierarchies of high and low ... The high/low opposition in each of these symbolic domains is a fundamental basis to mechanisms of ordering and sense making in European cultures.' (1986: 2-3 as cited in Shields 1991: 4).

To this opposition of high/low culture, the parallel geographic or spatial dualism of centre/margin may be aligned. Through overlapping these two binary categorisations we can see how the definition of 'marginal' spaces and places become associated with practices, ideas and interactions belonging to 'low' culture, and conversely, the 'centre' with 'high' culture. However, for Shields, and embedded in the Thirdspace perspective of this thesis, the dialectical relationship between centres and margins and high and low culture is not as geometrically straightforward or Euclidean as it first appears. The construction of marginality, and the oppressive 'otherness' of the low, are not fixed in either space or time. In forwarding an alternative, Massey asserts that:

> 'The language of marginality has been widely adopted, and indeed it does catch at the relative powerlessness experienced by those who feel themselves pitted against stronger forces. Yet the spatial imaginary may none the less be unfortunate. Not only does it implicitly set a coherent centre against already constituted margins, but it also reinstalls notions of central blocks of power. What is politically at issue, is ... transforming, subverting and challenging the constitutive relations which constructs spaces in the first place' (2000: 284).

Hetherington (1998a) further complicates the notion of the 'margin'. For him, 'marginal' spaces do not *only* exist on the metaphorical 'edge' or 'periphery' of society or geographical sites (like the beach in Shields 1991); instead they are found in other locations, and more importantly in the representations of these locations:

> '... these may be places on the edge of things ... but they can also be spaces right at the centre of things, spaces in which the State or big business may ... choose to surround ... with barbed wire, police dogs and tear gas. They may also be insignificant, everyday sites that are only made visible by what unusual goings on may be seen to occur there. In other words, they may be margins at the edge, margins at the centre, or transparent margins that are normally hidden from view.' (Hetherington 1998a: 130).

The central thread linking discourses about 'Lived' or 'marginal' spaces is that such spaces become socially *central* for those wanting to create alternative, resistant identities. As

Agnew argues, 'centrality is not *merely* locational ... the designation of a place as a centre ... implies a relatively dominant position for that place *vis-à-vis* all other places' (1993: 256). According to Hetherington (1998a), what we are dealing with here is what Rose (1993) has described as paradoxical space. The paradox being that sites which are socially central to some identity groups are likely to be spaces that are seen, in some way, as 'marginal' within society. In this way, Hetherington refutes the straightforward model of space that implies a geometric relationship between the centre and margin. Instead, drawing on Deleuze (1986); Deleuze and Parnet (1987); Deleuze and Guattari (1988) and Doel (1996), Hetherington suggests that we should think of margins in terms of a 'complex, folded and crumpled topology' (1998a: 126). This complex and crumpled view of space, has critical resonance with the 'entangled' spatial metaphor (Sharp et al 2000) presented previously and can similarly be applied to the topology of identity. We already know that identities are multiple, heteroclite and 'monstrous' (Shields 1992b; see also Hetherington 1998a), and can be constructed or enacted through identification with multiple neo-tribes (Maffesoli 1988; 1996). If we are then to map these identities onto spaces, they may also be seen as crumpled and folded. This (re)conceptualisation has the effect of disrupting not only the relationship between centres and margins, but also the relationships between forms of oppression and resistance. What is important about Hetherington's work, while not explicit in mentioning Soja (1996, 1999), is that it speaks to the conceptualisation of Thirdspace through its disruption of the centre/margin binary and creation of alternative, 'Other' or 'third' spaces.

Liminal spaces

In considering Section One of this chapter, a similar typology that disrupts the Euclidean view of space and offers a space of transformation and potential, can be found in the anthropological concept of liminality. Liminal spaces are 'in-between', or spaces that juxtapose dominant and resistant practices through transgression. Such spaces also concord with ideas about margins in that, they are both significant for identity transformation through rites of passage. As demonstrated in Section One, rites of passage are rituals corresponding with changes in the life course, which require the movement between different states or ages. Spatially, liminal rituals involve either the literal crossing of a threshold, or during longer periods, spatial segregation from society into the 'marginal' zone of wilderness. The spatial shift is accompanied by a corresponding shift in identity.

Liminal periods occur through pilgrimage to a sacred site or shrine that comes to symbolise renewal or the creation of a new identity (Turner 1982). For instance, Matthews (2002) locates the 'street' as a liminal space, or site of passage between the realm of childhood and independence of adulthood. Similarly, Winchester et al (1999) through their work on Australian 'Schoolies' week focus on the beach as a liminal zone in which teenagers celebrate leaving school alongside the broader passage between childhood and adulthood.

In the small-scale tribal societies studied by van Gennep (1960) and Turner (1969; 1974), liminal rituals as rites of passage were important both at the level of the individual and for society as a whole. Such rituals mark a change in status for the individuals and are celebrated at the societal level through festivals as a means of renewal. In this way, liminal rituals have come to be associated with practices of transgression within marginal spaces (see for example Shields 1991; Cresswell 1994). Shields' text *Places on the Margin* (1991) has been influential in establishing the 'margin' as a liminal space. Through narrative accounts of four 'marginal' spaces - Brighton beach; Niagara Falls; the Canadian North; and the North/South divide in Britain - Shields contributes contemporary, empirical texture to Turner's liminal spaces. Here, it is useful to consider Brighton beach as a liminal space of renewal, frivolity and transgression. For holiday makers, the seasonal, ritual visit to the beach marked a 'collective release' from the regular routines of everyday life. This liminal 'time out' (1991: 85) was accomplished by a spatial shift out of the neighbourhoods of everyday life to resort towns along the English coast. In this way, the site of the beach embodies aspects of carnival through the permitted disruption of normal social codes and engagement in holiday freedoms. Whether it be for holiday makers escaping production centred industrial areas, gay travellers seeking a 'dirty weekend' or embedded in the confrontations between Mods and Rockers; the beach is constructed as a space of renewal or transition through the seaside 'Cure'. This work resonates with Turner's ideas about the liminal as a space of renewal and the creation of identities outside the regimes of everyday life. Moreover, to echo the ideas forwarded in Section One about conceptualising liminal spaces as borderlands further demonstrates ideas of Thirdspace, given their creative potential.

Heterotopic spaces

Alongside the spatial theorisations of lived, marginal and liminal spaces, the work of Michael Foucault also speaks to the notion of Thirdspace through his concept of heterotopia. Heterotopia is a spatial concept that has received growing interest in recent times (see for example Hetherington 1997; 1998a; St John 2001). Foucault began thinking about space in this way during the 1960s, although it was not until after his death, that this work *Of Other Spaces* (1986) was published. Soja (1996) issues cautions about drawing on the work, particularly as it was never published by Foucault himself and may therefore have been an early, preliminary sketch that was forgotten or discarded. However, it does provide a collection of insights that add significantly to a practical and theoretical understanding of Thirdspace. Like Lefebvre, and also incorporated into the ideas of Soja, Foucault begins his explorations with a thirding, as a critique of traditional spatial imaginations, that leads us to Other spaces. Foucault called these Other spaces, 'heterotopias' and described them as 'the space in which we live, which draws us out of ourselves, in which the erosion of our lives, our time, our history occurs' (1986: 23).

The term 'heterotopia' originates from the study of anatomy where it is used to refer to parts of the body that are not where they should be; out of place organs, missing pieces, extra fingers or toes, or like cancers and tumours, alien to the body. In his earlier work, Foucault (1973: xviii) was concerned with the heterotopic character of language, and the way 'that a textual discourse can be unsettled by writing that does not follow the expected rules and conventions' (Hetherington 1997: 8). Later however, Foucault (1986) used the concept to refer to unsettling, contradictory or ambiguous social spaces. He argued that by contrast to 'utopias', 'sites with no real place ... fundamentally unreal spaces', which 'present society itself in a perfected form, or else society turned upside down', there exist heterotopias (Foucault 1986: 24). According to Foucault (1986), heterotopias are:

> 'real places – places that do exist and that are formed in the very founding of society – which are something like counter-sites, a kind of effectively enacted utopia in which the real sites, all the other real sites that can be found within the culture are simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted. Places of this kind are outside of all places, even though it may be possible to indicate their location in reality' (Foucault 1986: 24).

Heterotopias come to be established through the juxtaposition of unusual or heterogeneous things not usually found together and the confusion that results. To explain this, Foucault draws on the example of the theatre or cinema. For Soja (1996), the practical, or empirical elements of this work are important, as it draws our attention to a spatiality of real world *sites,* highlighting what Soja calls the 'micro- or site-geography of Thirdspace' (1999: 157). In other words, the empirical settings of Thirdspace, as Foucault describes:

> 'The heterotopia is capable of juxtaposing in a single real place several spaces, several sites that are themselves incompatible. Thus it is that the theatre brings onto the rectangle of the stage, one after the other, a whole series of places that are foreign to one another; thus it is that the cinema is a very odd rectangular room, at the end of which, on a two-dimensional screen, one sees the projection of a three-dimensional space' (Foucault 1986: 25).

The patchy, fragmented approach of *Of other spaces* (1986) makes it rather inaccessible to discover exactly what potential Foucault had in mind for this alternative way of thinking about space. Aside from Soja's synthesis of it within Thirdspace, another interpretation can be found in the work of Hetherington (1997; 1998a). Hetherington (1998a) argues, that while Lefebvre's representational or 'lived spaces' are useful in helping to analyse the spatiality of resistance; Foucault's heterotopia, as well as enabling acts of resistance and transgression, are primarily about issues of *ordering*. For him (1997; 1998) heterotopia are sites in which all things displaced, marginal, rejected or ambivalent are represented. This representation becomes the basis of an alternate mode of ordering, which contrasts with dominant representations of social order. This alternative or resistive form of ordering facilitates acts of transgression in that spaces are generated where there is no clearly defined order of how things should occur. Spaces do not however, remain in this state of confusion, instead they allow new modes of ordering (and therefore identity) to emerge.

This theoretical framework has been developed in order to enable us to engage with and illuminate teenagers' identities and spatialities. The framework comprises three main parts: liminality, neo-tribes and Thirdspace, although ideas about borderlands, individualised biographies and entanglements of power have been weaved throughout. The thinking behind this framework informs the five research themes that permeate this thesis which can be summarised as:

- *Teenagers' negotiations of their identities in relation to age*
- *Teenagers' social and cultural identities*
- *Identity spaces*
- *Collisions or 'entanglements' between teenagers and adults and between teenagers themselves*
- *The 'lived' spaces of teenage experience*

The next chapter details the methods that were used to operationalise this research. Although the concepts developed here are useful in illuminating teenage experience, many also resonate with the actual 'doing' of research.

Chapter Three

'You alright jumping over this gate?': methods for accessing teenagers' identities and spatialities

As the previous chapters have detailed this research is about uncovering the lived experiences of teenagers, with regard to their everyday spatial practices and identity performances in a north Wales town. This chapter is about the processes involved in actually undertaking research with teenagers. The quotation used in the chapter title: 'You alright jumping over this gate', is from a phase of the study that involved participating in teenagers' hanging out spaces. Accessing one group's favoured evening hang out involved climbing over a locked gate, into the local primary school playground. One of the boys in the group flung himself over the gate, then turned around and asked if I too was alright to jump over. In many ways the gate can be seen as the metaphorical border(land) that I, as an 'adult' researcher, was attempting to cross to gain access to the realm of teenage experience. This chapter portrays my journey across this borderland, and the methodological and ethical issues I was faced with along the way.

The chapter can be divided into three broad sections – planning the research, generating data and reflecting back. The first section deals with the methodological issues apparent in research with children and young people; including accessing participants and developing teenager-negotiated methods. The second section details the actual process of collecting data, paying specific attention to the context of research and advantages and limitations of each of the methods used. Finally, section three offers reflections on the methodological, ethical and emotional strands that became woven into the research process. Although structured in this way, the research process at times was far from neat, instead, the reflective moments weaved throughout the chapter aim to demonstrate what Parr (1998) describes as the 'messiness' of actually 'doing' research. In describing my journey through

this borderland, I want to demonstrate the highs and lows, the trials and tribulations of accessing teenage space(s). The chapter is illustrated through an assemblage of participant voices, extracts from my own fieldwork diary, and descriptions of various 'moments' during the research.

Section One: Planning the research

Developing teenager-negotiated methods

In recognising that teenagers are experts on their own worlds (Pattman and Kehily 2004), it was their potentially multiple and complex perspectives that the research was attempting to access. In order to gain an insight into teenage lived experiences, methods were needed that participants felt comfortable using, and that best enabled them to demonstrate their spatial practices and identities. I wanted to find ways of accessing their everyday lives, from the mundane and the banal to the larger, serious issues affecting their lives. As Leyshon (2002) demonstrates, placing young people at the centre of the research elicits complex and detailed micro-geographies and richly textured accounts of growing up, but such work depends on mutual trust between the researcher and research participants and a willingness to engage with young people on their own terms.

Much debate has occurred around the use of *appropriate* methods in research involving children and young people. As Fraser (2004) explains, use of the terms 'child-centred' or 'young person-centred' can be used in two different ways – relating to the use of methods specifically designed for the age 'stages' of development; or research which attempts to 'make sense' to the children and young people concerned. Punch (2002) notes the somewhat paradoxical approach within the new sociology of childhood, in that many of those who call for the use of innovative or adapted research techniques with children, are also those who emphasise the competence of children.

This situation is further complicated by the liminal position of teenagers, situated between the worlds of childhood, youth and adulthood. Skelton (2001) comments that, in much of the existing literature regarding research methodologies and young people, the term 'children' is used to refer to those 'up to the age of 18' (Alderson 1995; Alderson and Goodey 1996; Morrow and Richards 1996; Alderson 2001). The participants involved in

this project were aged 14-16, and therefore, technically, fell into the 'children' category. However, those involved in the study did not define themselves as 'children', instead choosing to describe themselves as 'teenagers' or 'young teenagers' (see also Skelton 2001; Weller 2006).

The power imbalance in adult-child/young person/teenager relationships in terms of research methods has been well documented (Mayall 1994; Qvortrup 1994; Morrow and Richards 1996; Matthews 1998; Matthews and Tucker 2000; Matthews 2001). Given that children and young people experience much of their contact with adults in subordinate positions of power (Caputo 1995), especially within the context of the school, as will be discussed below, methodological innovations now seek to disrupt this power in-balance through processes that empower participants. Taking the view that children and young people (including teenagers) are active social actors in their own right (Matthews and Limb 1999; Mathews et al 1999; Holloway and Valentine 2000a; 2000b), and recognising that research with teenagers is often different to that with young children (Mauthner 1997; Moolchan and Mermelstein 2002), for the purpose of this research, teenager-*negotiated* methods were developed. Following Fraser (2004), the development of such methods was not intended to question or patronize the competence of participants (see also Valentine 1999), but instead formed collaborative approaches. Such an approach challenged the notion of participants as research objects, and instead sought to create greater active participation (Young and Barrett 2001) where participants are in effect co-producers of the data (Alderson 2001). Such methods were useful in engaging teenagers and creating 'empowering research relations' (Holt 2004) through which they could actively construct their own lived experiences.

Accessing teenage participants

Accessing teenage participants is fraught with practical and ethical difficulties. During my earlier research about skateboarding in Cardiff city centre, I had approached teenagers within the case study area and undertaken semi-structured interviews (see Jones 2001). The small scale nature of this study only facilitated a one off, casual meeting with the skateboarders unlike the doctoral study which aimed to adopt a longitudinal approach and involved developing deeper research relations with participants.

Coupled to this, recruiting teenage participants in outdoor spaces where they have a visual presence would also have detracted from the aims of the research. Given the study was attempting to uncover the teenagers' own spatialities during their hanging out practices the purpose was for teenagers themselves to define the spaces they occupy, literally mapping their own geographies. This would not have occurred to the same degree if I as the researcher were to define teenager-inhabited spaces, based on my own preconceptions, and approach potential participants in the space I designated as research sites. The teenagers involved in the study were to be encouraged in generating themes and spaces for discussion, through their own identification and articulation of the places they frequent. Actually recruiting teenagers within spaces would have jeopardised this intention. As Hill et al explain, attempts should be made to:

> '... give children [and teenagers] a greater voice in defining and describing issues that are important to them. This requires not only that children [and teenagers] contribute to producing the data, but are involved in establishing the agenda which generates those data.' (Hill et al 1996:141-142)

Further practical problems of recruiting teenage participants in public spaces are detailed by Leyshon (2002) and include; anxieties surrounding lone researchers surveying areas and asking young people to participate in research, the potentially fleeting and temporal use of public space by teenagers, and Featherstone's (1991) claim that young people's presence in public space is in decline. Approaching young people in public outdoor spaces creates other problems in terms of maintaining contact with participants and gaining parental consent (although see Matthews, Taylor, Percy-Smith and Limb (2000) who wrote to parents/guardians informing them of the project after interviewing youth participants in a shopping centre). As an alternative to recruiting in village spaces, Leyshon drew on his role as a CYP youth worker to access participants, similar to Skelton (2000; 2001) who based her research within the setting of a youth club. Recruiting teenagers through youth clubs or other similar organisations was considered for this research, but I had no previous youth work experience to draw on and wanted to access a more varied, heterogeneous sample of teenagers, rather than just those who attended youth clubs.

For these reasons, although the research is focussed on teenagers and their identity and spatial practices *outside* of school, initial stages of the research were undertaken *inside* a school, thereby overcoming many of the issues highlighted by Leyshon (2002). My role as a researcher was legitimised through my initial contact with the school gatekeepers and I had undergone police checks. The school setting practically facilitated in mobilising the research and provided somewhere warm, dry and relatively undisturbed to undertake interviews and activities such as looking at photographs. Given that the outdoor public spaces teenagers hang around in often constitute 'private' spaces, away from adult and teacher surveillance (Lieberg 1995; Valentine 1996b), undertaking research in the school, in the first instance, created a non-invasive approach. In order to access the actual hanging out spaces of teenagers through ethnographic techniques, relations and rapport had to first be developed with participants. Through basing initial stages of the research within the space of the school, this facilitated my 'getting to know' participants and their use of spaces through 'talk'. Drawing on the theoretical strands explored in Chapter Two, the school provided a liminal 'in-between' or Thirdspace, through which the research became mobilised.

Cardiff schools: access denied

It had originally been intended to base the study in Cardiff, given this was where I was living and studying and because I had already undertaken teenager-centred research in the city. I first began contacting Cardiff secondary schools in September 2004 (see contact letter in Appendix I). However, I received limited success. With two universities in the city, all with staff and students attempting to access local schools, problems of saturation became apparent as schools demonstrated resistance to *another* outsider wanting to come in and undertake research. Several attempts were made to involve Cardiff schools but all proved unsuccessful. I experienced a lack of response to letters and negative, unenthusiastic responses to follow-up telephone calls.

As part of the research design process, I contacted my own secondary school to pilot ideas about incorporating the project into the national curriculum. I spent a week at the school, observing lessons and informally chatting to pupils about their leisure experiences outside

of school. Following this, coupled with the lack of success in accessing Cardiff-based schools, the research location was shifted. Negotiating access to my own school had been far easier, given my status as a past pupil and my contacts already at the establishment (see contact letter to Headteacher in Appendix II). In contrast, in Cardiff I was 'stranger' researcher wanting to access an already saturated system.

The school

The research school is a voluntary aided Catholic secondary school for pupils aged 11-16 years old. It is located on the southern outskirts of the town centre. For the school year 2004-2005 the school had 470 full time pupils, with 13.5 percent of pupils entitled to free school meals. Given its faith-based denomination the school did not have a specific geographical catchment area. Although most pupils were based in the town, others travelled from the outlying villages. This impacted on the study in terms of the variety of spaces talked about by participants, and provided an interesting dynamic that will be explored further in Chapters 4-6. During week nights after school, participants were not all confined to the same local neighbourhood but instead participated in differing spaces and identity practices. In many ways this approach succeeded in producing a broader picture of place use. Teenagers involved in the study often had varied spatial and temporal geographies. For instance, those who lived further away from the school would exhibit diversity in their time-space geographies, with weekdays being spent in their local more rural neighbourhoods and weekends spent in and around the town centre.

The study was based on 14-16 year olds[6], and therefore involved pupils from years 10 and 11. In total there were 194 pupils in the year groups: 101 in year 10, and 93 in year 11. In each year there were predominantly more females than males. Year 10 had 42 males (41.5%) and 59 females (58.4%), and year 11 had 38 males (40.9%) and 55 females (59.1%). As there is no sixth form these were the oldest pupils in the school. Fieldwork was undertaken across a period of 10 months from November 2004 to August 2005. In-depth research was carried out with approximately 50 teenagers, although this varied between phases.

[6] Study was based on 14-16 years olds for the reasons highlighted in chapter one, that is that this particular age group of (young) teenagers remain relatively neglected within geographical studies.

Before entering the school I had some ideas about the types of methods that could be used, although I wanted their application to involve negotiation with teenagers rather than simply imposition, as detailed by Hill et al (1996). During the pilot week, teachers introduced me to a group of year 11 boys known for skateboarding, and another group of year 10 pupils who lived on the nearby council estate and would often talk about their hanging around experiences in school. Both groups and other pupils I spoke were interested in the project, and especially enthused at the idea of using disposable cameras to capture their experiences. I suggested a variety of options, including keeping diaries or drawing maps (Lynch 1960; Gould and White 1986; Young and Barrett 2001), but it seemed visual methods and emphasis on 'talk' was far more important than others that resembled 'boring' school work. As the following conversation with Jamie and Jordan reveals:

> K: Well, with a disposable camera you take pictures wherever you go to hang around, making a photographic diary
> Jamie: (groans) We don't have to write anything do we?
> Jordan: No I wouldn't write about it

Methodological issues in research with teenagers

Research with children and young people raises a number of methodological issues to do with access, consent, privacy and confidentiality, and dissemination (Valentine 1999). Although these issues are not unique to this age group, they do present dilemmas when researching teenagers, especially within the context of the school. UK law in relation to consent and research with children and young people remains very uncertain (Valentine 1999) and raises difficult, often unresolved questions:

> 'Do we always have to obtain parents' as well as children's consent, even for young people aged 12, 15 or 17 years, as some guidance advices? ... [this question is] still being debated' (Alderson 2004: 106-107)

In relation to consent, the law is complex and relates to the notion of 'competence' (see Masson 2004; Alderson and Morrow 2004). Wiles et al (2007) note that in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, children under the age of 16 are not *automatically* presumed to be legally competent to give consent. However, if a child can be judged to 'understand' what participation in research will involve (known as 'Gillick competence' see Valentine 1999) then parental consent is not necessary. Alderson (1995) on the other hand suggests that the

safest course of action for researchers is to ask for both the consent of the parents/guardians and the child, rather than one or the other. Within the context of the school, while teachers can act *in loco parentis*, granting researchers access to pupils they cannot consent to pupils participating in the research (Alderson and Morrow 2004). Therefore, the Headteacher at the research school, whilst initially granting me access to pupils, requested I write to parents/guardians informing them of the project and to obtain consent (see Appendix III). The letter outlined methods and potential future outlets for research findings especially visual data. It was noted that I was a past pupil and contained my full contact details for further information however, nobody did contact me. Parents/guardians were asked to sign a consent form and return it to the school. Each form I sent out was returned with consent.

Informed consent is a significant consideration in research with teenagers (Alderson 1995). From the beginning my role as a researcher was made transparent to pupils, who were fully informed about the aims and nature of the research I was undertaking and the long-term implications of the project in terms of dissemination outlets (see Lindsay 2000). Participants were told they could withdraw from the study at any time, without giving reason and that their participation was not compulsory.

Another methodological issue concerns the representation of teenagers in the process of dissemination and the use of pseudonyms. To give teenagers more of an involvement in the research process, I asked participants to choose their own pseudonyms. Most participants had suggested I just use their real names or were happy for me to choose pseudonyms for them. The option of a pseudonym as a measure of confidentiality or protection had not seemed a major concern for participants choosing what they revealed to me. However, after great consideration and given that the school can (potentially) be identified because it is my past school, pseudonyms have been used for the teenagers involved in the study. Other methodological issues arose during the course of the research, relating to various ethical, moral and emotional dilemmas which will be discussed and reflected upon when relevant in the remainder of this chapter.

Section Two: Generating data

The questionnaire

Following the initial pilot week, I returned in January 2005 to continue with data collection. Based on my informal chats with many pupils during the pilot week and informed by themes in existing literatures, I compiled a questionnaire aimed at generating data from across years 10 and 11 about what it is like being a teenager in the town. Although I had originally intended to incorporate the study into an area of the national curriculum, following discussions with subject leaders and given the nature of the research, a PSHE session was suggested as a more appropriate outlet.

The questionnaire was piloted amongst a group of teachers, to ensure its suitability in length and context for the session in which it was to be given out and also amongst a mixed group of year 9 (age 13-14 year old) pupils[7]. Following the pilot, a few minor alterations were made in terms of question structure and more examples of activities were added for clarification purposes. For instance, one of the questions asked about the types of activities that teenagers do in their hanging out spaces. Following the pilot it was suggesting that some examples of 'not so innocent' activities should be included, for example, smoking and drinking alcohol. Whilst this was not intended to encourage the revelation (or indeed creation) of 'spectacular' activities amongst respondents, it served as a way of letting respondents know it was 'okay' to list such activities, that they would not normally be allowed to admit to in the school context.

The purpose of the questionnaire was two-fold. In the first instance, it was used to reach all pupils within years 10 and 11. The aim being to gather basic quantitative and qualitative information about the spaces and places in which teenagers spend their free time. It mainly focussed on the spaces of the youth club, the town centre and local neighbourhoods, although room was allocated for respondents to detail other (indoor) spaces and places they used (see Appendix IV). Given that not every teenager spends a lot of time in either the town centre or their neighbourhood, I felt it important to include a broad range of questions so as not to purposely exclude anyone from participating in the questionnaire, and also to

[7] Year 9 pupils were included in the pilot study to avoid repetition amongst years 10 and 11 who would all be completing the questionnaire at a later date.

allow for the demonstration of multiple experiences. Both open and closed questions were used. General questions about the positive and negative aspects of the town centre were included, questions about safety in the town centre and local neighbourhoods, and a question about whether enough was provided for young people in the area. Completion rates are detailed more thoroughly in Chapter Four.

In the second instance, and perhaps more importantly, the questionnaire was used as a recruitment tool for gathering pupils to be involved in more in-depth research. As mentioned above, before the questionnaires were administered I had already established contact with several pupils during the pilot week who said they would be willing to take part in the project. The questionnaire served as a way of 'mopping up' more volunteers, through asking pupils to complete the personal details section if they would be interested in taking part. From the 157 completed questionnaires 53 respondents volunteered to take part in further research. These included most of the 'key' teenagers I had previously spoken to and a range of other pupils. However, some of these 53 volunteers were later confirmed as fictitious names and others opted out at later stages, thereby reducing the sample that actually volunteered. Nevertheless, given the length of time I spent in the school it was possible to recruit further participants who had not initially volunteered on the questionnaire. Through spending time on the school field at lunch time, collecting cameras and generally chatting to different groups more pupils were encourage to get involved. Looking back, it was generally a certain type of 'good pupil' that was keen to volunteer on the questionnaire, even if the research was not particularly relevant to their lifestyles, as demonstrated on the questionnaire below. Whilst Rachel is keen to participate in the research, her questionnaire revealed her to be a more 'indoor' person rather than outdoor person. Rachel was interviewed about her experiences, although she didn't feel it necessary to participate in later stages of the research.

FINALLY – if you would be interested in being involved in further research about these topics please fill in the details below. The research would involve:

- **Being interviewed about your experiences and opinions**
- **Making a photographic diary with a disposable camera**
- **Showing me around the places you hang out**

I'd do it, but I don't really hang out anywhere

The research won't be any use to you!

It was only through spending time, chatting with and getting to know those 'harder to engage' pupils, and building rapport with them, that they then became involved in the study. Whilst the questionnaires succeeded in obtaining data from across the year groups, it was the more personal approach that succeeded in recruiting those academically less able students.

To ensure confidentiality a sticky label was attached to the front of each questionnaire so pupils could seal their completed forms. Questionnaires were to remain anonymous unless pupils wanted to volunteer on them to be involved in later stages of the research. While the context and nature of the method did not adequately allow for any pupils who wanted to 'opt out' of completing the questionnaire (Valentine 1999), several pupils provided 'creative' answers providing an alternative means of participation:

3.4 Have you ever been told off or moved on from somewhere in your neighbourhood? Please give details

Yes I was abducted by rampant cows & tortured. When I told police they sent me on my way. The cows haven't returned since.

3.5 Do you feel your neighbourhood is a safe place to hang out? Think about differences between day and night and whether you are with friends or on your own

No I live near drug dealers and am often caught up in driveby jellyfish shootings.

SECTION FOUR: OTHER PLACES AND SPACES

4.1 Are there any other spaces or places (indoor or outdoor) that you go to when you are not in school for your own leisure? E.g. Friend's house, Chester, cinema, garden, playground, skateboarding park

Place	Activity	How often
E.g. Friends house	*Play computer games*	*Every day*
The Brothel	I'm a pimp	Most days

4.5 How much does the weather impact on where you go to spend your free time?

I am destroyed mentally when it snows

Administering the questionnaire – the context of the classroom

> '… very little attention has been paid to the influence of the social context in determining the ways in which questionnaires are used in practice' (Strange et al 2003:337)

According to Scott (1999) the location or context in which research with children and young people is carried out, is often likely to influence the way participants respond. This is of a particular issue in classroom based research where pupils used to acting in a certain type of way (Ireland and Holloway 1996). As previously mentioned, the questionnaire was distributed for pupils to complete during a PSHE session. An hour-long session was given over to PSHE for the whole school every two weeks. This created various logistical problems given that there were 8 classes across years 10 and 11 all doing the session simultaneously, making it impossible for me to be in each classroom for the duration of the questionnaire exercise. It was therefore administered under the usual classroom context. I was conscious that within this context the questionnaire would be perceived as school work (Denscombe and Aubrook 1992), and therefore not yield honest responses if pupils did not know what was expected of them and remained conscious of teacher involvement.

Therefore in the days leading up to the PSHE session, I visited each class during the registration sessions to introduce myself and the research project. I explained to pupils that

they would be given a questionnaire to complete during their next PSHE session as part of the research project. I also explained that if they would like to be involved in further research, they should provide their name at the end of the questionnaire. It was explained to pupils what could be involved in later stages of the research, and that their participation would involve giving up some lunchtimes, as time could not be spared from lessons. I iterated to pupils that the research was not in anyway associated with the police or teachers in the school and that all answers would be kept private and confidential. I also explained that there were no right or wrong answers to the questions, and that I was solely interested in finding out about their own experiences. I explained that I was not there to judge their behaviour if they engaged in 'not so innocent' activities, but that I just wanted to gain a picture of what teenagers actually did. This was reiterated in a covering letter or research information sheet (Alderson and Morrow 2004) attached to the front of each questionnaire (see Appendix V).

Questionnaires can be criticised for being impersonal and for not facilitating interaction between the researcher and respondent. It was intended that through previously spending time getting to know some of the pupils and by introducing myself to form classes this would remove some of the impersonality embedded in questionnaire usage. Questionnaire responses were later used as interview prompts and therefore served as a means of *creating* interaction between myself and interviewees through the exploration of experience. Within the context of the study, this phase comprised a relatively small component, however was useful in securing a 'way in', through legitimating the research to the school and also gathering basic data about the life worlds of teenagers. The questionnaires were successful in that they yielded basic data about being a teenager and confirmed the importance of outdoor places in their free time activities.

Adults in positions of authority: the lifescape of the school

An important feature of school-based research (whether educationally focussed or not) involves the negotiation of both power and space. Within the context of the school adults are afforded natural positions of authority through repeated performances and interactions which can be termed 'lifescapes'. The following section offers reflections on how I went about creating an alternative identity and space for myself within the school setting.

The notion of 'lifescape', introduced by Nararea (1995; 1996), and developed by Some and McSweeney (1995), seeks to integrate the social and spatial interactions that tie individuals into places. Through repeated and iterated practices (and performances), mutually constitutive relationships between people and place are created. This concept can be applied to the context of schools, where through their repeated practices adults are located in positions of authority. As Robinson and Kellett comment;

> 'In schools the balance of power is heavily skewed towards adults, and children are least able to exercise participation rights. Adults control children's use of time, occupation of space, choice of clothing, times of eating – even their modes of social interaction.' (2004:91)

The lifescape also conferred to me, as a researcher, a similar 'pseudo' authority as an adult. When I first entered the school, most pupils naturally assumed that I was another student teacher and would instinctively call me 'miss', thereby reinforcing the dominant discourses of the school context and drawing attention to my power relative to that of the pupils, as similarly described in another study by Ansell (2001).

The notion of lifescape can be linked to Butler's (1990; 1997) conceptualisation of performativity, which views dominant sexed positionings as reproduced through constant repetition or reiteration. As Butler describes, 'gender is the repeated stylisation of the body, a set of repeated acts within a highly rigid regulatory framework that congeal over time to produce the appearance of substance, a natural sort of being' (Butler 1990:33). These dominant identity positions become naturalised and taken-for-granted, similar to adult/teacher authority apparent within school contexts. However, there is often opportunity for these performances to be contested, as Holt (2004) drawing on Butler, commentates:

> '... performances are inherently unstable and dominant identity positions can be contested/transformed either consciously or unconsciously, through resistive performances or 'slippage', imperfect reiteration (Butler 1990; 1997).'

In an attempt to disrupt the adult authoritarian lifescape practices apparent within the school setting, I made a conscious effort to distance myself from the 'school' side of activities. In many ways, I had been unable to adopt this role before distributing the

questionnaire, because I was reliant on the classroom context to mobilise the research and had to be seen by staff to 'fit' a certain role. However, through spending time in the school, I found it easier to subvert this positionality in order to obtain a 'different' kind of data. Engaging teenage participants in the research process, therefore involved developing the kind of rapport with pupils that was different from the traditional teacher-student relationships within the school context. To this end, I tried to identify myself as an 'outsider' to the normative school culture, insisting pupils called me by my first name, being non-directive in my approach, and trying not to enforce discipline as suggested by Strange et al (2003). Such 'resistive performances' had significant impacts on the temporal, spatial and social aspects of the research, as will be discussed in the following sections.

The spatialities of the research process: the space of the storecupboard

Given the research is focussed on the spatiality of teenage experience, it is also important to consider the spaces of the research process itself (see Barker and Weller 2003a; Anderson and Jones *forthcoming*). While social science has done much to demonstrate the significance of social relationships in methodology, as iterated by Strange et al (2003) above in relation to questionnaires, the 'where' of method often receives less attention. The following authors identify this with regard to the interview:

> 'With the exception of McDowell's (1998) workplace interviews, there is very little discussion of how interview participants relate to the space of the interview and are situated within the multi-faceted power dynamics of a particular site' (Elwood and Martin 2000: 652)

> 'Despite the plethora of spatial metaphors, the theorization of space in the setting of an interview has been curiously abstracted and removed from the concrete 'place' in which an interview takes place. The spatial contexts under which interviews are carried out remain largely excluded from any theorization of the social construction of knowledge' (Sin 2003:306).

Following the completion of the questionnaire, early interviews with volunteers were undertaken in the space of the classroom during lesson time. Although this had not been the intention, a teacher had allowed me access to pupils during one of her lessons and I felt it wasteful not to take her up on her offer. In this way, the context granted me access to pupils who would not have readily given up their lunchtimes to be involved in the research.

For instance, although one pupil Darren, was willing to talk to me during lesson time, he was not as eager to participate further in the research when it was revealed interviews would have to be done during lunch time sessions.

During the lesson, while students worked on computers around the edge of the classroom, I was allocated a table at which to interview pupils on a one-to-one basis. The following example, although not that successful in terms of the actual 'data' it succeeded in generating, usefully illustrates the influence of place and context on the research process. One of the interviews I undertook in the classroom was with Oli. Throughout the interview, Oli adopted the tactic of whispering when talking about the subjects and 'not so innocent' activities he thought could land him in trouble with his teacher. For instance, when he talked about buying alcohol for his Saturday night gatherings with his friends, he would whisper so only I could hear him:

> 'Well, we usually [says quietly] get alcohol and go to a couple of different places, we'll just find somewhere a bit out of the way where we can all have a laugh, hang round, whatever' (Oli, individual interview, classroom during lesson)

Similarly, when Oli talked about places he would avoid, he also whispered. On these occasions he cared more that his class peers didn't overhear the conversation, rather than the teacher herself. Clearly aware that other pupils in the class lived in some of the places he considered undesirable and therefore avoided:

> K: What places do you avoid?
> O: Er, places like [whispers] Q______ and stuff we try and stay away from the er lower estates as it were like. Yeah we try and stay away from where we know all the gangs go and stuff ... You know yourself not to go to places like [whispers] Q______ or, like you know, bad places in general.
> (Oli, individual interview, classroom during lesson)

While this interview was relatively successful in revealing some insight into Oli's spatial practices, it was somewhat limited by the context of the classroom lifescape. The teacher remained a panoptical viewer, keeping an eye and ear on the encounter, which appeared to have an effect on the types of issues brought up by participants, and how they would speak about them. Coupled to this, the classroom environment limited the research at this stage due to the proximity of other pupils within the classroom. Perhaps the most explicit

example of this influence involved the conversation bordering on Oli's sexuality. On his questionnaire, Oli had chosen to reveal that he is gay. However, he had also requested that this be kept confidential.

4.3 Do you consider yourself to belong to a youth subculture, 'gang' or 'group'? E.g. 'skateboarder' or 'goth', if yes what is it called?

Gay – Please keep Private!

4.8 Do you think there are enough things for young people to in ███ (or where you live)?

Yes (No)

4.9 Please explain your answer and what else you would like to be provided for young people in ███?

Gay Youth groups are needed. ~~[illegible]~~
The one I went too was closed down

In his questionnaire Oli explained that his local gay youth club had recently closed down. When we moved on to the topic of youth clubs during the course of the classroom interview, Oli hesitated. Studies have shown the lesbian and gay pupils commonly experience harassment and social exclusion at the hands of their peers (Epstein and Johnson 1998; Khayatt 1994), therefore, in the classroom, in earshot of his peer group, Oli clearly did not feel comfortable talking about this matter:

> K: Are you a member of any youth clubs?
> O: Er, no. I did but it just kinda failed and that was it
> (Oli, individual interview, classroom during lesson)

It can therefore be seen how the place of an interview can influence the types of information revealed by participants. Conscious of the issues raised within the classroom, I made the decision to base future interviews in a location (spatially and temporally) dissociated or dislocated from the 'normal' school environment. Thereafter, the geography storecupboard became the place in which the majority of interviews were held and apart from the initial pilot week, I tended not to participate in lessons instead confining my school visits to lunch time periods.

The storecupboard was (unsurprisingly) not a place pupils usually inhabited. It therefore provided an alternative space in contrast to the previous classroom location. The storecupboard had a positive impact on the research process, facilitating a different type of knowledge then was obtainable through interviews in a classroom context. The physical and social aspects of the storecupboard contributed meaningfully to the interviews held there. Interactions in the storecupboard became relaxed affairs: The narrowness of the cupboard meant that only two chairs could be placed next to each other, however, as friendship groups were interviewed it sometimes meant that three, or even four pupils would have to sit along the two chairs. This often resulted in a great deal of giggling, especially when there was a mixture of males and females.

As a consequence, the storecupboard became a very different place to that of the classroom. The storecupboard was a place that people didn't mind being located in, in fact they enjoyed it, seemingly considering it a fun place – so much so that the teacher in the next door classroom would often comment that; 'things seem to be going well, given the amount of giggling I hear coming from the cupboard'. In a sense, the storecupboard became transformed into the pupil's own place within the school, an intimate place where they felt free to talk about what they wanted, thus making interviews there more effective. Through the co-construction of the storecupboard as a 'different' type of space by both myself and participants, it succeeded in contesting and transforming the normative lifescape usually associated with the school context.

By operating within the storecupboard, it was possible to destabilise my authority as the 'adult' researcher within the school environment. In the storecupboard I came to occupy a temporary position that pivoted my identity (following Fine 1994). I was no longer positioned by pupils as a pseudo teacher, but became neither Other nor the Same'. The potential of the storecupboard was also helped by the fact that it was a relatively undisturbed space, especially when the door was shut. In many ways, the store cupboard could be negotiated as a 'private' space, in contrast to the more 'public' space of the classroom (Alderson 1994; Valentine 1999). Unlike during Oli's interview, participants were not as conscious of others, either teachers or peers, overhearing. Out of earshot, many would reveal more detail about their 'not so innocent activities', such as drinking alcohol and drug taking.

The location of the cupboard beyond the normal regimes of the school rendered it effectively a blank canvas, or a 'no-teachers-land', which allowed the research encounter to construct its own dynamics, free from the legacies of the conventional school lifescape. This socio-spatial quality was useful as those involved were liberated to facilitate conversations about their spatial practices.

As Valentine et al (2001) report, numerous studies have demonstrated that the school is an environment saturated with heterosexuality (Mac an Ghail 1994; Holloway et al 2000; Hyams 2000; Valentine 2000; Renold 2002). However, paradoxically, the storecupboard became in effect, an empowering 'closet space' or paradoxical space (see Rose 1993); a safe space allowing for the articulation of sexuality in an otherwise homo-negative context (Brown 2000). In contrast to my classroom encounter with Oli (as above), during our next meeting in the storecupboard we talked more freely and openly about his sexuality, than had been the case in the classroom context when surrounded by peers.

Interviews located within the storecupboard, therefore went further in accessing a more resonant understanding of teenager's spatial practices, than was achieved through the classroom-based encounters. However, the physical detachment of the storecupboard from the spaces and experiences teenagers were attempting to recapture was sometimes problematic. As some aspects of this lived experience remained difficult to communicate just through 'talk', therefore, a further methodology was adopted in an attempt to get closer to this action.

Friendship group interviews

Phase two of the research involved interviewing those teenagers who had volunteered as part of the questionnaire exercise. I began interviewing participants individually or in small friendship groups, whichever the pupil(s) preferred. Interviews in friendship groups are thought to facilitate greater participation (Matthews and Tucker 1999; Mayall 2000) as participants follow on each others leads, pick up and expand on points and confirm or provide alternative ideas. However, individual interviews were just as successful often for revealing more personal, intimate details. During this stage, more people became involved in the project that had not initially volunteered on the questionnaire but came along to the

interview with their friend who had. These initial interviews were based around a set of themes developed from the literature, but also as a consequence of some themes raised within the questionnaires. The interview usually began with a broad question such as 'Tell me what you did last Saturday' in order to stimulate a discussion. Questionnaire answers and themes were used as prompts, enabling participants to expand or clarify details. The sessions were a general 'getting to know each other' session but followed a loose interview schedule. At the end of the interview, participants were given a disposable camera and asked to make a photographic diary of a typical weekend 'hanging out'. The photographs were developed and formed the basis of phase three – 'photo-feedback' interviews.

Visual methods

Visual methods played a significant part in the research, as a means of engaging and empowering teenage participants in uncovering their spatial practices. Whilst visual methods have been used previously within childhood research, they have traditionally been located in the fields of spatial cognition and environmental psychology (see for example Matthews 1984; Blaut 1997, Blades et al 1998). Such areas were synonymous with testing child developmental stages and were very much researcher directed and controlled. In contrast, the recent repositioning of children and young people within research as social actors has advocated the use of visual methods as a means of affording participants a sense of ownership and freedom in demonstrating their own lived experiences (for example Aitken and Wingate 1993; Young and Barratt 2001; Leyshon 2002; Dodman 2003). The use of such methods can enable participants to become reflexive interpreters of their own use and understanding of space (Christensen and James 2000). Visual methods encompass an array of different ways of gathering, interpreting and portraying data and experience (Russell 2007). The visual techniques used in this research involved teenage participants photographing a typical weekend hanging out, analysis and interpretation of the images through 'photo-feedback' interviews, and participant-directed film making in teenage hanging out spaces. The images created by participants have been used throughout the thesis to portray the spatial practices of teenagers involved in the project.

Self-directed photography

This method is based on the concept of photo novella (Wang and Burris 1994), literally meaning 'picture stories'. Participants are empowered in expressing themselves and their

experiences, not only *verbally*, as in the previous interviews, but also *visually* through the actual act of taking photographs (Young and Barrett 2001). Each participant was issued with a 24 exposure single use camera, and asked to photograph a typical weekend hanging out. Rather than deconstructing the images as the researcher, analysis took place in collaboration with participants, as we met and discussed the content and meaning of their photographs during 'photo-feedback' interviews. As Radley and Taylor (2003) comment about their use of self-directed photography with hospital patients; taking photographs constitutes a definitive act through which participants can communicate their own experiences, whilst also providing a visual record which can subsequently be reflected upon.

Self-directed photography afforded participants many spatial, temporal and creative freedoms, coupled with the absence of the researcher, teenagers were able to actively and visually construct a representation of their spatial practices. Although it was up to the participant to choose how they wanted to visually represent aspects of their spatial practices, some prompts were given as a guide (see Appendix VI). It was iterated that it was not necessary for participants to plan any 'special' events outside of their normal activities instead the emphasis was on capturing a typical weekend or night after school. However, for some participants, the novelty of having a camera prompted them to do something spectacular rather than ordinary, thinking it would create a more interesting set of photographs. Participants were asked to take the first photograph of themselves, or of their name on a piece of paper which assisted in the process of returning photographs to individuals. Some teenagers took this a stage further and customised the outside of their cameras with colourful stickers or name tags so I could identify them. When the cameras were returned, two sets of photographs were developed – one for the participant, and one for me as the researcher.

Advantages of self-directed photography

Through handing over cameras to teenagers, participants were equipped with a resource enabling them to tell 'visual stories' about themselves and their spatial practices. This created an opportunity for them to express themselves in their own images, words and reflections. In turn, these images became 'points of entry into seeing beneath surface issues' (McIntyre 2003) and offered an insight into social relationships, events, practices

and identity performances. Taking photographs, either with disposable cameras, or with camera phones was something some of the participants did anyway whilst hanging out, thereby making this method particularly engaging, and something they wanted to do (see also Barker and Weller 2003a). For those, who had not used disposable cameras before, after the photography exercise, they introduced cameras into their weekend hanging out practices, and would often bring into school other photographs of weekend activities they had taken themselves not as part of the project. In this way, the research was more than an exploitative process, instead participants benefited from being introduced to a 'new' activity, which they then chose to incorporate into their hanging out practices. The use of an enjoyable method made the participants keen to take part, and as Dodman (2003) discovered through use of a similar method with children in Jamaica participants were (quite literally) able to see the results of their participation.

Limitations of self-directed photography projects

Whilst the use of self-directed photography aimed to give teenagers space and autonomy to represent their everyday spaces, limitations also exist. Once all the participants had returned their cameras, it became clear there were varying levels of engagement with this method. Whereas some teenagers were confident and experienced at taking photographs, and had enjoyed having a disposable camera, others had struggled to find inspiration and had only taken a handful of photographs. When questioned, these participants said they would have preferred to have taken fewer pictures and were worried about repetition:

> K: You didn't take many pictures did you find it hard to use up the film?
> L: Well I took some pictures but that's all what I do really. I didn't know what else to take pictures of. I didn't want to have the same picture all the way through
> (Laura, photo-feedback interview)

Photographic timescapes often varied between participants, with some choosing to use the whole film on one specific outing, whereas others photographed several different episodes. While this approach was not inherently problematic, frustrations arose when participants delayed in returning their cameras, or did not return their cameras at all (in the case of 11 participants). An initial timeframe of a week was negotiated but this was flexible given that some teenagers did not go out every weekend due to the weather or for other reasons. As a way of prompting teenagers to remember to take their cameras out with them, I devised a

text-message reminder system whereby I would text them on a Saturday morning to remind them to use their camera.

The low technical capabilities of the cameras were sometimes problematic. The single-use cameras did not have a zoom function or a flash, making close up images, or images at night time a problem. However, they did provide a relatively cheap method of engaging participants, and involved fewer risks and practicalities that would have been involved with using more expensive equipment.

While visual methods are useful in enabling participants to site themselves in their everyday environments (Emmison 2004; Emmison and Smith 2001), and are capable of capturing a range of spaces, people, routes and relations (Kindon 2003), some participants felt they couldn't take pictures in certain places, as the following conversations with Bethan and Matilda reveal:

> B: I didn't take it to town to take pictures
> K: Actually, not many people have taken pictures of town
> M: I think it because like people tend to look at you.
> B: It's the cinema as well, because if you have got a camera, I mean I did take it with us to the Odeon. And they were looking at us really strangely ... because obviously you are not allowed things with recording images and stuff like that
> ...
> M: There was people on the side [in the park] starring at me just because I had a camera. I was like 'what?!' and they were like 'what are you doing?'. I was like 'taking a picture', it was annoying (giggles)
> (Bethan and Matilda, photo-feedback interview]

Ethical and moral dilemmas associated with self-directed photography

While providing participants with disposable cameras provides them with the freedom to reconstruct their own experiences, there are many methodological and ethical issues which surround the use of this method. From the beginning, risk was an important concern in encouraging participants to photograph spaces in their local areas, during their free time, without an adult present. Although perhaps this issue is more pertinent with younger children, to minimise this risk, parental/guardian consent was gained prior to volunteers receiving cameras, and (at the request of the Headteacher) some basic safety instructions

were provided along with the disposable cameras (see Appendix VI). No incidents of teenagers being put in danger occurred.

The images produced can also result in moral dilemmas for both the participant and the researcher. Some participants felt embarrassed about the content of their images, 'after the event', especially when situations involving drugs and alcohol had been photographed. Participants were allowed to withdraw or destroy any images they were not comfortable with and were fully informed about the potential ways in which the images could be used in the future. However, as demonstrated through the following research moments such issues can arise when participants are given such photographic freedoms. In some ways, this is similar to over disclosure that can occur in an interview setting whereby respondents impart more information, express views or declare experiences that they may subsequently feel uncomfortable about revealing (Morgan and Krueger 1993).

One female participant Amber had decided to use her camera to capture a typical Saturday night hanging out at the park with her friends. Part of the Saturday evening ritual involved getting ready in a friend's bedroom, listening to music and consuming alcohol. When the photographs were developed there were several images of her wearing just her underwear, lying on the bedroom floor in an alcohol induced state. At first Amber and her female friends found the images funny, however, at the end of the lunch hour she returned in a somewhat distressed state. Some boys in the year above had sneaked a look at the photographs and she began to feel embarrassed. I had already given her my copy of the underwear photographs for her to decide what she wanted to do with them. When she came to see me, she wanted to destroy both copies so they could not be obtained again by the boys.

Another participant had chosen to photograph his group of friends smoking cannabis as part of their hanging out activities. When the photographs were developed the participant became rather concerned about the severity of the situation should the photographs be seen by anyone. After a discussion we decided it would be best if we destroyed all copies of the images.

Questions have been raised concerning the ethical dilemma of taking or using photographs of children and young people and therefore exposing their identity (Allan 2005). Keeping participants (and sometimes the places) involved with the research anonymous has been an accepted part of the research process. However, this assumption is more difficult to carry out when visual images comprise part of the research, as to show a person's photograph means their identity is more openly revealed. Researchers therefore have to make choices regarding if and how visual material will be incorporated into research publications (Pink 2001). Although informed consent had been obtained from participants, and their parents/guardians prior to their involvement, a further issue arose when photographs contained other teenagers not directly involved in the study. Teenage participants had been informed about the ethical issues surrounding taking pictures of other people, and had been instructed to ask permission before taking anyone's photograph. However, it was not possible for me as the researcher to obtain consent from these other individuals to include their images in dissemination practices, as some were from different schools. Therefore, to help protect participant's (and other peripheral participant's) identities, images that expose revealing aspects of a person's identity will be distorted or concealed in dissemination.

The misuse of images is a further issue of concern when using visual techniques. Somewhat related to the above incidents involving 'explicit' images, several further events occurred during the course of the fieldwork which caused me to think about the potential for the images generated through the project to be misused. Parry (2005) comments on the ethical concerns surrounding the use of camera phones in school systems, and the potential for users to instantly email or post digital images to other phones or websites. Although the disposable cameras did not produce digital images, the potential still existed for images to be scanned and manipulated using IT resources. This concern was demonstrated during an incident that occurred during a lunch time within the school.

Given that I was only in school at lunch times, this meant students had to look after their disposable cameras themselves for the rest of the afternoon. Although I tried to insist that students left the cameras in their bags until home time, many used the cameras during the lunch break and afternoon sessions. An incident occurred one day involving a student taking a photograph of a teacher whilst she was supervising students in the canteen. The pupil had called the teacher's name, then taken her photograph when she turned around.

While the teacher had not minded, thinking the incident quite funny, the deputy head teacher was shocked and began to reprimand the student for their behaviour. The deputy head then uttered a cautionary note to the teacher who had been photographed, concerned about what students could do with images they possessed of teachers.

A second incident relates to the use of technology in perpetrating and capturing violent actions. Recent media reporting and moral panics have focussed on behaviour known as 'happy slapping', which describes a practice whereby people gang up on another person, hit or mug them and record their shock reaction on a camera phone or similar device (Parry 2005). During a photo-feedback interview with a group of participants, I became worried that through giving the participants a disposable camera, I had actually encouraged, or in the least, facilitated such behaviour. As the conversation demonstrates:

> 'Oh there's this little git on my road. He'll mouth at you when he's dead far away but I had me camera on me so we chased him and beat him up ... it was just a bit of fun I had my camera on me and I thought it would be good'
> (Josh, photo feedback interview)

The above research moments highlight some of the ethical and methodological potentials and dilemmas associated with using visual methods, and demonstrate the need for a reflexive and informed approach by both researcher and participants.

Photo-feedback interviews

When the cameras were returned and the images developed, participants were asked to talk about their photographs through a 'photo-feedback' interview. These discussions were based the photo-elicitation method (Collier 1957; Collier 1986; Harper 2002), in which photographs are inserted into the interview context for participants to discuss. Whilst photo-elicitation techniques have traditionally used photographs taken by the researcher (Collier 1957; 1986), or cultural images (Goffman 1979), the purpose of this study was to use teenagers' own images.

In this way, the photo-feedback interview became a collaborative approach, between the researcher, participants and their images. This disrupts the power dynamics of a conventional interview situation, in that participants are empowered in leading the

interview through the demonstration of their own images, which in turn shape the research themes. The interview conversations generally followed the themes of the photographs, and participants were better able to describe what, who or where they were talking about with the use of the photograph as a visual prompt and means of contextualisation, as described in the following conversation with Lizzy:

> K: Did you quite like doing it [the self-directed photography exercise]?
> L: Yeah it was fun just like taking snapshots of everyone
> K: How does it compare to the other interview we did?
> L: Well this is better. Just cos, well you've got something to talk about
> K: And do you think the photographs portray your life?
> L: Oh yeah, well it shows what we do to a certain extent. Yeah like some of the photos are indoors but most of the outdoor stuff is exactly what we do
> (Lizzy, photo-feedback interview)

The combination of participant images and the photo-feedback interviews facilitated a more nuanced understanding of teenage spatial practices, than had been obtained through the more distanced questionnaire and initial interviews. The photography exercise revealed the precise identification of places and 'things' through looking at the photographs, alongside other, nonmaterial aspects such as meanings, emotions and attachments which were revealed through talking about the images. In essence, the technique accessed both fact and feeling (Collier 1995). Through providing a focus point, around which to base conversations, the photographs spurred meanings and spatial practices that may have remained dormant in a conventional face-to-face interview. As Banks comments, photo elicitation is a

> 'highly productive research tool ... yielding insights and understandings that might be otherwise missed or not be discernable by other methods'. (Banks 2001:99)

Often, it was not the actual content of the photograph that was important, but the discussions these photographs prompted. For instance, there was a notable absence of 'negative' things in the photographs taken by teenagers. In assessing the role of the visual and cameras in the lives of the participants (Pink 2001), this is perhaps unsurprising given that the teenagers in the study talked about how they usually used cameras for recording special events or 'good things'. However, it was often through talking around photographs that negative issues were uncovered. For instance, one participant Pablo had taken the

majority of his pictures either inside his family home or at the local basketball courts. Unlike other participants he had not chosen to capture his route to the basketball courts. When prompted about his local neighbourhood, Pablo revealed that it was a place he didn't enjoy or want to spend time in. Part of his everyday geography in the area involved encountered drug users or their syringes, elements which he had not wanted to photograph. It was only through talking about the 'in-between' spaces between his house and the basketball courts was such a significant aspect of his spatial practices uncovered.

Moreover, useful insights into the lives of teenagers were uncovered through the use of this method, and provided an example of teenagers actively shaping and informing the research. Given the focus of the study on outdoor public spaces, I had asked participants only to photograph these types of spaces. However, when the photographs were developed, many contained pictures of indoor, as well as outdoor spaces. In discussing this with a participant Paul, he highlighted that these indoor spaces also constituted an important part of the hanging out experiences of him and his friends. The interrelationship and connectivity of indoor and outdoor space was brought home to me by teenagers taking pictures: spatial practices involved outdoor spaces, interjected by important indoor spaces such as friends bedrooms or youth clubs. As informed by my conversation with Paul:

> K: OK here are some more of your pictures; they're very indoory aren't they?
> P: Yeah
> K: I thought you would just take pictures of outdoor places?
> P: No you said places where you hang round (laughs). And that's what we do, we all go to Leo's bedroom, get stoned, play on the Playstation and then go out to Mirror Hill and all that (Paul, photo feedback interview)

The use of photography can in many ways be described as a 'portable' method, in that teenagers' experiences and practices were transported and conveyed, through the photographs into the interview situation. The photographs provided access to events, people and places during their hanging out experiences, as a non-invasive, non-confrontational method (Morrow and Richards 1996), which could later be discussed through interviews in the school context. The use of this method enabled an overlapping of the space of research (the school) and the researched spaces (teenage hanging out spaces).

Towards more mobile methods

As discussed above, the *portable* method of the photo-feedback interview, overlaying the previous interviews and questionnaire went some way to accessing a more resonant understanding of teenage spatial practices. However, the emphasis on 'talk' rather than the embodied action characteristic of such practices, still somewhat limited a full understanding. For instance, one participant, Leah often found it difficult to get across what hanging around in a car park with boy racers actually meant to her. Although she justified her choice of the car park as a safe space away from the bullies that had previously caused her trouble, she found it difficult to convey her experiences of the car park through the method of the interview, even with the prompt of her photographs. Within the detached space of the cupboard, she berated the activity as seemingly 'boring':

> L: It's a bit boring really, so there isn't a lot to say about it ...
> K: Well what is it about Wickes car park that makes you go there?
> L: I dunno really, that's just the place where we go. Where we just sit and talk. It is really good. It's just, I just think it seems really boring when we're talking about it (Leah, photo feedback interview, storecupboard)

The store cupboard was a place detached from the outdoor places teenagers used, sometimes making it difficult to grasp what, or where participants were talking about. I was not aware of the location or nature of many of the places teenagers were trying to describe and difficulties often arose when volunteers tried to explain where places were. As demonstrated in my interview with Oli:

> K: Right tell me about this place then?
> O: Well it's not far from the school. It's that way [points over his shoulder]. Oh I know the tape recorder can't hear that but .... It's not far from [primary school]. You head up that way
> K: Is that by the nursery?
> O: Yeah that's it. The nursery by the old people's home
> K: Is it by a doctor's surgery?
> O: Sort of. It's by a hairdressers (Oli, Photo-feedback interview)

As the above example demonstrates, the physical detachment from the places and experiences teenagers were trying to recapture was sometimes problematic. It is impossible for the school sited element of the research to 'access all aspects of lived experience'

(Kusenbach 2003), especially when the interview was taking place in a detached location from the spatial practices I was seeking to uncover. As Kusenbach describes,

> 'interviews can miss out on those themes that do not lend themselves to narrative accounting, such as pre-reflexive knowledge and practices of the body, or the most trivial details of day-to-day environmental experience' (2003:462).

In order to access these embodied and emotional experiences, a further methodology was adopted in attempt to get closer to the action.

Go-alongs

The shift from school based static and portable methods, to more mobile, outdoor methods was undertaken in an attempt to further probe the complex and embodied spatial practices of teenagers. The mobile method used took the form of a go-along, as defined by Kusenbach (2003), go-alongs involve:

> 'researchers accompany[ing an] individual [or groups of] informants on their 'natural' outings, and – through asking questions, listening and observing – [they] actively explore their subjects' stream of experiences and practices as they move through, and interact with, their physical and social environment' (Kusenbach 2003:463)

In this way, I was actually involved in participating in the hanging out spaces of teenagers. This mobilization of ethnography was partly intended as a practical means to cope with the movement of participants as part of their hanging out practices (see also Lorimer and Lund 2003 who undertook go-alongs with hill walkers). It also enabled, through actually being in spaces with teenagers us to discuss events or activities as they spontaneously occurred. As Anderson describes of the practice 'talking whilst walking' he used with environmental activists at their direct action site, the approach …

> '… produces not a conventional interrogative encounter, but a collage of collaboration: an unstructured dialogue where all actors participate in a conversational, geographical and informational pathway creation. As a consequence, the knowledge produced is importantly different: atmospheres, emotions, reflections and beliefs can be accessed, as well as intellects, rationales and ideologies' (Anderson 2004:260)

Following the school based elements of the research, the research site shifted to the hanging out spaces of several teenagers involved in the study. In total four go-alongs were undertaken:

The first go-along was with two female participants, Bethan and Ceri. Bethan had texted me on a Saturday afternoon to confirm they were at The Park. I arrived, a little nervous as I had not been there previously and couldn't find either of the girls. Instead I saw another group of boys from school and began talking to them. Bethan and Ceri then returned from the shops and joked to the boys 'Oi get away from her, it's us she's come to see not you!'. I then went with Bethan and Ceri down a hill to an area of grassland away from the boys playing football. We sat on the grass and chatted for a while. Bethan had recently had a set of photographs developed that she wanted to show me. After talking about the photographs, the girls thought it would be a good idea to give me a tour of The Park which we could record using the video camera.

The second go-along was with a group of male participants – Andy, Leo, Declan, Scott and Paul. After arranging with Leo, I met the boys at The Park one Saturday evening. We stayed in the park for a bit, chatting, some of the boys took the camera and filmed the tennis courts, playground and seating areas. When they returned, Leo started filming himself and some others doing tricks with a football. We then all walked to the local primary school where they sometimes hang around, stopping on the way at the local shop. After the school playground we went to Mirror Hill, the special hanging out place of this group and their wider circle of friends. An area of informal space (re)claimed by teenagers and occasionally shared by elements of the local homeless population. Here I met more teenagers, some from the research school and other schools.

The third go-along was with TJ at Wickes car park, a Saturday night hang out for local boy racers. I met TJ before most of the other boy racers had gathered on the car park. This gave us a chance to sit on some nearby benches and chat. At around 10pm the car park started to get busier, cars would park in clusters next to each other with large groups of predominantly males standing around, comparing engines, neon lights and stereos. Other cars would drive in and out, round and round the car park, beeping their horns, pulling hand

break turns and with passengers and drivers shouting to each other. Every now and again, a police car would come a drive round in a lap of the car park.

The final go-along was with a group of girls Lizzy, Alannah and Emma in their local, rural hanging out places at The Bridge and surrounding country parkland. I met the girls in the car park of the local cricket club and we walked through the residential streets and back alleys to The Bridge. We walked through the woods, stopped and chatted at key points personal to them along the river, before meeting everyone else on the road bridge at the entrance to the park. Many teenagers were gathered at The Bridge, sitting on the entrance gates, up trees and along benches just inside the parkland area.

Benefits of go-alongs

Revealing emotional attachments to place

Go-alongs, materially at least, bring the research encounter (and the researcher) closer to the practice under study. As Adams and Ingham demonstrate:

> 'Surveys and audits, questionnaires and interviews are all excellent techniques to record information, but sometimes they are not appropriate to explore the subtle and hidden feelings that connect us with a place.' (Adams and Ingham 1998:149).

Such 'subtle and hidden feelings' connecting someone to a place were evident in my go-along with Ceri and Bethan, as recorded in my fieldwork diary:

> 'In the park today I sat with Ceri, and she began to open up and tell me how she was once beaten up in the neighbourhood where she lives. This was not recorded on the tape recorder, usually Ceri is a bit elusive in how she describes things. But when it was just the two of us in the park, she opened up and seemed more at ease in surroundings familiar to her. This was an important moment in our relationship and for the research. Even though she is still quite shy, she did seem to open up more, when there was just us sitting on the grass chatting. Ceri talks about the park in a really happy, positive way. It is almost as if it provides a 'sanctuary' for her. Although she has to travel quite far to get to the park (a bus ride then a walk across town), she feels safe there away from 'certain' people in her local neighbourhood. This was later demonstrated through her go-along video narration of the park' (fieldwork diary extract, go-along Bethan and Ceri)

> 'There are places around [village name] that are dead rough and scary so we don't go down there ... in [village name] there is loads of drugs. Um people spread around everywhere, hanging around, taking drugs or dead high like so we don't tend to go there. But here, you can just be yourself. Be dead hyper or whatever. You don't have to watch your back all the time. Like at home, you just don't know who's gonna be around looking at you, which other groups of teenagers are about' (Ceri, go-along video narration, The Park)

Actually conducting methods within the places of teenagers therefore creates opportunities for the emotional ties that bind individuals to places to be uncovered.

Unpacking the banal and mundane

When undertaking school-based interviews, there is the potential for some places and activities to be regarded as unimportant, and perhaps to be overlooked altogether. The use of go-alongs, and actually being in hanging out spaces for extended periods of time illuminates the incidental, trivial, mundane and often banal dimensions of teenage spatial practices (Horton and Kraftl 2005), that would often remain hidden within the context of an interview:

> 'Much of the time at the Bridge is fairly uneventful – we seem to spend a lot of time just sitting about, waiting for things to happen or for friends to turn up. But then every now and again to relieve the boredom, somebody will do something spontaneous. Stu will climb a tree or the boys will start bike races and the group will gather round to watch and cheer them on – it's like the toughs and peaks of hanging around ... ' (fieldwork diary extract, go-along, The Bridge)

> '... Today when we were hanging around on the bridge, Stu found a piece of orange plastic fencing that must have been left by some repair men. He tied the plastic on to the bridge and began to use it as a ladder to climb down to the water below. Everyone gathered on the top of the bridge, there must have been about 15 of us, all excited and cheering him on as he fought to climb the precarious hanging ladder' (fieldwork diary extract, go-along, The Bridge)

Go-alongs allowed me as the researcher, in the ethnographic tradition, to witness an array of embodied and emotional practices as they were experienced and performed by teenagers. Allied to the opportunity to discuss and ask questions about these practices as they happen, or soon afterwards.

Sensory experience

The insights revealed through interacting with participants as part of the go-along were also complemented by my own experiences of the same situations. As Massey points out, 'spatialities are constructed as well by sound, touch and smell – by senses other than vision alone' (2002: 463). A range of sensory, tangible experiences - for example, sitting on damp grass, climbing trees, getting muddy, smelling petrol fumes – add to the, by turns, anticipation, fear, excitement, and exhilaration that come together to define the 'sensuous, embodied, creativeness of social practice' (Latham, 2003:1998). In other words, go-alongs created a sensory methodology that went beyond the interview, talk-based approach to research, as recorded in my fieldwork diary notes:

> 'It was quite amazing just to experience the atmosphere on Wickes car park at night time. Until now I had only ever been there with 'respectable' shoppers during the day. However, at night the car park seems to completely transform itself, to take on another life. What seemed like a hundred cars were all clustered in groups: coloured neon lights flashing along dash boards and underneath cars, music pumping out of stereos, engines revving, brakes screeching as racers make handbrake turns, petrol fumes.... The atmosphere was really exciting, exhilarating, if a bit intimidating...
>
> ...As I was standing there with TJ and a few others we had met, a police car drove up and did a 'lap' of the car park - I began to feel nervous. Whilst rationally knowing I wasn't actually doing anything wrong, the thought and feeling of being in a situation that is subject to regular police checks made me nervous. I was feeling how it feels to be someone in the wrong place, or in a place where certain behaviour is not tolerated' (fieldwork diary extract, go-along Wickes car park)

Through the go-along and actually participating in teenage hanging out spaces, I was afforded the ethnographic opportunity to temporarily 'live the life' of the research participants. In contrast to the lifescape of the school, within these *other* settings my authority as an 'adult' researcher was effectively displaced. I was now a novice, within a new world, as well as potentially miscreant in the eyes of the adult world in which I would normally inhabit. Such social and spatial re-positioning, although raising important ethical and methodological issues, also affords elusive insights that make substantial advances in accessing the everyday social practice of teenagers. Each go-along involved a significant shift in power, as described in my fieldwork diary anxieties about leaving the relatively 'safe' space of the school:

> 'I came back yesterday to do my first go-along. Text Jess and Jo about meeting them, but no response. Didn't mind they hadn't got in touch because suddenly I've got a bit scared. I'm now moving outside the seemingly safe environment of the school, feeling like I have to negotiate a whole new role and space for myself now' (fieldwork diary extract)

The quotation in this chapter's title 'you alright jumping over this gate?' provides another example of a shift in power dynamics and role relations. In this instance, Leo, a participant in the research took it upon himself to adopt the 'adult' role in our go-along relationship, ensuring my safety, both in jumping over the gate, and then later making sure I was okay to 'walk home on alone, given all the drunks in town on a Saturday night'. This protective stance, was also demonstrated by another participant, TJ who on briefing me about our forthcoming go-along told me to wear 'sensible shoes' (in contrast to the flip-flops I usually wore to school), because he usually 'covered a lot of ground'. He also warned me that the local boy racers would try and 'pick me up because I was a girl hanging around', but assured me 'I'll keep you safe'! In exchange, TJ informed me that most of his contacts where he hung out thought he was 18, and he wanted me to keep up this pretence.

Despite my own self-consciousness about being an 'adult' participant in 'teenage' spaces, it did not seem as though the participants and their associates were that phased by my presence. In discussing my 'adult' and 'researcher' identity with one participant before a go-along to the local boy racer hang out, the 16 year old participant Sophie assured me:

> 'They'll probably just think that you're like my age' (Sophie, individual interview)

I usually left it up to participants to decide how they wanted to introduce me to their friends and other people in the spaces they hung around in. Most introduced me as 'Katie' someone 'doing research on teenagers and where they hang out', some seemed quite proud that they had the task of showing me their spaces 'for her PhD'. At this point, I would usually explain a bit more about the project to teenagers I had not met before and answer any questions they had. I always carried my university identity card and business cards I could give out with my contact details on, although nobody objected to my presence or seemed suspicious, and most were happy to talk to me about their experiences and spatial practices.

Limitations of go-alongs

Despite spending a number of months building relations with teenagers within the context of the school, it was not possible to undertake go-alongs with everybody that had been involved in previous stages of the research. This occurred for several reasons. Firstly, it was very difficult to maintain contact with participants once they had left school and our daily face-to-face contact had ceased (perhaps justifying the choice of basing research within the context of the school in the first place). During the short time period of the summer holidays, various individuals or key group members were away on holiday themselves or busy with other commitments, and unable or unwilling to commit to a go-along. Secondly, there were some groups that I as a researcher did not feel comfortable 'hanging around' with. For instance, some male participants were involved in a football hooligan group – a male dominated group of teenagers and adults who would actively arrange violent conflicts with rival football team supporters on match days. These interactions usually took place in secluded locations and often resulted in encounters with the police. Something I, as a lone female researcher felt nervous about participating in. In addition to the four go-alongs undertaken, a further three were arranged but participants cancelled at the last minute or failed to turn up.

Teenager-directed film making

Whilst participating in go-alongs, teenagers were introduced to a digital camcorder and encouraged to make a film of aspects of their hanging out experiences. According to Kindon (2003), few geographers have used video within their research, instead emphasis has been put on photography as a research technique. For the purpose of this research, it was intended that the use of video would build on the photographic elements that had come before. Coupled with the practice of go-alongs, filming the experience provided a way of representing more fluid, embodied and mobile elements of teenage spatial practices. As Pink describes:

> 'By adding video to the process of telling or talking to, through a method of showing-touring and embodied enacting, our collaborations with informants can involve not simply spoken narratives of their sensory experiences but also visual display, exposure to sounds, smells and textures, thus bringing the ethnographer closer to the sensory, pre-reflective experiential context' (Pink 2006: 47-48)

Purpose of the film

In some respects, although I had spent time building rapport with participants in the context of the school, the digital camcorder provided a 'way in' or a purpose to be in the research setting (see Schwartz 1989). In the first instance, the digital camcorder was used as a recording tool. Instead of relying on my own ethnographic field notes from the research go-alongs, the use of film created the opportunity to capture both verbal and visual data. The verbal commentary attached to the film was transcribed and analysed alongside the visual images, and where it is not possible or appropriate to include visual footage, the transcriptions can be used to evoke a sense of the setting. In the second instance, as Lomax and Casey (1998) point out, the use of video acts not only as a way to record data but as a media through which ethnographic knowledge is created. This was demonstrated through participants using the camera in their own unique ways to express their spatial practices and performances.

Benefits of teenager-directed film making

Empowering research methodology

Similar to the empowering approach behind the use of self-directed photography, the digital camcorder was also handed over to participants for them to actively produce a film of their spatial practices. As Kindon (2003) commentates, this approach is in contrast to most other uses of video in research, whereby the technology remains in the hands of the researcher and is used to capture, document and record the 'reality' of a scene. This was largely possible due to advances in modern technology which have produced light weight, fairly robust and easy operable pieces of equipment which participants can be taught how to use relatively easily.

The compact nature of the camera and its large filming/viewing screen meant the camera did not create an intrusive presence, but could be passed easily around group members and incorporated into activities such as doing 'keepy-uppies' or riding bikes. Some participants were nervous at first about being captured on film, and were keen to view the footage immediately to 'see how they looked'. Others, when the camera was first introduced began to 'act up' or over perform, wanting to capture spectacular stunts or activities. However, as they got used to the presence of the camera, the novelty seemed to wear off and they

became distracted with other comings and goings in the spaces, meaning that more normal, mundane activities were also filmed.

Participants were empowered in deciding which aspects of their hanging out activities to demonstrate, who or what to include in shots and when to turn the camera on and off. The viewing screen meant footage could be viewed in the field, reflected upon and edited, or actions re-shot. Self-directed film-making enables participants to construct their own representations of their life worlds and experience, in contrast to the image produced by mass media and other dominant representations. As Valentine (1996a; 1996b) notes, popular discourses surrounding childhood and youth usually centre on angel/devil dichotomies, portraying children as innocent, incapable beings in need of protection and teenagers as unruly undesirables. Such discourses become manifest in representations of young people within society. For instance, as one participant, Michael comments on the role of visual media in his life:

> '... have you seen Eastenders? There's a 15 year old, Stacey her name is. She's doing all these bad things and that and it well puts 15 year olds down what she does. We're not like that' (Michael, individual interview)

Through allowing teenage participants to construct their own filmatic accounts of their lives, this imbalance is effectively redressed, turning unsatisfied viewers into active producers (Holliday 2000). The digital camcorder controlled and directed by teenage participants acts in direct contrast to surveillant CCTV cameras which exert a panoptical presence over teenage spatial practices and freedoms. Through the overwhelming presence of CCTV within British towns and cities, groups of teenagers 'hanging around' inevitably represent a large majority of those under constant surveillance, perceived to be deviant and 'up to no good'. By placing a video camera in the hands of young people, this enables them to create an alternative representation of themselves as the video becomes a positive tool for capturing their own expressiveness, rather than a tool associated with more negative forms of surveillance.

Digital camcorder as an expressive research tool

In considering the role of visual technology in participant's lives, as suggested by Pink (2001), some of the teenagers already participated in film-making and had experience of using such equipment. For instance, the group of skateboarder boys had in the past borrowed one of the boy's father's camcorder to record their skateboarding tricks or 'Jackass' moves as they had seen in many DVDs. For others, using the digital technology on new camera phones was an important part of their hanging out experience. As Lizzy and Alannah explain about one of their friends:

> A: Him, I could not get him out of the camera
> L: Oh no I know he loves it doesn't he, he loves being in front of the camera
> A: Camera phones or video recording phones he turns them in and goes 'hello', 'hello I'm Jamie'
> K: Do you use phones quite a lot then?
> A: Yeah for recording
> L: Or the phone journey
> A: Oh yeah one day he was like 'Hello this is the phone's journey' before he dropped it through a pipe and then (giggles) he played it back
> K: And what was it like?
> A: It was just like huuuuhhhh [Makes rough whirring noise] and then a flash of lights and then you just saw the grid flash by (Lizzy and Alannah)

The way participants used visual technology, either through their own means or through the research process often mirrored their use or appropriation of their hanging out spaces. In many ways, the digital camcorder became an 'expressive research tool' (Goldman 2004), recording participants' performative interactions with their local environments. Bethan and Ceri are key figures in the park, and have a good knowledge of all the different groups that hang around there and the various different spaces that create the park. Their approach to using the video camera was based on a documentary style of film-making as they produced a guided tour around the park, pointing out and explaining key features such as the notice board, the *big* gates, the toilets and the bowling green. The camcorder was used simultaneously to represent the park visually (through the lens) and verbally through their spoken narratives about the park.

The group of male participants who usually engaged creatively with the town surfaces and street furniture through skateboarding activities, translated this creativity through their use of the camcorder. Through changing the settings and special effects on the camcorder, they

succeeded in producing a range of colour manipulated images. In contrast to the other participants, one teenager, TJ did not want to use the camcorder himself, preferring to remain in front of the lens. During the go-along at Wickes car park, some of the other people there questioned if I was making a documentary for *The Discovery Channel.* Following these comments, I think TJ enjoyed the reputation of being filmed under the guise he was going to be on the television!

Use of video in capturing sensory experience

Video creates the potential for sensory experiences such as sound to be captured and relayed to an audience outside of the space. Video is an audiovisual rather than a visual medium, and participants were aware of this as the video camera became part of our communication (Pink 2006). Participants would demonstrate ring tones from their mobile phones, blast songs from car stereos, or beep car horns, using music and sounds as props that were evocative of the hanging out atmosphere they created. By exploring these aspects, I gained an idea of the sensory embodied experience of hanging out (Pink 2006).

The combined use of the go-along and film making enabled the mobile experiences of hanging out to be researched and represented, more so than through photographs and static interviews. These peripatetic methods allowed me to better capture and experience passing through places, or the 'in-between' spaces that had previously been neglected or regarded as unimportant. In considering the point made in the previous section about participants not photographing negative things, go-alongs and filming allowed for such things to be exposed. For instance, when walking between places with one group of participants, we walked down 'the dodgy alleyway' and past the 'druggie house' - an empty building littered with used syringes that were clearly visible through the fencing. The participants had not mentioned this place before, it was only through the process of the filmed go-along that it was uncovered and reflected upon.

While some photographs can infer movement, they often portray a static approximation of life. Film, on the other hand, moves realistically through time, capturing an invaluable fluency that is missing in still life images (Collier 1995). For the purpose of exploring teenage spatial practices, the context of movement itself may be crucial to understanding hanging out fluxes and flows. Watching the film back gives a sense of the rhythm enacted

through walking – for instance, Bethan's film of walking around the park, is not a smooth image, but embodies the rhythm of walking action. Similarly, through the use of the camcorder the kinaesthetic sensation of Stuart grappling and succeeding to climb up the make shift rope ladder was captured on film, surrounded by the audio-visual carnival atmosphere of the interactive audience cheering him on from above the bridge.

Limitations of film-making

All the filming took place outside, which often meant background noise such as wind, was picked up on the tape. Recording multiple voices whilst hanging out, also meant the situation was less controlled than in an interview situation, often with many people talking at once which proved difficult to decipher when transcribing narratives. Given the relative ease of recording and lack of time constraints relating to hanging out, in contrast to the hour-long lunch hour within the space of the school, the potential exists for hours and hours of footage to be produced which must them be edited and/or sorted for analysis. Despite the wealth of footage accumulated, the go-alongs were often my last contact with participants, therefore it was not possible to co-edit film footage with them.

Many similar ethical and moral issues arise in the use of film as in photographs – perhaps more important in film as distorting faces or concealing identities is more complicated task than with still images. Once again, there is great potential for people outside of the research process to be captured on film and it is difficult to gain informed consent from everyone. Filming in public spaces, especially the children's playground made me feel particularly nervous especially in today's climate of concern about risk and images of young children.

Section Three: Reflecting back

The following sections aim to provide further reflections on the methodological and ethical issues that were apparent throughout the course of the research, and in journeying through the borderland of teenage lived experience.

Longitudinal approach

The longitudinal approach to the research and was beneficial in terms of adopting a flexible research approach, uncovering the temporal nature of spatial practices and shifts in identity practice, and in building rapport and developing relations with participants. In total I spent each lunchtime in the school for a period of seven months, enabling me daily contact with pupils. I became a familiar feature wandering around the school field, chatting to groups of pupils, handing out and collecting disposable cameras (which earned me the nickname 'Katie Kodak').

The longitudinal approach provided a vehicle for participation as over the course of the research, other teenagers became involved in the study either through a snowballing technique whereby their friends who had already been interviewed encouraged them to participate, or through informally chatting to me about the research. The timeline was also useful in a practical sense, given that the research often required a flexible approach. In enabling pupils to decide when they wanted to be interviewed (see Skelton 2000), there were some days when pupils were not that keen especially during the summer weather when playing football outside seemed a more attractive option. Therefore on days when no formal interviews were taking place, I spent time wandering around the school field, informally chatting to groups and individuals which was useful in that it revealed informative and current information about their hanging out activities. As Darbyshire (2005) comments a longitudinal approach offers the possibility of tracking changes in participant's experiences through a 'linking of time and texture' (Neale and Flowerdew 2003). Through these informal playground chats I was kept informed of changes in place use, friendship groupings and identity or 'neo-tribal' shifts:

> 'When I chatted to the 'skateboarder boys' today, they told me they are staying away from the school playground for a while. A car window got smashed and

> someone called the police. They've now started locking the gates, so they're going to stay clear for a while.' (Fieldwork diary extract)

> 'Another falling out between Bethan, Ceri and Matilda. Bethan and Ceri are getting annoyed with Matilda because of how she flirts with the boys at The Park, they say they've 'agreed to spend some time apart'.' (Fieldwork diary extract)

I doubt whether my contact with research participants would have been as frequent or as prolonged if I had chosen to study them solely in the public spaces outside of school they chose to hang around in. As demonstrated above, 'hanging out' patterns, spaces and activities were subject to frequent changes. In contrast, with school attendance being compulsory, maintaining contact with volunteers was more manageable.

The longitudinal approach facilitated the use of multiple methods, which generated an in-depth understanding of teenagers' perceptions and experiences through a range of material. Such sustained contact was beneficial in that participants could be asked for further details or to clarify examples through the course of our several meetings. The various data generating approaches complemented, rather than duplicated, each building on what had come before and enabled the expression of different aspects of teenager experiences.

Research encounters

Wood and Smith (2004) draw on musical performances as events that sometimes 'work' better than others:

> 'Performers talk of gigs where they failed to engage the audience despite their best efforts and they also speak about performances that escalate 'to some higher plane of consciousness'. In these 'successful' situations performers feel that something, for some reason 'clicked'. (Wood and Smith 2004:536)

In many ways the research encounter can be thought of in a similar way. My first interview with one participant, Pablo, left me with a sinking feeling that our encounter hadn't 'worked', and that I had failed in trying to engage the participant. Our conversation, had seemed very one sided, with me asking lots of questions to his rather short 'yes' and 'no' answers. One of the teachers had previously described Pablo as a 'colourful' character, always with 'something to say about what he got up to at the weekend' however, I felt I had

been unable to communicate with him at all. Why was he not displaying his 'colourful' character to me? Feeling rather frustrated and saddened by the experience, I talked over some of my worries with a teacher. She informed me, that Pablo had only recently moved to the UK from Portugal, and given his basic grasp of the English language, he was not always that confident talking to strangers. The teacher also thought that Pablo was probably seeing me as an adult in authority, given most of his contact with adults in school was with social workers or educational psychologists.

Alderson and Morrow (2004) describe how some young people, although they have agreed to be interviewed appear 'unwilling, bored or shy', during the interview. They suggest the participants may open up with some gentle prompting, but if not it is respectful to draw the interview to an end. After my first encounter with Pablo, I did wonder if it was ethical to include him further in the study. Did he actually want to take part, or had he been forced into it by the teacher who thought he would make a 'colourful' contribution? I did feel slightly uneasy, and conscious about 'making' him participate in the photography exercise, however, he did seem enthusiastic about being given a disposable camera, and I thought perhaps it was more ethical to give him the camera and talk to him at a later stage, than to exclude him altogether. For the next few weeks, I made a special effort to acknowledge Pablo whenever I saw him around the school, or on the school playing field. Our second interview, which involved looking at his photographs was a much more successful encounter, something had, like in the musical performance, just 'clicked'. I think Pablo had got used to my presence around the school, and the use of photographs provided a visual prompt, rather than dominance of the verbal around which he felt more confident to talk about his spatial practices (see also Dodman 2003).

Researching the familiar: undertaking research at 'home' and as a past pupil

> 'Fieldwork has traditionally been regarded as something of a trademark within certain academic disciplines...still today [it is] mainly treated as a physical assignation, out there, preferably far way, different, distanced and detached from the 'everyday', or 'home' of the researcher.' (Crouch and Malm, 2003: 260)

In many ways my fieldwork for this research project was detached from my everyday life in Cardiff and the resources and academic environment of my university. Distanced by the 07.15 train I would catch every Monday morning to spend the school week doing

fieldwork. And yet, despite this physical separation from my Cardiff 'home' of the past five years, the research town too, was also once my 'home'. In this section I reflect on my multiple fieldwork roles or personas, of being simultaneously an 'insider' and 'outsider' within the research setting, and on my commonalities and differences with participants.

Throughout the course of the research, my fieldwork persona was made up through a series of identities, variously located within the setting of the school, the hanging out spaces of teenagers and the wider context of the town itself. I was at once, a(n) ('adult') researcher, a past pupil of the school, and 'at home' in the town. These identities were by no means discrete and often overlapped, or shifted according to changes in the context.

School based identities

Undertaking research within the school involved complex negotiations in order to perform my identity in non-authoritarian ways with pupils, without transgressing institutional expectations on adult behaviour (Holt 2004). According to Valentine (2000) the school comprises two worlds; the *world of the institution* – adult controlled formal world of official structures, time tables, and spatial segregation by age, and the *informal world* of the students themselves – of social networks and peer group cultures. Throughout the research process, I was located between these two worlds, in a liminal or Thirdspace (following Bhabha 1994; Soja 1996; Routledge 1996; Anderson 2002), which involved a constant weaving between the two worlds. According to Routledge (1996), such a space involves:

> 'a simultaneous coming and going in a borderland zone between different modes of action ... [and a belief] that we can inhabit these different sites, making each a space of relative comfort. To do so will require inventing creative ways to cross perceived and real 'borders'. The third space is thus a place of investigation and transformational encounters, a dynamic in-between space that is imbued with the traces, relays, ambivalences, ambiguities and contradictions, with the feelings and practices of both sites to fashion something different, unexpected (Bhabha 1994)' (as cited in Routledge 1996:406).

My role as a past pupil, and contacts within the school undoubtedly secured my access into the setting and was used to legitimise the research to parents/guardians thereby mobilising the research. Conversely, I also drew on my former pupil status to 'exchange' information with pupils as a way of building rapport. As Valentine (2000) commentates, institutions such as schools play an important part both in shaping young peoples' collective identities

and marking individuals' biographies. In many ways, it was this collective identity and my own biography of being a pupil at the school that I was able to draw on in forging relations with participants. Pupils were often keen to know about my experience of being a student and stories about teachers. In many ways, the school provided a familiar, yet also distant research site. In contrast to my previous 'pupil' status in the setting, I was now an 'adult' and allowed in spaces such as the staffroom or to drink coffee with teachers, addressing them by their first names. Whereas somewhat conversely other 'pupil' spaces, such as the girls' toilets and areas of the school field (particularly behind the smoker's tree), were at first, seemingly inaccessible given my now adult status.

At times, I felt my positionality or role within the school context was tested by pupils. For instance, one lunch time when standing informally chatting to a group on the school field, they asked what I would do if I found somebody with a mobile phone in school (a prohibited item). I carefully answered that given my role as a researcher, I was not really there to monitor what people brought into school. With this, every member of the group retrieved their mobile phones from their pockets and began sending messages to friends! While the mobile phone incident was an issue I felt relatively comfortable on turning a blind eye to, other activities, I felt I could not endorse for fear of jeopardising my research position within the school. A few weeks later whilst sitting on the school field, interviewing a group of girls about their photographs, the girls offered to take me to their 'hang out' during the lunch time:

> K: I don't think I know where the Brickie is
> C: It's just over there
> J: Do you want to go have a look. There's a hole in that fence, we can go now if you want
> C: Oh go on. If we get found out we can just say that we were taking you on an adventure
> K: We probably best not. If they caught me, I would never be allowed back here again! You can show me one day though, after school
> (Charlotte and Jess, photo feedback interview, school field)

My occupation of this third or liminal space between the world of teacher relationships and pupils was marked by one research encounter with Sophie. Sophie had sporadic attendance at school, and was described by one teacher as 'a waste of time', somebody who should not be included in the project because 'she will let you down' (Fieldwork diary extract).

However, my previous encounters with Sophie had always been enlightening and rewarding, and she seemed keen and committed to participating in the project. It was getting close to Sophie leaving school and she had still not returned her disposable camera or attended school for about two weeks. On going through my list one day in the staff room, and expressing my disappointment, one of the teachers offered to intervene, as she was phoning home anyway to speak with Sophie's parents about her poor attendance. Fearful this would completely disengage Sophie from the research I instead opted to access Sophie, or make contact with her through the less formal channels of her own social networks. By this time I had built up significant enough relationships with some of the students for them to know I was not associated with the school, therefore they were more co-operative in facilitating me access to Sophie, than they may have been with other teaching staff. I stressed to Sophie's friends, that I was not concerned with whether she was attending school or not, but that I was solely interested in talking to her about her photographs. I gave the girls my phone number, and asked them to pass it on to Sophie if they saw her. In the end, Sophie returned to school, with the camera and we were able to discuss her photographs.

'Insider' based identity

Having once been a teenager in the town, I had insider knowledge about some of the places occupied by participants. Although the fieldwork process often involved looking at these familiar sites with new research lenses (Amit 2001). In other cases, the spaces I had occupied as a teenager were no longer frequented by teenagers, or had been replaced by other more popular central sites. For instance, the installation of CCTV cameras on the area of grassland outside the local library had effectively displaced local groups, whereas the redevelopment of The Park and creation of basketball courts had transformed its marginal status into a valued site.

It would be naive to presume, or indeed portray, that my 'insider' status as a former pupil and a teenager within the town afforded me rapport and empathy with every participant. This was certainly not the case, as commonalities and differences did exist with participants. However, following Hodkinson (2005) viewing my 'insider' status as a non-

absolute category did facilitate a significant degree of *initial* proximity between myself and participants (see also Gilbert 1994). As Hodkinson explains,

> '[researchers] having experienced activities, motivations, feelings and affiliations that are liable, at least, to be comparable with those of many respondents, they have a significant extra pool of material with which to compare and contrast what they see and hear during the research process' (Hodkinson 2005: 143).

For instance, with some teenagers it was easy to emphasise drawing on my own experiences of for example, specific places, conflicts with 'other' groups of teenagers or parental restrictions. However, at other times, my distance was highlighted as it became apparent I was not really considered an 'insider' by those I was researching (Bennett 2002). Many of the cultural practices and signifiers that had existed during my time 'inside', had since changed. As mentioned above, the places used for hanging out had shifted location or altered in their importance. The language used by many teenagers was different to that I had used; the term 'scallies' had replaced 'townies' and 'block' had been replaced by 'rocky' to describe cannabis.

Proximity

The notion of proximity highlighted by Hodkinson (2005) is useful in explaining the development of my relationship with one participant Ali. My relationship with Ali is an example of a research encounter that developed over time, from an initial conflictual interaction, to a moment of great insight and familiarity. I first became acquainted with Ali and his group of friends when I went out on to the school field one lunchtime to distribute the first batch of disposable cameras. The boys were hanging around the gates at the field entrance acting as pseudo gate-keepers to people wanting to pass. The group were all taller than me and seemed to huddle round, all asking questions, playing on my non-teacher status. One of the boys took a camera out of the box and ran away across the field, at which the rest of the group laughed and applauded. Unsure of what to do and not wanting to turn into an authoritarian adult I remained chatting to the rest of the group and tried to laugh it off. The pupil did return with the camera, but for the following days I made a conscious effort to use the other gate on the school field to avoid intimidation! However, over time and through informally chatting to and interviewing friends of the group I became acquainted with them again. After several informal meetings on the school field at

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lunchtime, Ali agreed to have a camera. Although our relationship had improved, I was still slightly anxious about how the interview would 'work'.

During the photo-feedback interview, I began asking Ali general questions about where he lived. It emerged he and most of his family live on the local council estate in the same area that my own father had grown up, and where my grandmother still lives. Through chatting it became apparent that our grandmothers actually live on the same street and probably know each other. The discovery about our grandparents and subsequent conversation about them and the neighbourhood acted as a form of proximity (Hodkinson 2005) between Ali and myself. It was almost as though having a personal connection with his neighbourhood gave me a context, or grounding in his life, and local area. I was no longer an outside researcher from Cardiff, but someone with who he (surprisingly) had a connection. After this our conversation flowed much more freely, and the interview ended up being one of the longest school based interviews. Through the interview Ali chose to reveal his involvement as part of the 'Front Line' Youth football firm – part of his identity that usually remained covert in school amongst teachers and his peers.

Shifting power dynamics / entanglements of power

While the power imbalance between adults and children or young people have been well documented and remains a serious consideration, the situation can not be thought of in such a binaristic way. As detailed in Chapter Two, these power relations are not simply one-way exchanges of (adult) domination and (youth) resistance but instead may be regarded as complex networks or entanglements (Sharp et al 2000). One of the key theoretical tools offered by feminist and post-structuralist approaches is that of deconstructing such dichotomies. The rethinking of power by Foucault and others, as having multiple forms and micro levels is important in thinking about researching children and young people's lives (Robinson and Kellett 2004). As Thapar-Bjorkert and Henry (2004) comment the research process, and the relationship between the researcher and participants, cannot be viewed as a hierarchical process, instead, it has been commented that power can also be exercised by participants. It is therefore more appropriate to adopt a framework in which power is shifting, multiple and intersecting (Foucault 1980). In this way, power is understood, not only as top-down, but dispersed throughout both research relationships and the research process. Such an approach allows for greater fluidity of power than

conventional binary researcher/researched or adult/youth relations, while still acknowledging that there are differences and inequalities between the researcher and research participants.

During the course of the research, there were times when I as the 'adult researcher' was not always the 'most powerful', instead power was seen to shift between contexts and situations. At times, the research process was very much dependent upon the participation and engagement of students. As described above, I felt relatively useless and 'powerless' in my relationship with certain hard to engage students. Other stages of the research were also fraught with frustration and feelings of powerlessness, when participants were slow in returning their cameras to be developed, or preferred to be out on the playing fields during lunchtime, rather than being interviewed. At times, teachers offered to intervene, although despite their best intentions I declined this offer as I did not want to be associated with presumed teacher power.

Ethical dilemmas

Guillemin and Gillam (2004) delineate two dimensions of ethics. The first is procedural ethics, the kind mandated by institutional ethics committees to ensure procedures adequately deal with informed consent, confidentiality, rights to privacy and protecting human subjects from harm. The second is ethics in practice, or situational ethics, the kind that deal with the unpredictable, often subtle, yet ethically important moments that come up in the field (see also Goodwin et al 2003). By illustration of several research moments I attempt to demonstrate several unexpected ethical incidents that I was became faced with during the course of the project, and the tension between following institutional ethical guidelines and the actual messiness of being in the field. As Cloke et al (2000) comment, in the growing context of reflexive and dialogic research, standard ethical practices are a whole lot more 'turbulent and problematic' in the actual practice of research.

When interviewing a group of female students about their hanging out practices with older males, an incident of a sexual/abusive nature was revealed involving two girls in the group. The incident was potentially serious, one of the girls was under the legal age of consent, and no other adults had been informed. After talking to the girls about the incident and the circumstances surrounding it, it became clear that it could be interpreted in two ways – if

looked at in isolation with just bare facts the incident could constitute a serious offence, however, when taking the context and reaction of the girls into account a different picture was provided. Through a conversation with the girls, I nevertheless iterated that such behaviour should not be expected of them, and we talked about ways of avoiding similar situations in the future and sign-posted help and advice services should they want them. While the girls had felt comfortable confiding in their friends (and me) about the incident, they did not want to involve any other adults, either teachers or the police, perceiving them to be 'of little use'. Although after talking to the girls, I felt the issue had been somewhat resolved, I still felt I had a responsibility towards them, especially given my 'adult' position should anything else occur. I was conscious about the need to follow the 'correct' path of action laid down by ethical codes and guidelines. I therefore sought the advice of a teacher. Without revealing the identity of the students I spoke to the teacher vaguely about what had happened. She assured me, that given it was an isolated incident, rather than an ongoing problem, and given that the girls appeared to be dealing with the situation, if they weren't willing to talk to the police or other adults, then there was nothing else that could be done and that I had already followed the best course of action. This example highlights the need for an ethical approach to research which is situational and considerate of context. As Simons and Usher (2000) iterate:

> 'A situated ethics is local and specific to particular practices. It cannot be universalised ... [the research encounter] is mediated by the local and the specific – by, in other words, the situatedness which constitutes that practice ... [This does not involve an] abandon[ment of] ethics as some critics of this position would claim. On the contrary, [it] emphasise[s] the inescapable necessity for making ethical decisions and the difficulty and complexity of such decisions-making' (Simons and Usher 2000:2-3).

Ethics and emotions

Whilst this incident was a new disclosure, other incidents were revealed during the course of the research that were ongoing or already known to teachers or other adult authority figures. While in some ways this removed many of the ethical dilemmas associated with the previous incident, I did still feel an obligation to the research participants in terms of their emotional and supportive needs. Therefore if a teenager wanted to talk about a problem, I would let them, even if it sometimes digressed from the topic of the interview. Holt (2004) talks about the pseudo-therapeutic relationships she entered into with some of

her participants, talking about their experiences of being bullied, and offering advice or tactics for dealing with these incidents. In some cases, I was able to draw on my own experiences and empathise with a participant, other times, it just involved listening and putting forward some advice or suggestions for coping with what was happening.

While qualitative research is unlikely to cause harm, as for example drugs trials may, it can lead to emotional distress or anxiety (Hammersley and Atkinson 1995:268) as participants end up recounting incidents they may find upsetting to talk about. While I had not initially expected to uncover any 'emotionally sensitive' issues during the course of the research, it was sometimes the case that teenager's spatial practices, or their lives in general involved highly emotive experiences that became revealed through their narratives. Emotional experiences have traditionally been marginalised within human geography (Anderson and Smith 2001), and yet as Bondi (2005) notes, emotions are integral to research relationships. This was apparent in the case of one participant, Leah, who revealed some intimate and highly emotional aspects of her experience of hanging around:

> 'I met Leah in the corridor before her interview, and we started chatting on the way to the storecupboard. There were other people around as we were chatting and Leah said she had something important to tell me, but only when we got inside the cupboard. Once inside, Leah began to tell me how she was badly beaten up a few years ago, and this is why she is now afraid to go into the town centre...' (Fieldwork diary extract)

> 'Well what it is as well I think is, I got beat up a few years back. On the fair ... Yeah and you know, from this day on I still get threats from the girl and she had no reason. And there was 10 of um, and they all ... hit me. And I was in hospital and this, that, and the other. And that's why I just don't like going walking about town and going on the fair and all this cos that's where it happened. So then I prefer to be in the car, cos then I feel more secure' (Leah, individual interview, storecupboard).

> 'It was obviously a big thing for Leah to reveal this to me, and something which continues to impact on her life – she is still receiving counselling and seems to have a real fear of going into the town centre. I don't think I expected hanging out practices to be informed or even determined by such highly emotional and traumatic events. I'm quite shocked to find, just how many teenage girls have been involved in violent clashes with other girls.' (Fieldwork diary extract)

Widdowfield (2000) looks at the distress that can be caused for both the interviewer and the interviewee when traumatic or sensitive issues are talked about or revealed during the

course of the interview. As my fieldwork diary extract highlights, I had perhaps not been aware of the potential for my research to *actually* uncover such emotive issues. Through a series of interviews with participants, I began to learn about severe experiences of bullying and violence, and the fear or confinement some teenagers consequently felt with regard to spaces in their local areas. It was clear many of the participants had led fairly traumatic lives, and I sometimes felt inadequate in my reaction to their revelations. Kobayashi (2001) demonstrates that, ethics are not just about following the rules. They involve a need to care about people who become participants, and an ethical commitment of understanding and taking the responsibility for how one sets in motion the complex emotions that flow back and forth in the course of a research encounter.

Other dilemmas were more apparent when on go-alongs with teenagers, and I was exposed to semi-illegal or illegal activities involving drugs and alcohol. There was one specific incident however, that did raise an element of concern. For one of the go-alongs a participant turned up unaccompanied driving a sports car, claiming he already had his driving licence. I could not be sure of this, and the student had admitted during a previous interview that he had already driven whilst underage and without insurance. Given the ambiguity of the situation, I made a point of not getting in the car with the participant. While the student seemed slightly upset that I would not believe him, I hid behind (an interpreted version) of my institutional guidelines iterating that it was not appropriate for me to be alone with a student in a car. The student seemed to agree with this line of reasoning and did not try and entice me into the car further. Instead we stayed in the one location, instead of travelling between different spaces, which would have involved being in the car.

Leaving the field

> 'Certainly like many romantic encounters, fieldwork evolves, develops, changes and in most cases comes to an end.' (Coffey 1999:105)

The end of my fieldwork coincided with a series of other 'endings' for those that had been involved in the project. For me, it meant closure of one section of my PhD project, before returning to university to make sense of all the data that had been generated. For many of the participants it was the end of their educational careers and time at school. Given that

pupils had left school, it was not a practicable option to provide feedback on the research, which is perhaps a shame, and something that I would try to build in future research projects. On returning to school after the summer holidays and beginning year 11, one girl from the study sent a text message to see how the project was progressing and to tell me she had been made deputy head girl in school.

When transcribing interviews or analysing data, it was often a great source of frustration that even through verbatim transcriptions I felt I was loosing many of the humanistic qualities and individual characteristics of the participants. Gradually interviews and conversations were transformed into pages of text, loosing much of the 'flavour of dialogue and life' that marked such discussions (Crang 2001). As a way of (re)inserting these personal elements back into the research I have used as many direct quotes as possible, displayed participants' own photographs throughout and have created a biography of each teenager involved in the study in an attempt to relay some of their attributes and characteristics.

Transcription and analysis

The majority of the interviews were transcribed in the field, with basic level analysis notes added to transcripts or jotted down in my fieldwork diary to inform or use as topics in later interviews. When I returned to university transcription complete, I embarked upon the process of analysis. An afternoon was spent battling with a word document, trying to compact the multifarious passages of data I was uncovering into a table format. I achieved little but a feeling of frustration and inkling that 'there must be a better way'. The qualitative analysis software Nvivo had recently been installed on the university network, and I began to explore. After a few initial teething problems and the angst of re-saving 73 documents into rich text format, I had found my saviour!

My analysis was based loosely on a grounded theory approach (Glaser and Strauss 1967), being data led and theory informed. One of the main tenets of grounded theory is that coding should emerge from the data rather than from preconceived models, theories, or hypotheses. Whereas it was necessary to undertake a literature review before commencing the fieldwork to inform the initial stages, a balance was achieved between reading enough

to be aware of and understanding the area of study, whilst still remaining open-minded to the perspectives and experiences of participants (Bringer et al 2006). Using Nvivo a systematic line-by-line process of coding was undertaken. Codes (or free nodes in Nvivo) were developed using participant's own words in category names (e.g. scallys, snogging), known as in vivo coding as a method of staying close to the data (Glaser 1978). Later stages of analysis involved using more analytical or theoretically constructed codes (e.g. liminality). In early stages of coding, the text search tool was used to search previously coded documents for instances of a newly developed category. The initial phase of analysis generated approximately 300 free nodes, which I then arranged into hierarchical trees or sets of closely related codes which then formed the structure of my empirical chapters. Some of the free nodes were joined with others, some were deleted if duplications and others were further divided in child and sibling nodes, known as 'coding on' (Beazley and Richards 2000). Go-along transcripts were also analysed in this way. The photographs were naturally embedded in this process because they had been used as prompts throughout the interviews.

This chapter has detailed the actual 'doing' of the research. The use of a mutli-method, multi-sited approach and building relations with participants over time were important elements within the project in allowing me to access teenagers' identities and spatialities. From the onset the emphasis was on enabling teenagers to describe and (re)present their own experiences through both visual and verbal narratives. The following chapters will now go on to present the findings of the research.

Chapter Four

Questionnaire findings

This chapter presents findings from the questionnaire that was distributed amongst all pupils in years 10 and 11 in the research school. The data is presented as a means of 'setting the scene', as a preface to the substantive empirical chapters that follow. As detailed in Chapter Three, the aim of the questionnaire was to gather introductory data from teenagers about their experiences of living in the town. Within the scheme of the whole thesis the questionnaires comprise a relatively small component, however it is nevertheless useful to present the findings before going on to explore some of the issues raised in more detail.

Response rates by gender and school year

	Yrs 10 & 11	**Yr 10**	**Yr 10 males**	**Yr 10 females**	**Yr 11**	**Yr 11 males**	**Yr 11 females**
Total	194	101	42	59	93	38	55
Returns	157[8]	90	35	55	67	29	38
%	80.9	89.1	83.3	93.2	72	76.3	69.1

Figure 4.1 Questionnaire response rates

The findings presented here are based upon the 157 questionnaires that were returned. As detailed in Chapter Three, the questionnaire included questions about three main spaces – youth clubs, the town centre and the local neighbourhood.

Youth clubs and groups

45% respondents were members of a local youth club or organisation that they attended on a weekly basis. Examples included Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme clubs, local youth clubs, football teams, sports clubs and activities such as theatre or dance. A gender

[8] 13 pupils were absent the day the questionnaire was distributed. Also several pupils took the questionnaire home to complete but never returned it.

distinction did occur, with 56% males participating in such activities compared to 38% females. This can be explained in terms of the type of youth groups attended with boys predominantly taking part in localised competitive sports activities such as football, which were not always on offer to girls. Whilst some teenagers identified local youth clubs as regular places they attended, later interviews revealed that many had been excluded from such clubs for being 'too old'. This will be discussed further in Chapter Five.

The town centre

The town centre itself comprises a relatively small commercial area spread across two main pedestrianised streets. As expected the most popular time of the week to visit the town centre was at the weekend, with 60% responds saying they go every weekend. This varied slightly by gender with 54.7% boys going at weekends compared with 64.1% of girls. The section on neighbourhood spaces will show that more males than females use their local areas which could go some way as to explaining why more girls than boys use the town centre. However, the town centre was still an important place for the majority of participants, both boys and girls. Each participant was asked to list three likes and three dislikes about the town centre. Through coding the qualitative data over 30 categories of 'likes' were revealed. The most popular codes related to shops and shopping (38.7%); fast-food places (16.3%); meeting or hanging out with friends (8.3%); and public houses and nightclubs (4.3%). Other examples mentioned by participants included: 'to get out of the house' or 'somewhere to go when bored'; meeting new people; familiar people; the atmosphere and 'randomly walking around'. Specific places were also named such as McDonalds, the swimming baths and the football ground.

Similarly 37 negative codes or 'dislikes' were also developed. Somewhat paradoxically to the most popular 'like' category, the lack of shops was bemoaned by respondents (15.7%). They also found litter and/or dirt a problem (14.2%); that the town centre was too small or had a lack of space (11.5%) and was over-crowded (10.1%). Other dislikes that were mentioned include: nothing for teenagers to do; beggars and Big Issue sellers; gangs that make you feel threatened; drug addicts and drunks; that there were not enough shelters and toilets for teenagers to use; age discrimination by shop assistants and that most places are too expensive.

Within the town centre 51% of respondents had been told off and/or moved on from somewhere, although the figure was higher amongst males (60%) than females (44.6%). The reasons given for being moved on were relatively harmless and tended to depend more upon the perception that the teenagers were up to no good, rather than because of what they were actually doing, although this was not always the case. The main activities that would result in being told to move on were skateboarding; hanging around in large groups; being in shops and cafes without actually buying anything or for just generally hanging around:

> 'Yeah I was harassed by the police for skateboarding' (male, age 15)
>
> 'For being loud and mischievous' (male, age 14)
>
> 'Yeah for just sitting in a café without ordering' (female, age 15)
>
> 'Yes in town we are told to move on because as teenagers we are assumed to be making trouble' (male, age 15)
>
> 'Yes from most places in the town centre because people think we are up to trouble but we are not' (male, age 15)
>
> 'Yes for just waiting around and for being in a big group of people' (female, age 15)

Respondents were also asked if they perceived the town centre to be a safe place. Overall 28.9% said yes and 34.2% said no. However, 36.9% of respondents thought it varied and many mentioned a distinction between day and night time. Results did differ by gender with just 19.1% of females thinking the town centre was a safe place compared with 42.9% of males.

> 'In the day it is kind of safe but at night when you're on your own I think it might be a bit dangerous' (female, age 14)
>
> 'I think the town centre is relatively safe during the day when you are with friends although I don not feel safe at night when I am alone or even sometimes with friends' (female, age 15)

From the questionnaire responses it was revealed that most teenagers felt insecure about other gangs of teenagers during the day and drunken adults leaving public houses and nightclubs at night time. Other events such as football matches were mentioned as things that increase feelings of fear within the town centre:

> 'No it's not really that safe, although it depends when you go. Saturdays are the worst when there are big gangs of people (teenagers) being offensive. Nights are unsafe when adults go out to drink at pubs and clubs' (female, age 15)

> 'Sometimes but you do get other teenagers that want a fight or something, but you're usually alright because it's busy' (male, age 14)

> 'No the town centre is not safe especially at night because there are people causing trouble with others. In the day it could be safe but sometimes it is not safe, especially after football matches when the teams do not get along' (female, age 16)

> 'In the day time it is, however it is useful to always have friends with you because sometimes there are rough people in town. However, at night it is dangerous to be anywhere in town on your own, even in a group by nightclubs because of all the drunks' (male, age 16)

> 'No because there is a lot of violence mainly due to the fact that there are a lot of pubs and nightclubs. The people who generally attend pubs frequently are very aggressive which can cause trouble at night' (female, age 15)

Specific places were also noted as being particularly unsafe and places to avoid:

> 'Sometimes it depends where. It is safe in the morning but not at night in the bus station there are loads of drunk people there' (female, age 14)

As tactics for ensuring safety teenagers said they would often hang around in large groups or with friends and many reported feeling safer in areas where CCTV cameras operated:

> 'It is very safe in the day but not at night if you're on your own, but with a gang of friends it's better' (female, age 16)

> 'Yes it's alright in the day but at night I wouldn't like to be on my own. I'm always in a group so there isn't any trouble and if there is we all stick up for each other anyway' (female, age 14)

> 'Yes it is safe because there are good security cameras' (male, age 14)

> 'I don't feel threatened to watch my back as much as I normally would anywhere else cos I know there are lots of cameras watching the area 24-7' (female, age 15)

Nevertheless, later interviews revealed that some teenagers actively avoided areas with CCTV cameras, feeling them to be an invasion of their privacy.

Neighbourhood spaces

The questionnaire revealed that local neighbourhoods are important places for many teenagers with 35.7% respondents hanging out there everyday. Unsurprisingly, the figure was lower for weekend participation in neighbourhood spaces, just 12.1% as this is when the majority of teenagers venture into spaces in and around the town centre outside of their neighbourhoods. In terms of gender 30% of females compared with 45% males said they used their neighbourhood everyday. Although not a statistically significant finding, within the questionnaire results and later interviews girls felt confined to their houses during weeknights because of homework, whereas this was not a big concern for boys. The most common reasons teenagers gave for not hanging around their neighbourhoods were: because of intimidating gangs of other teenagers; not having friend's living close by; homework constraints; problems with drug users; a lack of facilities for teenagers and their preference for other in-door alternatives such as computers:

> 'Because I don't like the people who live around the area I'd prefer to stay in and talk to my friend on MSN or I'll have lots of homework' (female, age 15)
>
> 'None of my good friends live by me and I am too busy with school work and going other places. My neighbourhood is not safe and there is nothing to do' (female, age 16)
>
> 'It's boring and quiet so I prefer to stay in the house with friends or at my friend's house' (male, age 15)
>
> 'There's not much facilities for teenagers' (male, age 14)
>
> 'Because there is nothing to do in my village and there is just loads of scallies hanging around being intimidating and wrecking the skatepark' (female, age 15)
>
> 'Because it's full of drugs and violence' (male, age 15)
>
> 'Because there's lots of gangs and drug dealers hang around my street' (male, age 16)
>
> 'There is nowhere really to spend much time. the park at the end of the road is vandalised and you are not allowed on the school playing fields at the back of my house' (female, age 15)

42.2% of teenagers had been told off or moved on within their local neighbourhoods. Like in the town centre it was often for relatively minor transgressions, but nonetheless annoying

to adults, such as being loud or playing football. Like in the town centre, when asked to move on teenagers often do but then return later. However, as the following chapters will demonstrates, teenagers are often far more self-conscious in their local neighbourhood, especially small villages where they tend to be known by other residents. This is compared with the relative anonymity they are afforded in the town centre. The most common reasons teenagers gave for being told off or moved on in their neighbourhoods were:

> 'Because we kicked a ball against someone's house' (male, age 14)
>
> 'For playing football and swearing' (male, age 15)
>
> 'Yeah I was sitting on a wall and someone asked my friends and I to be quieter so we went for a walk (female, age 15)

Other spaces

On the questionnaires teenagers were asked to list any other spaces in which they spent their free time. Common answers included friend's houses where they watch TV and DVDs or listen to music; the cinema; the nearby city and some females spent the majority of their free time volunteering at a local animal charity.

Identity clusters

Teenagers were asked if they belonged to a particular identity group, gang or 'subculture'. The following table shows the number of teenagers that identified themselves as belonging to a group, although it is important to note that several identified themselves as 'just normal'. From the figures, it is clear that boys more so than girls identify with particular groupings, whereas the majority of girls define themselves as 'normal'. More boys than girls identified themselves as basketballers, skateboarders or as belonging to the football hooligan group.

Group	Male	Female	Total
Scally	15	11	26
Goth	6	7	13
Basketballers	6	1	7
Skateboarders	7	1	8
Football hooligan group	3	0	3
Indie Rocker	1	0	1
'Normal'	15	42	57
Neighbourhood group	4	5	9
Gang no name	8	6	14
Gay	1	0	1
Totals	**66**	**73**	**139**

Figure 4.2 Identity groupings

In Chapter Six, the identity practices of named identity groupings and neighbourhood groupings will be explored in more detail, in particular in relation to their stylistic preferences, group formations and spatial associations. An insight into the experiences of teenagers defining themselves as 'normal' are weaved through the other chapters. Below are some of the answers provided by those teenagers who chose to identify themselves as 'normal', giving reasons for their decision:

> 'I'm an individual' (female, age 14)
>
> 'No as they look stupid and they're a waste of your life' (male, age 15)
>
> 'No I'm me and I don't follow other people' (female, age 15)

Importance of outdoor spaces

Over 60% of respondents stated that outdoor spaces within their local neighbourhoods or the town centre were important to them. Popular reasons included socialising and as something to do:

'Very important because it keeps me busy and I love having somewhere to hang out' (female, age 15)

'Very, its somewhere where I can go to get away and have fun' (female, age 15)

'I'm always going to town, to shop or go to the cinema, eat or go to my mates house, without town I wouldn't have a social life' (female, age 16)

'10/10 it's where everyone meets and hangs out' (male, age 14)

'The town centre is a very important place for me to go because it is enjoyable and it stops me from being bored. Also it helps me interact with other people' (male, age 16)

'Very important because I do not like to stay indoors and I like to meet new people and you only do this by going out' (female, age 14)

'It's very important because it's easy to get to so if I need anything I can be independent' (female, age 15)

'We enjoy spending time in our community, so it is very important to us' (female, age 16)

For just under 40% however, such spaces were not that important:

'Not very I wish there was more to do that wouldn't be too expensive e.g. bowling, better swimming' (female, age 15)

'Not very good because there is nothing for teenagers to do' (female, age 14)

'Not that important there's not that much around to do' (male, age 15)

'It is not important because nothing to do' (male, age 16)

'Not very, because I have little time to go out, except weekends there is little to do anyway' (female, age 16)

Provision for teenagers in the town

Respondents were asked if they thought enough was provided for teenagers in the town. To this 16.7% thought there was compared with 83.3% who thought the town lacked facilities for their age group:

'They don't give us any Gothic shops or not that much clubs' (female, age 15)

> 'We would like more places for us to sit and hang around' (female, age 14)

> 'More places to meet, more things to do. The only interesting thing is the cinema. There should be bowling alleys, sport centres, more skateparks, all my friends get told to stop skating but they have nowhere to skate' (female, age 15)

> 'They give us no places to go and then they complain about us hanging around somewhere but if they gave us somewhere we where could hang around' (male, age 15)

The questionnaire focussed mainly upon the commercial spaces within the town centre, however during later stages of the research, when teenagers were given disposable cameras few actually photographed these spaces. When prompted, it became clear that the majority of teenagers only used the town centre for practical things like shopping or eating at fast food restaurants. The remainder of their time was spent in alternative spaces on the outskirts of the town centre: The Park; 'under the flyover'; Wickes car park; Mirror Hill and a series of other alleyways, car parks and backstreets. It is these other spaces, which largely remained 'hidden' within the questionnaire that the following chapters seek to interrogate.

As detailed in Chapter Three, approximately 50 teenagers participated in the more in-depth stages of the research involving friendship group interviews, photo-feedback interviews and teenager filmed go-alongs. Before exploring the identity and spatial experiences of these individuals it is useful to learn something about them. Therefore, the following table summaries a brief biography for each participant whose narratives have been incorporated into the following chapters. The table includes information about their school year, the area where they live, the group they identified themselves as belonging to, their friendship circle and the main spaces and places they use to hang around.

Teenage biographies

No	Name	M/F	YR	Lives	Identity	Friends	Spaces
1	Alannah	F	10	Rural village	Normal	Lizzy and Alannah	The Br
2	Alex	M	11	Council estate	Scally, Frontline	Ali	Older f
3	Ali	M	11	Council estate	Frontline	Alex	Footba
4	Amber	F	11	Semi-rural village	Scally	Charlotte	Town c neighb
5	Andy	M	11	Terraced housing area near to town centre	Skateboarder	Scott, Declan, Leo and Paul	Mirror a netw spots
6	Ashley	M	10	Rural village	Scally	Lewis and Ryan	Local r
7	Becca	F	11	Semi-rural village	Scally	Amber and Claire	Local r
8	Ben	M	10	Middle class housing estate	Indie Rocker	Hayley and Sarah	Nearby band p
9	Bethan	F	10	Terraced housing area near to town centre	Normal	Matilda and Ceri	The Pa
10	Ceri	F	10	Village	Normal	Matilda and Bethan	The Pa
11	Charlotte	F	10	Middle class housing estate near to the school	Scally	Jess and Gemma	Town c
12	Clare	F	11	Village	Scally	Amber and Becca	Local r centre
13	Danielle	F	10	Terraced house near to the school	Normal	Zara and Lindsey but has other friends outside of school	The Pa
14	David	M	11	Council estate	Scally/Frontline	People in school not involved in the	Footba houses

						study, older people outside of school	
15	Declan	M	11	Middle class housing estate near school	Skateboarder	Leo, Andy, Paul, Scott	Skateboarding spots
16	Dylan	M	10	Council estate	Goth	Other year 10 boys	Town centre, Goth events like Unchained, Local neighbourhood
17	Emma	F	10	Rural village	Normal	Lizzy and Alannah	The Bridge
18	Gemma	F	10	Semi-rural village	Scally	Gemma hangs around with her twin sister Jess, they are also friends with Charlotte	Town centre
19	Hayley	F	11	Middle class housing estate near to the school	Normal	Helen, Molly and Sarah	Nearby city
20	Helen	F	11	Village	Goth	Sarah, Hayley and Molly	Unchained and nearby city
21	Jade	F	10	Council estate	Scally	Josh and Jordan in school and other girls not involved in the study. Is the girl friend of year 11 boy Ali	Town centre on a Saturday
22	Jamie	M	10	Semi-rural village	Scally	Jordan, Josh and Jade in school, other friends in local neighbourhood	Local neighbourhood, the abandoned house, town centre on a Saturday
23	Jess	F	10	Semi rural village	Scally	Jess hangs round with twin sister Gemma and	Town centre

						another school friend Charlotte	
24	Jo	F	10	Council estate	Scally	Jess, Gemma and Charlotte	Wickes car park, local neighbourhood
25	Jordan	M	10	Council estate	Scally	Josh and Alex in school, older people outside of school	Older friend's houses and cars
26	Joseph	M	11	Terraced housing area near to town centre	Scally/Frontline	Year 11 boys	Town centre
27	Josh	M	10	Semi-rural village	Scally	Hangs around with Jamie in school but has other friends in his local neighbourhood	Local neighbourhood
28	Laura	F	11	Village	Goth	Natalie who came to an interview with her and other people from another school	The Park
29	Leah	F	11	Council estate	Normal/scally	Older friends outside of school	Wickes car park
30	Leo	M	11	Terraced housing area near to town centre	Skateboarder hybrid	Scott, Andy, Declan and Paul	Mirror Hill, under the flyover and a network of other skateboarding spots
31	Lewis	M	10	Semi-rural village	Scally	Ryan	Outside McDonalds on a Saturday
32	Lindsey	F	10	Village	Normal	Zara and Danielle in school	Local neighbourhood, although feels constrained because of other teenagers
33	Liz	F	10	Village	Scally	Other year 10 girls	Town centre, local neighbourhood

34	Lizzy	F	10	Rural village	Normal	Emma and Alannah	The Bridge
35	Mark	M	10	Rural village	Basketballer	Tom, Samir	The Park, his local neighbourhood
36	Matilda	F	10	Terraced housing area near to town centre	Normal African	Bethan and Ceri	The Park
37	Mickey	M	11	Village	Normal	Oli and some girls from another school	Alleyways, car parks, marginal places on the outskirts of town
38	Molly	F	11	Village	Goth	Sarah, Hayley and Helen	Unchained and nearby city
39	Natalie	F	11	Village	Normal	Laura (participated in Laura's interview)	The Park
40	Oli	M	11	Village	Normal / gay	Mickey and some girls from another school	Alleyways, car parks, marginal places on the outskirts of town
41	Pablo	M	10	Council estate	Basketballer Portuguese	Other year 10 boys	The Park, basketball courts
42	Paul	M	11	Council estate	Normal	Scott, Andy, Declan and Leo	Mirror Hill, under the flyover and a network of other skateboarding spots
43	Rachel	F	10	Middle class housing estate near to the school	Goth	Susan and some boys from another school	Car parks, abandoned spaces – likes playing with trolleys
44	Ryan	M	10	Rural village	Scally	Lewis	Outside McDonalds on a Saturday, local neighbourhood
45	Samir	M	10	Middle class housing estate near to the school	Basketballer African	Mark, Tom	The Park, his local neighbourhood
46	Sarah	F	11	Terraced housing area	Normal	Helen, Molly,	Town centre, nearby city

				near to town centre		Hayley	
47	Scott	M	11	Terraced housing area near to town centre	Skateboarder	Andy, Declan, Leo and Paul	Mirror Hill, under the flyover and a network of other skateboarding spots
48	Sophie	F	11	Council estate	Scally [although changes, at the moment likes to hang around with boy racers]	Tends to have older friends outside of school, not really in school that much but when she is hangs around with Molly, Helen and Hayley	Wickes car park
49	Susan	F	10	Middle class housing estate on the other side of town	Goth	Rachel, Tasha and some boys from another school	Car parks, abandoned spaces – likes playing with trolleys
50	TJ	M	11	Council estate	Hip Hop basketballer Philipino	Largely friends from his neighbourhood and other people outside of school	The Park, under the flyover, back of the garages, likes playing basketball and graffiting, often gets into trouble for wearing a hooded top
51	Tom	M	10	Rural village	Basketballer	Samir, Mark	The Park, his local neighbourhood
52	Zoe	F	10	Rural village	Normal	Lindsey and Danielle in school	Local neighbourhood, town centre early on a Saturday morning before other teenage groups are around

Chapter Five

'You're young you can't do this, you're old you should know better': teenagers' experience in relation to age

This chapter is about teenage identities as they relate to age. Age based biographies are made meaningful through the use of classificatory concepts such as 'child', 'youth' and 'adult'. Although formal initiation rites to mark movement between categories may be institutionally absent within contemporary societies (as in Chapter Two), attempts are still made to create boundaries between childhood, youth and adulthood, as a way of containing and controlling teenagers as a group apart from young children and adults (James 1986; Valentine 1996a; 1996b; Sibley 1995a). The purpose of this chapter is to explore teenagers' experience of these boundaries of exclusion and the ways in which teenagers go about negotiating, transgressing an disrupting boundaries as part of their identity and spatial practices. In addition, the chapter looks at the symbolic boundary crossing or rite of passage relating to leaving school and the formal and informal rituals associated with this transition.

Boundaries of exclusion/confusion

Numerical age exists as a definitional category circumscribing stages of the life course. Teenagers involved in the study frequently lamented how they found themselves excluded by law or other rulings from social spaces because they were either numerically 'under' or 'over' age. As 14, 15 and 16 year olds they were 'too young' to participate in adult spaces, such as public houses and nightclubs that have minimum age requirements. In contrast however, several teenagers had been told they were 'too old' to inhabit other spaces such as youth clubs and playgrounds. As will be explored further in Chapter Seven, the playground equipment in The Park, an area popular with teenagers, was only to be used by those 'under the age of 14' according to the park warden. These various boundary restrictions created a sense of ambiguity for teenagers, positioning them within a paradoxical space resonant with

Turner's concept of 'betwixt and between'. As the following interview extracts demonstrate:

> 'You get 'you're young you can't do this'. But then it's like 'you're old you should know better' (Gemma, age 15)

> 'Sometimes like adults, because you are young they don't like respect you. They don't think that you can do stuff, or make decisions for yourself. Because when you are 16 you are sort of classed as an adult aren't you. But they don't respect you as much as if you're an adult. Like they say that you're under age and all that, they say 'oh you're too young to do this or that' ... They think they can choose what you want to do, and what you should do and that, but it's like your life you know' (Danielle, age 16)

Gemma is talking about the contradictory discourses teachers and parents often locate her within. On the one hand, some seek to curtail aspects of her activities classifying her as too young, whereas on the other hand, at times Gemma is expected to perform an 'older' role. Danielle takes this point further by actually referring to a numerical age which she feels marks the boundary between childhood and adulthood, although she is sceptical as to whether being 16 actually confers adult status. For her, the boundaries set by adults are about issues of control in deciding what she can and should do. Danielle at the age of 16, is herself wanting more independence, but feels confined by others around her attempting to dictate her activities.

These feelings of ambiguity become manifest in the spatialities of teenagers. Given the spatial exclusions mentioned above, teenagers are left with few other options than hanging around in outdoor spaces. Whilst many said they enjoyed indoor leisure activities such as going to the cinema or bowling, they often found them too expensive to participate on a regular basis. As Helen and Molly comment:

> M: Like the cinema has gone up as well hasn't it? It's well expensive. That's bad that is
> H: It's a rip off isn't it? Yeah like sometimes we can't go to the pictures cos it costs like a fiver
> M: It used to be £3.50 but now it's £5.20 and it's like what?!!
> H: It's a fiver for under 15s isn't it?
> M: I know it's well bad

> H: But sometimes that's the reason we just don't go to the cinema. We just have to like hang around (Helen and Molly, age 15)

Helen and Molly's experiences were not uncommon amongst other teenagers in the study. As an alternative, the girls and their group of friends would often spend Saturday afternoons in the nearby city. However, again here, their lack of money was often a problem in defining where the girls could go. As they explain:

> H: Yeah it was really hot so we'd walked along the river, and then we went back into the shopping centre and we went to Starbucks, and we sat there but again none of us bought anything because we were all skint so we got chucked out. All we wanted to do was sit down but they wouldn't let us
> M: It's horrible, everywhere we go it's annoying
> H: They won't let us ... they were like someone is going to have to buy a drink, so Phil bought a drink and they were like the rest of you are still being kicked out. Phil stayed because he had the drink but it didn't count for all of us (Helen and Molly, age 15)

Despite their tactical manoeuvre, getting their friend Phil to buy a drink, this did not secure a place for the rest of the group. In many ways their lack of money circumscribed many of the activities and places the girls could and could not access. Helen and Molly were not alone in being excluded from spaces, especially commercial spaces. Throughout the course of the interviews, several teenagers recalled occasions when they had either been moved on or received stares and glares because they 'looked young':

> 'If you go into a shop, everyone, the people just stare and follow you around the shop' (Josh, age 14)

> 'It is like if you walk into a shop and the security guards automatically target you because you are young.' (Rachel, age 15)

> 'People think oh because we're young people, people think we could do something wrong. Cos like when you go shopping in a group, they always think you're gonna take something. Or when you hang out maybe near a shop, you're outside a shop but they always think, I dunno or sometimes I just feel people think you're gonna do something wrong to the shop or break their windows or whatever ... sometimes people just look at you really weirdly like, what are you doing? It kind of feels bad' (Matilda, age 14)

These findings are confirmed by other studies which reveal that teenagers become targeted by increased surveillance and security guards in shopping centres, particularly because they are perceived not to have the same spending power as adults and are therefore transgressing the normative values of the spaces (Shields 1992b; Hil and Bessant 1999; Matthews et al 2000). Teenagers in commercial settings are therefore out of place. This is particularly exacerbated if they hang around in large groups. Although somewhat paradoxically, the previous chapter highlighted that for many teenagers congregating in numbers is an important tactic in order to feel safe in certain areas, large groups are perceived to be unruly by adults and even a danger to others. For instance, Mark, Tom and Samir talk about their experiences when they are in the town centre with their friends. Mark, in particular feels as a teenager he is stereotyped as a trouble maker confirming the manifestation of 'adultist' spatial discourses, discussed in Chapter One, which locate teenagers as unruly and up to no good:

> M: People don't like it ... usually older people just walking around town doing their shopping, they just don't like big gangs of people walking around
> T: Even if you're not doing anything bad. If you're just walking around
> M: It makes them feel vulnerable
> S: They think you're causing trouble. So you feel that other people are like judging you and thinking bad of you even if you're just doing nothing
> M: Because they stereotype us teenagers as trouble makers
> (Mark, Tom and Samir, age 16)

These feelings were echoed by another participant Sophie, who then sought to criticise such discourses that effectively homogenise all teenagers as trouble makers:

> 'Just cos some people do it doesn't mean we're all the same. Just cos we're the same age doesn't mean we're all like that' (Sophie, age 16)

Moreover, another participant Jess feels that it is not just teenagers who are responsible for causing trouble but older generations are also guilty, especially in their behaviour towards teenagers. As she explains:

> 'I hate it when old people say young people are ignorant. Because when you go shopping old people just barge into you with their trolleys, it well does my head in and they're saying you're ignorant' (Jess, age 15).

In addition to these exclusions, two teenagers in particular felt they often incurred trouble from adults on the basis of their clothing. As Susan comments, her stylistic appearance marks her out as a target because it differs from adult dress codes:

> 'People don't trust us just because like we dress differently to how they do and stuff.' (Susan, age 15)

Susan identifies herself as a 'Goth' embodied through her distinctive style of dress, mainly black clothing and heavy make-up, which often attracts attention. As will be explored further in Chapter Six, Susan and her group of friends base their hanging out practices in out of the way, marginal spaces on the outskirts of the town centre. They do this in order to avoid conflicts and collisions with other teenagers and also adults. Paradoxically, however, as Susan indicates when talking about a photograph of one of the spaces they go to, they still find they get targeted:

> S: Yeah (laughs). That's the other car park where we go, which is like the other side of the road
> K: And do you like it that there aren't any people around here?
> S: Yeah yeah, but if people come down here they think we're doing something dodgy. Cos it's quiet. You can't win really. If you're in a busy place you get followed in case you mug someone. If you're in a quiet place they think you're doing something wrong. But there you go (Susan, age 15)

A similar experience related to clothing was talked about by TJ, who explains that he feels particularly targeted when he is wearing his hooded top. At the time of carrying out the research, hooded tops were an especially 'hot topic' within the media as Bluewater shopping centre in Kent had taken the lead in banning people from wearing hooded tops (Barkham 2005). During his photo-feedback interview, when talking about one space he and his friends use to hang around in, TJ discusses how he feels discriminated against when wearing his hoodie:

> T: It's like where we hang out really. We play street football there, and we graffiti a bit. Cos no one lives in those flats no more they're all like isolated.
> K: Do you ever get caught or told off by anyone?
> T: No, no one is there. There was once when the police came and I got my hood up and I was the only one they talked to for some reason, cos I got me hood up. And they said 'Aw it's not right putting your hood up when the police is coming'

K: Do you feel you get targeted when you wear your hoodie then?
T: Yeah, yeah you get targeted loads more. Especially when I got me hood it's more ... more than normally, without the hood. I dunno it's just this dress code innit for some reason they target you more

Photograph 5.1 Garages for street football – Photographer: TJ

What is interesting is that although they talk about these collisions, Susan and TJ both continue to wear their various 'teenage uniforms', viewing them as important aspects of their social and cultural identities. This mirrors James (1986) study of teenagers in Northern England, who suggests that bodily styles are adopted by teenagers as a response to their ambiguity and exclusions. For James, through adopting these alternative dress codes, teenagers are able to;

> 'erect and maintain their own group boundaries and establish themselves a relatively fixed social position and identity. Set aside from society, they set themselves further apart through using their bodies as a means of symbolic expression' (1986: 156).

In this way, the liminal and ambiguous experience of being a teenager becomes constructed by teenagers themselves. Chapter Six will demonstrate more fully the multifarious social

and cultural identities that teenagers construct for themselves and with others. However, such processes of identity formation are not necessarily always about 'setting themselves aside' from the rest of society, as James (1986) indicates. Instead, far from distancing themselves, as a reaction to their exclusions, some teenagers attempt to actively engage in adult spaces and with adult icons. This is demonstrated in the next section, with specific reference to the adult (defined) space of the public house.

Boundary crossings: entering the pub

According to van Gennep, a rite of passage involves the actually crossing of a spatial boundary or threshold. Gaining access into the adult space of the public house can be conceptualised as such a passage for teenagers. This passage does not confer a permanent change in identity, as in van Gennep's conceptualisation, but instead can be thought of as a temporary or 'quasi rites of passage' (Northcote 2006). However, this does not belittle the importance of the experience for teenagers in (re)defining, even if only temporarily their identity. The experience of boundary crossing is summarised by Sibley (1995a), as a potentially dangerous, yet also exhilarating experience:

> 'Crossing boundaries from a familiar place to an alien one which is under the control of somebody else can provide anxious moments; in some circumstances it could be fatal or it might be an exhilarating experience' (1995: 32)

This is particularly manifest in teenagers' experiences of entering a public house where the passage is not straightforward and often relies on a series of tactics or strategies. Most importantly, in order to cross the threshold teenagers must ensure they enact an 'older' performance. To achieve this, many rely on bodily features such as hair growth and physical size, so as to create the impression that they are older than they actually are. As the following interview extracts demonstrate:

> 'It's alright for me, I can get served in pubs. When I let me sidies grow anyway' (Lewis, age 15)

> 'Sometimes the bouncers are really strict, but if they ID me I just say look [lifts up his t-shirt to reveal a hairy stomach]. How many 15 year olds do you know with a stomach as hairy as that?!' (Alex, age 15)

> 'But it was quite good because I'm tall so they all think I'm 18, so I can get into the nightclub' (Helen, age 15)

> 'We went to the pub once. Gaz got served because he's like 6 foot. It was funny because John is 6 foot 2. It is quite handy having tall friends' (Molly, age 15).

In contrast, for teenagers without such physical bodily features creating this impression is more problematic, leading some to feel this boundary crossing is out of their reach:

> 'I want to go to pubs but I probably wouldn't get in. I'm a bit small'
> (Rachel, age 15)

> Aw in pubs?! Do I look like I could get served? I only look about 12'
> (Ryan, age 15).

Many teenagers spoke about the fear of being rejected, of not being able to perform an old enough role and the resultant shame or social stigma. For instance, Ashley felt that it was almost better not to attempt to get served, rather than to be rejected:

> 'I haven't tried cos I don't want to ... because, I dunno, because I don't want to get rejected. Cos you like a right twat, you just don't want to get rejected. Cos if I did, I'd look right stupid.' (Ashley, age 15)

In the absence of physical features, other stylistic elements could be appropriated to create an older appearance such as wearing make-up or dressing in older, 'going out' clothes, as Laura and Natalie explain below. In conjunction with these stylistic markers, the girls talk about the importance of knowledge in relation to the establishments that have a reputation for letting in underage teenagers. Similar to Cahill's (2000) concept of 'street literacy', knowledge about which places are easier to get in to is derived from personal experience of successes and failures in the past, and through urban myths generated amongst teenagers.

> K: So have you tried to get into pubs before?
> L: Yeah, I have
> N: I've actually got into one
> L: I got into three and got chucked out of one
> K: So, what types of things do you do to try and get in?

> L: We slap a load of make-up on to try and get in ... yeah, and there's certain places that you know you can get into, certain pubs, there's three in town (Laura and Natalie, age 16)

The feeling of excitement and exhilaration talked about by Sibley (1995) when crossing a threshold is confirmed by Scott, who demonstrates the thrill of being served at the public house. For him, the transgressive nature of his activities as a underage drinker in an adult regulated space are what make it particularly exciting, more so than if he was actually within the legal age boundaries for drinking alcohol:

> 'It's alright though being 16 cos some of us do get into pubs and that. You know it's alright when you get to the bar and you get served and you think aw that was great that was. I suppose it will be different when you're 18 though, just normal, like cos you're able to do it anyway, bit of an anti-climax' (Scott age 16)

Once the boundary or threshold has been crossed and a teenager has entered the public house or nightclub, they have temporarily achieved 'adult' status. However, this new identity is still fragile and is subject to disruption at any time through being asked to leave, as the following conversations reveal:

> 'Yeah I got chucked out of the pub. Just for being there, under-age drinking in the corner, it's happened a few times.' (David, age 15)

> 'Gaz was about to get served by the barmaid but then the manager came down and he was like 'are you 18?', and he was like 'where is your ID?'. Gaz told him he hadn't got any with him so we all had to go outside, it was really annoying.' (Molly age 15)

As a means of maintaining this identity and the space in the public house, Helen demonstrates the tactics she and her group of friends adopt to ensure they are not removed:

> 'We went to the pub once, because we were bored so we were just like what shall we do? Shall we try and get in the pub? Ok. Because the lads had been before after a gig and got drunk there, so they were like okay lets go and just have one. So me and Lou went and found a table and sat down, and there were already glasses on the table so it looked like we had already been old enough to drink and get served' (Helen, age 15)

Helen previously talked about how her friend Gaz looks tall enough to get served. On their visit to the public house therefore, he was sent to the bar to buy drinks, whilst she and another friend began their tactical inhabitation of a table with abandoned drinks glasses already on it. Helen felt that by associating herself with these signs or symbols of the adult world, she would be able to disguise the fact that she is under age. Whereas other adults would not normally choose to sit at a table with empty glasses, Helen was able to recycle the glasses as part of a tactical performance. To her, the glasses acted as an 'age marker' signalling that they were old enough to occupy the space.

The above examples demonstrate that definitional boundaries are therefore not static, but instead often transgressed, subverted or disrupted by some teenagers as a way of creating an alternative 'older' identity. However, boundaries are not only created by adults, teenagers are also active in creating boundaries between themselves and others, as the following interview with Lewis demonstrates. We already know that Lewis can get served in pubs because of his facial hair or 'sidies'. When embarking on a visit to the pub with his friends however, it is Lewis himself who actually makes the judgement about who will be able to cross the boundary into the adult space:

> L: It's alright for me, I can get served in pubs. When I let me sidies grow anyway
> K: Do you go to the pub quite often then?
> L: Sometimes, yeah
> K: How long have you been going for?
> L: For about two years now. I went with me Dad for the first year, and then after that I was alright on me own. Sometimes you get asked for ID, but it's generally alright.
> K: Do you still drink in outdoor places, outside of the pub?
> L: Yeah, cos not everyone I'm with can get served so there's no point going to the pub. Only the people I do know can get served I'll go to the pub with ... But the rest of um are like 14, and they look it, and they dress like it and all in tracksuit bottoms. (Lewis, age 15)

Despite having being able to get served in public houses for some time now, this has not provided a permanent change in identity for Lewis. Instead his occupation of a public house is still fragile and open to disruption at any time – through being asked for proof of age identification, or even being 'let down' by some of his peers who do not as yet look as old as Lewis. Once again, the issue of clothing becomes apparent, as Lewis describes, his friends who wear tracksuits are perceived to be more 'child-like' than others who dress up.

As a coping tactic, Lewis and his group of friends engage in drinking alcohol in outdoor places, rather than in public houses. In this way, I would suggest they are 'flirting' at the boundaries of adulthood, through consuming adult icons such as alcohol but in teenager created spaces outdoors.

Multiple experiences of age

This section focuses on the diffuse experiences of several young teenagers and their feelings in relation to their age. The examples demonstrate that the teenage space of betweeness does not comprise a static space, instead teenagers actively construct this space for themselves. It will be seen that the space is a fluid space with teenagers oscillating between childhood, youth and adulthood, in terms of 'growing up and moving on', engaging in 'typical teenager' activities and through retaining links with childhood.

Jordan feels he has grown out of many of the activities he used to do when he was younger, such as going to the cinema, hanging out in the town centre or going swimming, berating them as 'boring'. Instead he is looking for new activities and forms of entertainment, that distance him from the 'teenage' activities he has previously participated in. Through this process of distancing, Jordan is seeking to engage with 'older', more exciting activities. In order to achieve this, Jordan now spends his free time with older friends, many of whom have their own cars. Although he is not himself old enough to drive, being in the car with these friends confers an older identity.

> 'It's alright for younger ones, cos they like go to town, to the pictures and that, but after a while it gets boring. I'm bored of all them places now. Pictures, swimming, town every Saturday. It just gets boring after a while. I just drive round in cars now with me mates, that's much better than all that kiddie stuff' (Jordan, age 15)

Similarly, Alex found that hanging around on the streets with his friends was something he no longer wanted to do after school. Alex berated the activity as 'kiddyish', almost demeaning, in particular having to get someone else to buy alcohol for him and his friends so they could sit behind the local supermarket, only to be moved on by the police. Now Alex had started to hang around with older friends who have their own flats or bedsits, provided a place away from parental rules at home and fears about the police on the street.

A: Well apparently now drinking on the streets you get fined. But saying that I don't really drink on the streets now so
K: Did you used to?
A: Yeah, in parks, supermarkets, schools
K: Why is it that you've stopped?
A: It's kiddyish
K: How do you mean?
A: You go through a little phase don't you. And I've been through it now. So now I go to pubs or round to friends' houses and have a drink with them (Alex, age 15)

Through their activities and engagement with older friends, both Jordan and Alex are seeking to distance themselves from their previous childhood or teenage experiences. In contrast however, several other teenagers were actually quite satisfied with their age and teenage identity. This became apparent during their interviews when they were asked about why they hang out on the street:

'Cos I like it. I like being out on the street it's good. I'd rather be out on the streets, cos I can go round and get served in pubs and that but I'd rather be out with my mates on the street than go round the pubs in town. Cos I want to enjoy my teenage life. I don't want to be going to pubs yet. I want to leave it for a bit. I want to be on the streets having a drink cos that's the *typical teenage thing* at the moment' (Mickey, age 16)

K: So do you prefer going and drinking in parks and stuff then?
C: It's more fun
A: I dunno though, at the end of the day we're only kids so we don't want to be going around town in pubs and that. So we might as well hang around in parks and have a laugh and drink wherever (Amber and Charlotte, age 16)

For Mickey and his friend Oli, underage drinking in 'secret' outdoor spaces is an important Saturday night activity. The actual nature of the spaces they use will be explored more fully in Chapter Seven. Both boys felt they did not want to start going to pubs yet and instead preferred consuming alcohol on the streets. This was both a tactical decision, the boys admitted they did not feel brave enough to try and cross the threshold into a pub, but also because alcohol enlivened their experiences of hanging out, as will be explored further in Chapter Seven. However, for Oli and Mickey, obtaining alcohol could sometimes be problematic and they had to rely on older strangers. As Oli describes:

> K: Who is it that you ask to get you alcohol for you?
> O: A lot of the time its foreign people, cos there's a lot of foreign people in this area so ... They're the people most likely to say yes. I don't know why they do, they just do
> K: Does anybody ever say no?
> O: Oh yeah loads of people, they're usually not the foreign people. Probably cos they know that we shouldn't be drinking which is fair enough, I would probably say no if somebody asked me (laughs). But there are certain people you just know not to ask, you just know they will say no. it's just like the older, much older looking people, like the Mums and Dads looking people, or other young people (Oli, age 16).

The same preference for drinking on the street as a 'teenage activity' was echoed by Amber and Charlotte. Interestingly these girls talk about the spatial associations of adults to pubs and teenagers to parks and other open spaces. For these girls, drinking on the street offered more freedoms than the worries of getting served in pubs. Also, like Lewis who we encountered earlier, it provided a way of socialising with other younger looking friends who could not get served. In these examples 'typical teenage activities' have been associated with drinking alcohol. However, this was not an activity common to all teenagers involved in the study, instead the variety of teenage experiences are demonstrated throughout the empirical chapters. At times, as will be shown in Chapter Seven, teenagers who chose not to drink alcohol often enact their own 'moral geography' towards other teenagers who encroach on their spaces with alcohol.

In contrast to those teenagers traversing and transgressing boundaries to access adult related icons and identities, two other teenagers Lindsey and Zoe, still want to retain their links with childhood. Through their interview, the girls talked about how they felt pressured to perform an older teenage role, in particular when in school or with their peers. Both girls explained that they had preferred it better when they were younger, when it had not seemed as important to act in a certain way, and they felt they had fewer worries and responsibilities.

> K: Do you like being this age?
> L: No there's too much coursework (laughs)
> Z: No, I much preferred being like 10 years old. It was much more fun when you're 10. No worries or anything ... and it doesn't matter if you look stupid or anything, you just carry on and it like 'oh yeah it doesn't matter'. Those were the best years of my life being 10 and 11 for me.

L: Yeah you have more worries now don't you? Like you've gotta get your homework in, you've got to do your class work, you've got to write neat, you gotta do everything
Z: And you have to try and look better, you know try not to look stupid or act stupid you know. You can't act like yourself ... but it's like when you're a little kiddie it's like 'yey we're going to the park, yey'. It was dead good fun, but now it's just ...
L: ... yeah everyone's sitting there like this [slouches and puts a glum look on her face] with their arms crossed, just talking ... I'd rather go with me Dad cos we can just like mess around. But like with your friends you feel like you have to act mature and do what they do
Z: Yeah I'd much rather be a kid than an adult
L: Yeah it's much more fun isn't it (Lindsey and Zoe, age 14)

Goffman's concept of impression management (1959) would not be out of place in explaining many of the performances teenagers enact as part of their identities, especially in relation to age. Goffman uses the metaphor of the theatre to describe the social processes through which 'actors' enact different performances in front of different audiences[9]. An essential part of this concept relies on performing in front of different audiences, in other words: 'those before whom one plays one of his [sic] parts won't be the same individuals before whom he (sic) plays a different part in another setting' (Goffman 1959: 57). The idea of different audiences was particularly evident in Zoe and Lindsey's account. Taking their example of the park, they preferred either going with each other, or in Lindsey's case just with her Dad. With this specific audience, or fellow actors, they felt more at ease and able to perform a more childlike identity, running around and having fun. In contrast, when the audience was their wider group of friends they felt more constrained in their 'impression management', having to control their instincts and instead mirror their friends' postures and solemn looks, performing an older role. Chapter Seven will explore the spaces that Zoe likes to go to with her friend Tom and sister Ruth that she feels she can be more 'childish' in, in particular through making up games to play.

Chapter Two emphasised how the passage through the life course can no longer be viewed as a straightforward linear progression. This chapter has sought to demonstrate this point, through exploring the subjective experiences of teenagers who occupy the liminal or borderland space between childhood, youth and adulthood. The chapter has explored the diffuse experiences of teenagers, especially with regard to the identities and activities that

[9] Goffman (1959) through his use of the theatre metaphor refers to an 'audience' as detached from the individual. However, I would suggest that the audience can also include fellow actors.

enact for themselves. It has shown that the teenage years, rather than being static, are instead characterised by a fluidity and oscillation between the worlds of childhood, youth and adulthood. While some are firmly embedded as a teenager participating in 'typical teenager' activities, others congregate closer to the boundaries of childhood, wanting to disassociate themselves from the stresses and pressures of growing up. Similarly other teenagers are flirting or transgressing boundaries associated with adulthood, engaging with adult icons and adult spaces. However these positions are not necessarily fixed and vary between different spatial, temporal and social circumstances. In this way, the teenage space of betweeness can be metaphorically envisioned as a revolving door, enabling individuals to access a whole range of age related identities.

Leaving school

The previous sections have concentrated on the temporary, ephemeral or 'quasi' boundary crossing experiences of teenagers, particularly the ways in which they engage with adult, child or 'typical teenage' spaces of experience. The chapter now moves on to explore the formal boundary experience, or rite of passage, associated with leaving school. Despite the absence of ritual celebrations in contemporary western societies and changing life course transitions as detailed in Chapter Two, a significant event in the majority of teenagers' lives involves leaving school. This event can be seen as the transition between school on the one hand, and work, or further education at college on the other. At a broader level, according to Winchester et al (1999) it can be viewed as the transition between childhood and adulthood. Within the framework of van Gennep's (1960) rites of passage, this annual process can be seen to exhibit elements of separation (the actual leaving of school), liminality (during the uncertainty of waiting for exam results) and re-incorporation (into the new worlds of work, training, further education or for some unemployment).

The transition as negotiated and celebrated by pupils in the case study school contained both formal and informal celebrations, each having significant spatial and temporal dimensions. Formal rituals took place within the constrained space and time period of the school day, whereas teenager-created informal rituals occurred in more fluid spaces and times outside of school. School based celebrations included various playful rituals and a formal school assembly attended by teachers, pupils and their families. Then later, more informal celebrations were enacted by teenagers themselves, including a small group of

friends burying a time capsule, and a larger group drinking alcohol in a woodland area close to the school.

The rite of passage begins on the last day before year 11 pupils leave school to prepare for their GCSE examinations. Although this remains a 'normal' teaching day for the rest of the school, amongst the school leavers this celebratory day resonates with theoretical ideas about the carnivalesque (see for example Bakhtin 1968; Stallybrass and White 1986; Shields 1991; Cresswell 1994; Hetherington 1998a). This concept that implies the inversion or subversion of normal social relations and allows for 'authorised transgressions' (Bakhtin 1968). Within the context of the school, such transgressions authorised by the Headteacher involved the disruption of lessons and the adornment of school shirts with graffiti. Myerhoff (1982) suggests that our rites of passage can be memorialised with objects, notes or records that are kept in recognition of the transition. During the weeks leading up to the leaving school event, 'leaving books' had been passed around the majority of the year group. These were school exercise books decorated with stickers or wrapping paper covers, which became symbols of school life synonymous with what Myerhoff describes. The books contained farewell and good luck messages from fellow pupils and staff and the exchange of email addresses and mobile phone numbers. Many of the photographs taken as part of the research project also became embedded in the books as emblems of friendship and group identity.

The significance of the 'communitas' bond demonstrated in Chapter Two was apparent amongst the school leavers, especially as the end of their school life together was drawing to a close. Although the year group was not particularly unified in other aspects of their lives or identities (as will be elaborated upon in the Chapter Six), the process of leaving school, undertaking exams and following their own potentially separate life biographies seemed to unite pupils during this significant moment. As Sophie, a girl with usually poor attendance commented on the communitas type spirit that had been fostered throughout the year group:

> 'I'm definitely going to be in next week, cos it's the last week, you know, the last chance we'll all have to be together. I'm not going to miss that, cos you know I will miss some people. It will be quite sad when we all go our different ways. We're

quite a good year group in terms of how we all get on, we've had some right laughs' (Sophie age 16).

The climax of the school-based celebrations was the school leavers' assembly. This comprised a formal ceremony and presentation of various awards to students as a way of celebrating their educational achievements within the school. Some pupils were given tokenistic roles within the service such as performing readings or playing musical instruments however, the majority occupied a passive role. Delaney (1995), comments that the ceremonial structure of student graduation ceremonies for many young people may lack a depth of meaning. Within the school, the assembly received a mixed reaction. For some, it was an important event for which they had spent many lunchtimes and free lessons practicing singing and musical performances. Others, particularly girls, focussed on the clothes they were going to wear and hairstyles they were having done in preparation. However, others were not as enthused by the event, and were keen to avoid rehearsals and instead concentrate on their own forms of celebration, as my conversation with Ryan revealed:

> R: Oh yeah, go on, can you get us out of rehearsal for this service thing? It's dead boring, we're just sitting there with nothing to do. We have to like watch everyone do the same things over and over again. It's dead boring.
> K: Are you not looking forward to tonight then?
> R: I'm not really that bothered about it
> K: What are you doing then to celebrate leaving school?
> R: We're going down the woods aren't we? When it's all over [the assembly], we're gonna get some cans and go down there and get smashed [drunk] ain't we, it's gonna be well smart. Sorted. (Ryan age 16).

As this and other conversations with pupils highlighted, they were in the main more excited about their own self-made ceremonies they were going to participate in after the formal school assembly. Here it is useful to draw on Smith (1999) who notes Bakhtin's (1965) distinction between two types of festival form: ritual ceremonies and carnival. For Bakhtin, ritual ceremonies are serious, formalized official occasions, designed to be observed rather than engaged and in this way resonate with the formal school assembly. In contrast, carnival is an all embracing public spectacle based on laughter and performances which are synonymous with the 'authorised transgressions' that took place during the last school day and the informal celebrations that were to be enacted by teenagers themselves. In addition

to the school based celebrations teenagers also went about constructing and enacting their own rituals to mark the transition of leaving school. For instance, Mickey and Oli wanted to bury a time-capsule or memory box, as Mickey explains:

> 'Yeah we're doing a memory box when we leave school and we're gonna bury it ... Because I think it was in a movie we all seen ... and we're all gonna put something in the box, write something and then we're gonna come back on a certain date, at a certain time and then dig it up.
> K: Really? Where are you going to bury it?
> M: We don't know yet. We did think ... there's a tree, like right across the school field, there's a tree and you can go a bit in, like under the tree. We always used to go there from year 7 to the middle of year 10. We'd be there all the time, we spent most of our time in school lunchtimes in there, so we was thinking of there (Mickey age 16)

Several other groups of teenagers chose to create their own celebratory rituals in an area of woodland near to the school grounds. The woodland constitutes a liminal space, both as a 'time out' zone from the routinised structures of school, in which the teenagers no longer have to participate, and a marginal zone in terms of the uninhabitable nature of the woodland area. The marginal space of the woodland is however, part of the attraction, allowing teenagers to engage in their own relatively private rituals 'out of sight' from teachers and other panoptical adults. In contrast to the public events of shirt writing and the leaving assembly, rituals enacted by teenagers themselves take on a more individualistic and private nature.

Similar to the Australian 'Schoolies week' studied by Winchester et al (1999), this event involved 'ritualised and transgressive bodily experiences' (p 59) such as getting drunk and stoned to excess. In other words, the 'get[ing] some cans and ... get[ting] smashed' described by Ryan above. This, as Winchester et al (1999) continue 'mark[s] a change of state from the imposed discipline of school to the self-chosen freedom of a body 'out of control'' (p60). However, such alcohol fuelled gatherings to celebrate leaving of school have received negative publicity from in local newspapers, and police in the area were active in disrupting these activities. In this way the celebrations are enacted with a constant fear that they could be disrupted at any time. As a conversation with Jamie and Jade highlights, who describe what could happen if the police turn up at the woodlands:

> Jamie: You have to be careful no-one's gonna come though
> K: Who do you mean?
> Jamie: No police
> Jade: No police or no dads …
> Jamie: Yeah, the police chase you with your beer
> Jade: Yeah and if they catch you, they tip it away. So you just stash it down your trousers or something, but they usually get it. (Jamie and Jade, age 15)

In this way the celebrations are enacted with a constant fear that they could be disrupted at any time. In many ways the leaving of school celebrations mark the end of my time in school and it seems strange to begin the empirical chapters at the end, so to speak. However, it demonstrates how teenagers actively negotiate and recreate the space in-between childhood, youth and adulthood. While this chapter has concentrated on the experience of teenagers in relation to their age, the next chapter goes on to demonstrate a further way in which teenagers negotiate their in-between positioning through the creation of alternative social and cultural identities, otherwise framed as neo-tribes.

Chapter Six

'Oi! Why you wearing that?': neo-tribes and sites of centrality

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Through a focus on neo-tribal theory, this chapter is about the cultural identities and social groupings of teenagers within the spaces of the town (Maffesoli 1988; 1996; Shields 1992a; 1992b). There exists a common recognition within existing literatures that teenagers cannot be viewed as a homogeneous grouping (see for example Matthews and Limb 1999; Weller 2006). This chapter confirms this through exploring the ways in which teenagers organise themselves into heterogeneous identity clusters or 'neo-tribes'[10]. The chapter demonstrates how processes of identity formation and identification with others become enacted amongst teenagers through a series of practices involving clothing styles, ritual performances, expressive embodiments and neo-tribal 'occasions'. However, identity as well as being about identity formation and identification with others, is also about spatiality (Hetherington 1998a). Therefore it will also be explored how certain sites become socially central (Lefebvre 1991; Shields 1992a; 1992b; Hetherington 1998a; 1998b) or symbolically significant for those creating alternative neo-tribal identities. In these ways, the creation of teenage identities is not only achieved through identification with others who share a common outlook, but also through recognisable spatial and embodied practices. The spaces in and around the town centre therefore comprise a diverse topology of appropriated spaces (Lefebvre 1991) or temporary autonomous zones (Bey 1991) that have been claimed, even if only temporarily, by neo-tribes.

As I argued in Chapter Two, Maffesoli (1988; 1996) fails to consider the creation of boundaries and potential for conflict between different neo-tribes, although such collisions comprised a significant element within teenage spatial practices. Through mapping the matrix of complementary and conflicting neo-tribes, this chapter will demonstrate how teenage neo-tribal spatial practices manifest these 'entanglements of power' spatially

[10] Neo-tribes was not a term used by the teenagers themselves but is used throughout this thesis as a theoretical concept to illuminate identity groupings

(Sharp et al 2000). Collisions between differing groups will be explored alongside the various tactics employed by groups and individuals to negotiate or avoid such conflicts. The chapter will conclude by detailing the 'neo-tribal spatial equilibrium' that develops across the spaces in the town centre.

Previous subcultural studies have tended to deconstruct the meaning of youth identities from the standpoint of those outside the cultures (McCulloch et al 2006). In contrast, this research sought to investigate neo-tribal identifications through teenagers' own constructions of their identity (see also Weller 2006). Teenagers were therefore asked several questions about whether or not they belonged to a particular 'identity grouping' and, if so what the group was called, characteristics of the group and also about similarities and differences with other groups. It is worth noting that not all teenagers involved in the study defined themselves as belonging to a particular 'named' identity grouping, although their friendship groups exhibited characteristics similar to those of Maffesoli's neo-tribes. Space will be given to these other groupings in the next chapter. Although a range of identity groups were provided as questionnaire responses, as detailed in Chapter Four, this chapter will focus on the named groupings that appeared most significant within the spaces in and around the town centre: 'scallies'; 'Goths'; 'basketballers'; 'skateboarders' and 'Frontliners', as well as the neighbourhood neo-tribes that teenagers associate with in their local areas. Here, it is worth noting that there is often a spatial-temporal dimension to teenagers' identities in that they engage in particular named identity groups, such as scallys, Goths, skateboarders and basketballers primarily at the weekends, whereas their identity practices during the week are often more embedded in just hanging around in their local neighbourhoods. This is not to dismiss the importance of either type of identity, but to highlight the fluidity of identities across time and space.

Processes of identity and identification

'Identity markers' exist amongst teenagers as a way of constructing themselves (and others) as belonging to a particular neo-tribe. Such markers centre on clothing style, group behaviour, association with particular spaces and places (sites of centrality) and recreational activities. The significance of such markers are weaved throughout this chapter. It is worth commenting at this point, on the iconic importance of visual style as one of the main ways

in which definitions, and therefore boundaries are created between teenagers. According to Maffesoli, visual style represents:

> 'a sort of group 'uniform' (brandy, punk, retro-look etc) – that acts as a point of reference and becomes part of daily life ... It allows for the recognition of oneself by oneself' (1988: 150).

Each of the neo-tribes featured in the study had a distinct visual style or group uniform that became an embodied aspect of identity formations and processes of identification with others. Similar to Swain's (2002) study, based in a junior school with a relaxed school uniform policy, clothing created a space amongst the teenagers as a means of 'gaining recognition, of generating common bonds, and of sharing interests' (2002: 53). However, it was simultaneously a space for creating abject distance between self and other or between neo-tribes, with 'Oi, why you wearing *that*?!' being a common discursive issue between groups and individuals. The following conversation demonstrates the importance of clothing in the creation of group boundaries and identity, which works to define self and other:

> G: You can tell by looking at people can't you?
> J: If they have loads of earrings or the big gold hoops and that then they must be a scally ... It's mainly how you dress. When you look at someone and see they're wearing a black, with black baggy trousers, and someone else wearing trackies, it's easy to say 'that's a Goth' or 'that's scally'.
> G: Yeah I look at it as the way people dress. You can tell someone is a skater, Goth or scally I'd say just by looking at them.
> (Gemma and Jess, scallies)

This conversation provides a brief insight into some of the iconic features of group uniforms, which will be further elaborated upon during the course of this chapter. Let us now turn to consider the five broad identity groupings that hang around in the spaces in and around the town centre: the scallies, Goths, basketballers, skateboarders and Frontliners. Each group or neo-tribe will be explored under separate sub-headings although their conflictual entanglements with other groupings will be weaved throughout the sections.

Scallies

Throughout the study scallies were revealed as a significant grouping that occupied the central spaces of the town centre. Scallies are instantly recognisable through their distinctive 'group uniform', gang formations and practices of aggressive rituals. As a local variation of the national 'chav' phenomenon, scallies have a distinct clothing style and similar to chavs favour designer brand clothing, usually tracksuits and sports jackets, baseball caps and heavy gold jewellery. This was evident in conversations when teenagers were asked to describe scallies:

> 'People who wear their collars up, and tracksuit bottoms and their socks pulled up over their trousers. It's quite amusing because their socks are pulled right up to their knees. They wear Burberry hats and they wear chains and that'
> (Hayley, 'normal')

> 'You know people who wear trackies in their socks and that. And caps like half way off their head ... they all walk round with their caps like resting on their heads, thinking they're dead hard' (Ben, 'normal')

Current popular discussion of the scally or 'chav' focuses on their excessive participation in forms of market-orientated consumption that commentators deem aesthetically impoverished (see for example Haywood and Yar 2006). This perceived 'vulgar' sense of style was evident in the responses of non-scally teenagers who found the scally style of dress a source of ridicule and amusement. Coupled to this, the actual way in which the clothes were worn, for instance, the lop-sided positioning of baseball caps on heads and the pulling up of socks over tracksuit bottoms was also something other teenagers disapproved of. However, for scallies, styles of dress formed an important part of how they wished to be publicly and culturally represented and designer labels prominently displayed were a vital component of this. For instance, for Joseph, investment in clothing was an important facet and point of identification with his scally neo-tribe:

> 'I'm a scally and proud of it. I love it I do. You wear designer clothing. I got me Stone Island, La Coste, Burberry' (Joseph, scally)

Photograph 6.1 Scallies in the town centre – Photographer: Joseph

Photograph 6.2 Scallies in the town centre – Photographer: Ryan

A distinction was apparent between those teenagers who felt an extreme sense of pride in being a scally, like Joseph above, and those who lamented the stigmatising effects of being labelled a scally. Throughout the study, several individuals were identified as scallies by others but were quick to refute this definition when defining themselves, highlighting tensions in the process of identifying others. Further prompting revealed that 'scally' is often a negative term usually associated with large gangs of predominantly males, but also females, who go around causing trouble. While some teenagers defined themselves as scallies because of the way they dressed, they also made a point of disassociating themselves from more violent aspects of the identity. This was particularly the case with some females whose experiences we will explore later in the chapter. However, let us first consider the spatial rituals adopted by some scallies in the town centre.

Alongside the stylistic rituals discussed above, certain spaces and spatial practices are important for scallies in affirming their identity and exerting a claim over specific areas. Scallies have a dominant presence in the town centre particularly on a Saturday afternoon, where they congregate in large groups outside McDonalds restaurant. For scallies, McDonalds acts as a socially central meeting point, as Susan describes:

> 'When they [scallies] go into town, there's like a million of them. It's like they're on this pilgrimage to McDonalds where they all hang out'. (Susan, Goth)

The unprompted use of the word 'pilgrimage' by Susan is pivotal in capturing the importance of McDonalds restaurant as part of this group's identity rituals, and has literal resonance with the anthropological discourse of liminality forwarded in Chapter Two. Within this discourse, pilgrimage is associated with the journey to a sacred site or shrine that comes to symbolise the creation of a new or alternative identity (Turner 1982). In this way, the space outside McDonalds acts as a shrine or symbolic meeting place for the creation of the neo-tribal scally identity. The discourses of liminality and borderlands also speak to the spatiality of McDonalds as a space in-betweeness. Situated at the edge of the pedestrianised shopping area and bordering the main road that circumvents the town centre, McDonalds occupies a geographically in-between or liminal space. Coupled to this, it also epitomises the broader metaphorical space between childhood and adulthood (see also Winchester et al 1999; Matthews 2002). The road outside McDonalds forms part of

colloquial 'Macca Run': a route popular amongst local boy racers as a way of showcasing their modified cars. Part of the performative routines of scallies involves cheering and waving at car loads of people as they drive along the road outside McDonalds. Enticed and intrigued by the modified vehicles, and perceived 'adult' freedoms of car mobility, many of the teenagers involved in the study aspired to becoming modified car enthusiasts themselves. Metaphorically, therefore, the space outside McDonalds constitutes a liminal space; situated at the borderland between the pedestrian street (associated with childhood/youth) and the space of the road (associated with adulthood and cars). It is a teenage frontier, a space for the here and now, a space of becoming, allowing them to interact or 'flirt' at the pavement boundary with the adult space of car ownership, but prohibits their actual crossing given that they are still underage to drive.

There exists an important gender dimension to scally activities which warrants further explanation. While scally groupings comprise both males and females, the spatial practices of each gender are enacted somewhat differently. Female members tend to maintain a static presence outside McDonalds, only venturing off occasionally for 'window shopping', while male scallies enact mobile practices 'strutting laps' around the main shopping area. For boys, the emphasis is on being seen and seeing who else is around, especially other teenagers, as described by Lewis and Ryan:

> K: Ok so what do you do when you're in town?
> L: Strut around
> R: Yeah strut around, go to Maccies [McDonalds]
> L: Laps, we do laps; McDonalds, down past Woolworths and that and then all the way back round ... making people aware you're in town ... just in case, you know?
> K: Who are you making aware you're in town?
> L: Whoever
> R: All the lads that think they can take you on in a fight
> L: It's just for something to do really
> R: Yeah it's just something to do innit?
> L: Yeah, cos I mean we're spoilt for choice, aren't we? [imitates quotation marks with his hands and says in a sarcastic tone]. There isn't anything much for us to do. I mean you go to the pictures and it costs £5.60 to watch a film ... it's like wait a minute, I can't afford that all the time. (Lewis and Ryan, scallies)

This passage is useful in illustrating important strands weaved throughout the thesis relating to discourses of power and alternate modes of ordering. In response to their being

priced out or excluded from spaces such as the cinema, Lewis and Ryan claim and (re)appropriate an alternative resistive space (Lefebvre 1991) outside McDonalds. However, as Routledge (1996) comments, a space from which resistance emerges or is organised, also represents an empowering site from which others are excluded, or within which they are subservient. In this way, scallies outside McDonalds inhabit the life-world of empowered marginals, resisting their own exclusions from certain spaces whilst at the same time, excluding *other* teenagers from the space. Lewis and Ryan display dominating practices of power through aggressive rituals or symbolically violent acts, particularly over other males who are also looking to assert a claim over space(s) in the town centre. For them, following the ideas of Cresswell (1999), mobility is enacted as a form of dominating power enabling them to impose surveillance over others and assert their own neo-tribal presence and territorial claim. The combined use of body posture; 'strutting, ape-like lads' (see McDowell 2000; Nayak 2006) and the regimented, cyclical movement of 'laps' constitutes a powerful performance and assertion of masculine scally identity, deterring other neo-tribes attempting to disrupt the space. As well as employing mobile strategies, scally groups also exert their control over a particular space through hanging around in large groups. This was described by another scally teenager, Jamie who emphasises how claiming a specific territory, such as the area outside McDonalds is an important aspect of maintaining his scally identity:

> 'Being a scally, it's just like your mark, it's the way you are. Like if you're a scally, one part of it relates to where you hang around. It's basically your area. No one will mess with your area. ... Me and him hang around, don't we? About 20 of us just standing there it's dead good.' (Jamie, scally).

Given that they congregate in large groups and often demonstrate aggressive rituals, scallies assert a 'geography of fear' (Pain 1997; 2001), and appear most threatening to other teenagers. In repeated conversations, non-scally teenagers described the fears they face when visiting the town centre because of frequent collisions with scally groups. Such collisions, especially between teenagers with different stylistic identities could take the form of intimidation through starring or name calling or at times, physical encounters:

> Z: Scallies start following you round town
> D: And they will come after you won't they?
> Z: Yeah, yeah

K: And what do they say to you?
D: They swear at you
K: Do they ever use physical violence?
D: It's just like swearing basically
Z: Yeah, sometimes they shout stuff like 'Hey what the fuck you doing?' or if you're a Goth you get 'Oi! Why you wearing that? You Mosher, you devil worshipper'
(Zoe and Danielle, 'normal')

'Well they're just the type of people that cause havoc. They walk down the road and will pick a fight and you don't have to have done nothing.' (Scott, skateboarder)

'Well they reckon they're dead hard cos like most of them, the groups and that, they'll start mouthing at you and if you just look at them funny, one of em will come up to you and start mouthing at you and then if you get the better of them they'll all jump in so then you're on your own' (Leo, skateboarder)

The paradoxical and overlapping practices of domination and resistance resonate with the 'entanglement' metaphor presented in Chapter Two (see also Sharp et al 2000), whereby scallies are caught in the knotted process of simultaneously resisting and dominating (other teenagers). However, these processes are not fixed or absolute; instead scally occupation of the space outside McDonalds can only ever represent a temporary claim over space. As with other (re)appropriated spaces, inhabitation of the space is not guaranteed but is instead vulnerable to (re)capture at any time, by the police, or by other adults such as security guards, or staff from McDonalds:

L: Like outside McDonalds, we always get moved away by the coppers from there
K: Do you, what for just standing there?
L: Yeah
R: Yeah they always move you along don't they?
L: We're not in trouble, it's just they say can you move along you know
K: Does that annoy you a bit?
L: Yeah because we're not doing nothing. There is nothing to do
(Lewis and Ryan, scallies)

A tactic enacted by the scallies to diffuse the situation with the police, was to move on to another space within the town centre, and then return later. This was usually successful in maintaining their own hegemony over the space, while also temporarily appeasing hegemonic adults. So far this chapter has concentrated on the practices of male scallies. It

was acknowledged by teenagers that scallies could be either male or female, although as mentioned above, fewer girls were willing to 'fully' identify with the scally reputation, distancing themselves from 'proper' scallies who go around causing trouble, as the following conversations reveal:

> K: So would you lot describe yourselves as Goths or skaters or ...
> A: Oh my God, no way!
> C: We're scallys
> B: Scallys
> K: So you're scallys?
> A: I wouldn't say scallys
> C: We're not scallys cos scallys walk round like that [puts on a strut] and cause trouble. But we don't cause trouble. We're like the normal ones. We're in the middle.
> A: Yeah we're the good scallies
> C: We're the normal ones. We have fun but. Well we do get in trouble sometimes but not as much as proper scallys (Amber, Charlie and Becca)

Similarly, another girl, Jo who described herself as a scally was also careful to differentiate herself from other scallies, particularly male scallies:

> 'I'd call myself more of a scally than a Goth. I wouldn't wear all that black stuff and everything like Goths. I do wear trackies and that, obviously I don't wear trackies with my socks pulled up. I think it's more lads that are scallies than girls because they do wear their socks over their tracksuits and that, and they wear all their makes like Henry Lloyd and La Coste and that and they think they're dead hard and can take anyone on in a fight' (Jo, scally)

However, like the male scallies, the town centre and the space outside McDonalds still featured within the girls' spatial practices, although unlike the boys the girls found it got boring after a while and tended not to stay for that long:

> 'Yeah on a Saturday we go into town and hang around outside McDonalds with everyone. I only stay there for about an hour though cos it's absolutely rubbish. Or you just walk round in a circle all the time. There's nothing to do it's just boring.' (Amber, scally)

> 'It depends if you are going shopping then it's alright but if you haven't got any money you can't go shopping and just sitting by McDonalds gets a bit dull after a while.' (Jo)

Having grown bored of the town centre, in the evenings Jo and her friends go to Wickes car park to hang out with the local boy racers, a space that will be explored in more detail in Chapter Seven:

> 'Every Saturday we'll go to Wickes with the lads in their cars, and they'll just park up and listen to music and that. Basically girls get in the back of the car and they go for a drive round you know' (Jo, scally)

Goths

Several teenagers involved in the study defined themselves as 'Goths'. Goths exhibit a distinctive style of dress incorporating black clothing, large silver chains and heavy black make-up. This iconic style often created boundaries between Goths and other identity groupings, particularly scallies, who targeted Goths on the basis of what they were wearing. This was evident in the comments provided by teenagers in both the neo -tribes:

> 'It's not safe when you're dressed all Gothic. Cos sometimes people start on you. Especially scallies ... They start calling you names and stuff, and maybe throwing stuff, just cos you're wearing black' (Laura, Goth)

> 'Yeah Goths are sad people, I hate um. They believe in the devil and everything, and wearing stupid make-up and not having a hair cut, even the lads' (Jamie, scally)

> L: It's the Goths we don't like
> K: Why not?
> L: Cos look at them
> R: It's weird
> L: It's all like Satan
> R: They wear black, all black trousers what are ten times too big for um
> L: I don't see what the excitement is over them. I don't see why you would want to listen to music that goes 'raaaaa!'
> R: It's all weird
> (Lewis and Ryan, scallies)

Some scallies involved in the research expressed a certain animosity towards the Goth identity. This was mainly due to Goth's style of dress - their baggy, black clothes - that in contrast to scallies' usual smart appearance and liking of designer labels. Scallies also berated Goths for believing in the devil, although none of the Goths involved in the study actually claimed to. Male Goths were particularly targeted by scallies because their long hair and tendency to wear make-up was seen to transgress conventional forms of

masculinity. In these ways, scally descriptions of Goths resonate with Cresswell's (1997) focus on the metaphorical use of 'weeds', 'disease' and 'bodily secretions', which he suggests have been used in conflictual contexts to label people and their actions as abnormal, abject and out of place.

The negative perceptions of Goths by scallies often manifested themselves in collisions between the neo-tribes. Through their occupation of the space outside McDonalds and a continued presence along the main commercial street in the town centre, scallies effectively displace Goth teenagers from the area, leaving them with few spaces they feel they can safely inhabit particularly within the town centre. These practices resemble findings in a previous study by Percy-Smith and Matthews in an East Midlands town (2001). Although the study did not involve specifically Goth or scally teenagers, it did focus on the collisions between 10-15 year olds in their local neighbourhoods. In explaining the power struggles between young people the authors draw on the concept of 'encounter space' (Percy-Smith and Weil 2000). The study revealed that bullying or collisions occur when the dominant grouping (in this case scallies) control or exploits the encounter space (in this case the town centre) through the imposition of their own sets of rules and values, to the detriment of other groups (in this instance Goths), thereby undermining the other's developing autonomy and capacity for agency. While Goth teenagers' spatial practices are hindered by scally practices of domination, they resist by seeking out alternative spaces outside the usual spatial realms of scallies where they know they will be safe.

Instead of using spaces within the commercial areas of the town centre which are popular with scallies, Goths choose to hang around in spaces on the outskirts of the town centre, spaces rarely visited by scallies. For example, the Goths Susan and Rachel and the boys they hang around with from another school, use a range of spaces where they rarely encounter scallies. In many ways these spaces are marginal in that they are out of the way spaces, such as the out of town retail park, spaces forgotten about or overlooked by both adults and other teenagers. The uninhabited or undiscovered nature of their spaces is elaborated by Susan through her photo-feedback interview:

‘We go to lots of places, places other people don’t really know about or go to ... [the out of town retail park], or you know behind the bingo place, there’s a car park there that nobody ever goes to, we go there’ (Susan, Goth)

Photograph 6.3 Car Park behind bingo: ‘We sit on the railing by there ... and there’s a trolley there!’ – Photographer: Susan

Photograph 6.4 Steps by the Bingo place – Photographer: Susan

Photograph 6.5 'It's like an old car park nobody ever uses' – Photographer: Susan

The spaces comprising Susan's photographic diary perhaps don't look that inviting and are relatively deserted given it is a Saturday afternoon when other areas of the town centre are usually busy. However, for her and her group of friends they constitute safe spaces away from the town centre where collisions with scallies would be commonplace, as she and Rachel demonstrate:

> R: You're less likely to get beaten up in these places
> S: Yeah cos if you go into town, if you're on your own or if there's only two of you, then there's a massive gang of scallies then they will beat you up. They'll either chase you or they will beat the hell out of you (Rachel and Susan, Goths)

It is not just scallies that this group of teenagers are wanting to avoid but also adults, who Susan and Rachel feel often judge them on the basis of their identity. This was described by the girls when talking about their experiences in the town centre:

> S: Yeah it's like old people and just general people giving you weird looks
> R: Yeah
> S: And pulling their children away from you and stuff
> K: Why do you think they do that?
> R: Because we're Goths
> S: Yeah, because we're Goths, people think we're scary
> R: They think we're scary, drug taking people (Rachel and Susan, Goths)

These narratives resonate with the angels and devils discourse referred to by Valentine (1996a), whereby innocent younger children are perceived to need protecting within public spaces from the dangers of older devil teenagers. Susan and Rachel often feel demonised by adults on the basis of their 'scary' appearance. However, this sense of being different as a way of annoying adults was something that Susan in particular seemed to relish. For her being a Goth was about rebelling against her parents. In contrast, other Goths involved in the study did not choose the identity as a way of rebelling against their parents or otherwise. For them being a Goth was about being different, wearing alternative clothes and listening to different music to their peers.

The fact that the spaces inhabited by Susan and Rachel and their friends are relatively undiscovered, or paradoxically even avoided by other teenagers due to their marginal qualities in many ways affords the neo-tribe an invisibility. In contrast to scallies who

place great emphasis on being seen within areas of the town centre, Goths for the reasons discussed above, tend to occupy more hidden spaces choosing to keep themselves to themselves. However, this tactical manoeuvre prompts other teenagers to describe them as having 'no place', as described by Declan and Scott two skateboarders:

> D: We hardly ever see Goths much, they keep themselves to themselves
> S: Yeah, they keep themselves to themselves
> K: Where do they go?
> S: I don't really know (laughs). They don't seem to have a place to go.
> (Declan and Scott, skateboarders)

Far from having no place to go Goths have developed a topology of sites that they actively claim for their own ends. Similar to what hooks calls 'homeplaces' (1990); sources of self-dignity and agency, sites of centrality from which struggles can be organised. The spaces Susan and Rachel choose to inhabit also provide greater opportunities for creativity and invention than possible within the town centre which is often crowded and under surveillance from watchful adults. For instance, at the out of town retail park the group often find abandoned shopping trolleys and create games pushing each other around, an activity that would probably not be permitted within more central areas. As Rachel through her photo-feedback interview explains:

> K: So what happened you just found this trolley?
> R: Yeah and we were just shoving people around in it ... I got in the trolley and was getting pushed around and that. I was being spun around in the trolley and then the boys did it. It was mad (Rachel, Goth)

Photograph 6.6 Trolleys at the out of town retail park – Photographer: Rachel

Although the sites that this group choose to hang around in may be peripheral to the main commercial area, they have become socially central for this particular Goth group. In this way, following Hetherington (1998a) as in Chapter Two, not only is the centre/margin binary disrupted, but also the domination/oppression binary which can overlay adult/teenager, angel/devil and scally/Goth collisions. Through their active occupation of these undiscovered spaces on Saturday afternoons, alternative spaces of resistance are created, spaces in which they are able to perform their neo-tribal identity at ease, where they avoid both scallies and adults and where they can all go together to socialise and have fun.

For another group of Goths involved in the study, instead of hanging around in the town centre and risking running into scallies they prefer to go to the nearby city. As Molly, describes, there is a bigger Goth scene in the city that helps to create a feeling of safety, unlike in the town where Goths are in the minority:

> 'In the city it's better because there's more Goths there. You don't feel as intimidated because there's hardly any scallies. You can just walk down the road and nobody bothers'. (Molly, Goth)

Molly and her friends live on the bus route to the city making it easier for them to travel there, whereas for Susan and Rachel the trip would involve two bus journeys leaving them more confined to the town. In contrast to the Saturday hanging out practices, the overall experience of participating in a neo-tribe becomes intensified during specific events and occasions. These create spaces in which members of the neo-tribe can come together and express themselves. Something Malbon in his study of nightclubbing describes as an event which allows for an intense 'affiliation with others, forging and reforging their self and group identity' (1998: 266). In contrast to the town centre which often involves encountering other teenagers in close proximity, Unchained, a Goth themed night for under 18s at a local nightclub is a place that Goth teenagers can go and feel at ease performing their identity amongst others with similar interests in music and dance. As Helen explains:

> 'Unchained it's a Goth thing. It's where you can be yourself, you can wear what you like. Do what you like. Dance how you like and like nobody cares, or tries to beat you up' (Helen, Goth)

Unchained embodies an alternative entanglement of power to that found within the town centre. As Helen and Molly describe below, in Unchained Goths are in control of the 'encounter space' (Percy-Smith and Weil 2000; Percy-Smith and Matthews 2001). It is a space they have been able to carve out for themselves, for them to go and perform their identity – in terms of their dress, consumption of music and dance styles – without fear of retaliation. Here Goths are in the majority, unlike in the town centre, where they are often mocked by scallies for being different. When scallies attempt to permeate or disrupt this Goth space, they find themselves out of place, in terms of the clothes they are wearing and the aggressive practices they are wanting to engage in. Here Goths occupy the greatest position of power, out numbering the scallies. The gatekeeper or bouncers also refuse to allow scallies into the event:

> H: Scallies tried to take over but it didn't really work (laughs).
> K: How did scallies try and take it over?
> M: Oh they all started fighting. They came in, and they were dressed completely different to everyone else in there. It was like role reversal, cos in the town centre,

> we're dressed differently as Goths, so the scallies want to beat us up, or throw stuff at us. But at Unchained, cos everyone was dressed how we were, the scallies were out numbered.
> H: But then that time, when some of the scallies did try to come in, and they were dressed in their normal stuff, the bouncers wouldn't let them in because they just cause trouble' (Helen and Molly Goths)

While seeking out alternative spaces on the outskirts of the town centre or in the nearby city are largely spatial tactics for limiting conflict, other tactics adopted by teenagers revolve around their own identity formations. As was discussed in Chapter Two, the fluidity associated with neo-tribal forms of identity enable teenagers to 'try on' a multitude of identities. Given the incidence of collision between groups, for some teenagers this fluidity becomes an important survival tactic and means of avoiding conflict, as Liz describes:

> 'I used to be a Goth, my hair was black and everything, but then I stopped being a Goth, and I went to being a scally cos I though what's the point? ... I got leathered [beaten up] three times when I was a Goth. But now I want to go back to being a Goth again, because I really do miss it. I liked going to that club Unchained – you only go there if you are a Goth. No scallies are allowed. But I know I will get in trouble with scallies if I go back to being a Goth cos that's what happens'
> (Liz, scally/Goth)

Liz's interview extract highlights some of the emotional paradoxes associated with teenage identity practices. On the one hand she wants to go back to being a Goth as she misses dying her hair black and going to Unchained. But on the other hand, she is very aware of the dangers associated with performing such an identity. The majority of teenagers that hang around in Liz's neighbourhood tend to be scallies. As a Goth, Liz is in the minority and she becomes a target for the others. Due to previous attacks she has suffered, she felt unable to continue being a Goth and so has adopted more of a scally identity as a tactical manoeuvre and way of blending in, in her local surroundings. However, through adopting a scally identity she is now excluded from the Goth spaces in which she would like to participate.

Liz felt she had to permanently change her identity given the seriousness of her situation, however another teenager Dylan was able to adopt more fluid identity practices, changing almost daily between school, Unchained and his local neighbourhood. For Dylan, being

able to adopt a fluid, site specific identity was an important factor in allowing him to participant in the alternative neo-tribal gathering of his local neighbourhood. Given the large catchment area of the school, some pupils travelled considerable distances and were often the only teenagers from their local areas to attend the school. Therefore it was not uncommon for teenagers to socialise with different groupings during the school day, and in their local neighbourhoods, as in the case of Dylan. Within the context of the school, Dylan's reputation was as 'the biggest Goth in year 10', whereas in his local neighbourhood, his Goth identity remained covert as he performed more of a scally-type identity to 'fit in' with his friends. Through his chameleon like identity performance, Dylan was able to perform fluid identity practices in multiple sites:

> D: Half of my mates I hang around with are Scallies.
> K: Is it alright being a Goth when you're with them?
> D: Yeah it's all right, because I don't dress that bad in front of them.
> K: All right - when do you dress more like a Goth?
> D: Mostly when I'm going out to party or something, Unchained maybe ... I just can't be bothered to wear it all the time and get hassle off people
> (Dylan, Goth/scally)

This section has demonstrated the experiences of Goth teenagers. While for some Goths their spatial practices incorporate informal, out of the way spaces, let us now move on to explore a neo-tribe that bases itself within the formal, central space of The Park.

Basketballers

There were several groups of basketballers involved in the study. Playing basketball was very much a lifestyle option, with most basketballers seeking to combine keeping fit with socialising. As Samir describes when talking about his own preference for being a basketballer:

> 'Basketball is just a good sport to play, to keep fit and stuff, and it is fun to play with friends' (Samir, basketballer)

As well as the emphasis on keeping fit, other things were important in sustaining the basketballer identity such as the clothing worn by players and their musical tastes. From the research it was found that basketball and hip-hop gangs tend to be closely affiliated, sharing many of the same activities, places, musical tastes and clothing styles. Players tend to wear a mix of skater style baggy jeans and hooded tops and more hip hop fashion styles. The neo-tribe often drew inspiration from American cultures, in terms of brand names and musical influences such as Hip-hop, R&B and Punk Rock. The group was very much international in their stylistic orientation, rather than exhibiting a regionalised identity like scallies who responded to the national chav phenomenon and nearby Liverpool influence (see also Massey 1998; Pilkington and Johnston 2003). Moreover, although no substantive data was collected casual observations revealed that more black and ethnic minority teenagers were likely to participate in the basketball neo-tribe than any other. For instance, there appeared to be few, if any black or ethnic minority scallies.

The main site for basketballers to perform their activities is on the basketball courts at The Park, a formal park on the outskirts of the town centre. The courts are important in the lives of these groupings, it is where they are found most Saturdays, if not playing basketball then sat around chatting or listening to music on their MP3 players. While the basketball courts provide most of what the basketballers need, trips to the nearby shops or supermarket are often made for food and refreshments. Within the study, the basketballers are the only neo-tribe with a legitimate, formal space. In contrast to other groups, the basketball courts are not a space they have had to 'win out' or (re)claim for themselves. Instead it is a space that has been specifically provided for teenagers. Maybe this should lead us to question which came first, the neo-tribe or the space? However, the space is not an uncomplicated 'safe space' or 'free space'. Use of the courts is governed by the park warden who has authority to remove teenagers for unruly behaviour or transgressions such as dropping litter. In this way, use of the courts is conditioned by enacting a certain type of behaviour. The space is also regulated through specific opening and closing times with players being made to leave when the warden locks the gates.

As a way of regulating the space, or limiting interference from the warden, there are a few central figures or 'leaders of the courts' within the basketball neo-tribe, who exert a form of governance over the area. The court leaders have not been specifically nominated, nor do

they hold any official title however, given they are amongst the oldest players and most regular users of the courts they appear in other teenagers descriptions as the leaders. Their methods of informal policing involves making sure nobody leaves litter on the courts, watching over when people have left bags unattended, and ensuring that no scallies come and disrupt the usual running of the courts. Whilst Goths avoid collisions with scallies by claiming alternative spaces on the edge of town, for basketballers their constant presence and territorial control over the basketball courts ensures few scallies actually venture into the space. As the following conversations reveal, during its opening hours The Park is largely 'off-limits' to scallies, as it becomes informally demarcated or associated with the basketball neo-tribe:

> S: Scallies are a bit annoying. We've never had any trouble with them ... as long as they keep out of our way
> T: Like the basketball courts, everyone knows that is where the basketballers hang out so the scallies don't really come by there. It is like our territory.
> (Samir and Tom, basketballers)

> K: Do you get scallies in The Park?
> S: Not really cos there's more .. not normal people .. more people who aren't scallies. But friendlier types. There's like the basketballers and the skaters, more friendlier types and scallies get intimidated by them (Sarah, 'normal')

One occasion when some scallies did enter The Park was talked about by Matilda, herself a Hip-Hop basketballer. In Matilda's view, the scallies were not only encroaching the spatial territory of the basketballers but also other aspects of their identity, much to the annoyance of the basketballers. The conversation extract is useful in once again highlighting the boundaries that become created between neo-tribes, or between self and other:

> 'When I was taking these pictures there was these, those scallies there [points to picture] and I think their friends came in with a, I think it's a radio or something, a battery radio and they were playing hip-hop music and I was like why are you playing hip hop music if you're scallies? That's a bit waaa ... everyone was like 'What are you doing?' No one liked the fact that they were playing hip-hop music and they were scallies ... it was like ... I don't know, just really ... odd. You never see stuff like that.' (Matilda, Hip-Hop/basketballer)

The social dynamics of the courts are fairly relaxed. According to Matilda there are no set teams that play against ach other, teenagers just turn up and see who else is around to play

against. However, there is an important gender dimension to the activity. For the majority of the time the boys play basketball on the courts, while groups of girls sit around the outside watching and chatting, surveilling who else is in the park – other friends or acquaintances, people to gossip about, or scallies who 'shouldn't be there'. Whilst basketballers tend to be male, there were some females involved in the study, such as Matilda that also enjoyed taking part although at a more casual level. The girls' prime motivation for engaging with this activity was as a way of getting to know the boys who were playing basketball. As Bethan and Matilda explain, contact is made with basketball boys through the use of a basketball prop that invites boys to test out their hand size:

> K: Is that a photo of the basketball?
> B: Yeah it's got a massive handprint on it, it's huge. Everybody tries their hand on it. But it's huge. It's impossible to get your hand round it. It's really popular with the guys as well though ain't it?
> M: Yeah
> B: Ceri purposefully goes to the basketball courts with this ball. Well a couple of times, there's this boy called Az who she thinks is quite nice. And she wants his number. And she chucked the ball a couple of times down there because obviously he will catch it and throw it back to her (laughs).
> (Bethan and Matilda 'normal' / basketballers)

The gender dynamics of The Park will be returned to in Chapter Seven, let us now turn to consider the important of the neo-tribe and in particular the basketball courts in the hanging out practices of two teenagers TJ and Pablo.

Photograph 6.7 Playing basketball in The Park – Photographer: Samir

Through their association with the basketball neo-tribe, the space of the basketball courts becomes socially central for teenagers in a number of different ways. For TJ, a Philipino teenager who had just recently moved to the town, the basketball courts are an important meeting place for his specific neo-tribe. TJ liked to be known as the local Hip-hop gang leader with basketball being one of the gang's main activities. His gang was comprised of many other ethnic minority teenagers living in the area which conferred a sense of belonging and safety, similar to Watt and Stenson's (1998) study of South Asian and Afro-Caribbean teenagers in an English town. Although TJ had also previously lived in a more multi-cultural city in England, within the predominantly white landscape of the study town the formation of this group was an important aspect of his identity and spatial practices. As he describes:

> '... it all started cos there's like a Philipino community round here, cos I'm from Philippines and that. And like there's other teenagers that came from my country. And so like we decided to, it would be fun to make up a group and all that, hang around ... It's like international in the park when we play basketball.'
> (TJ, basketballer)

While for TJ the basketball courts were an important place for him to (re)affirm his international identity amongst others from similar backgrounds, for another teenager Pablo, the basketball courts provided an escape from his background. Pablo lives on the council estate in a block of flats where encountering drug users and their syringes forms an everyday part of his life. In the following quotation Pablo describes why he wants to leave his neighbourhood:

> 'Because of the smack heads ... our street one has got loads of smack heads. I hate smack heads ... you know if you go in the flats or my street it has got like loads of syringes on the floor and that ... Last time I found one he and he was like he was injecting himself with stuff and that really scared me' (Pablo, basketballer)

Pablo aspires to growing up and being able to leave this neighbourhood. For him, the basketball courts provide a form of 'escape' from the realities he is faced with in his immediate environment. It is a place where he and his brothers can meet other teenagers and hang out. To Pablo, participation in the basketball neo-tribe offers a lifestyle synonymous with keeping fit and healthy, in part as a reaction to the drug users in his immediate area who want to abuse their bodies.

The activities of basketballers are concentrated in one specific place – The Park. The next section moves on to explore the experience of the skateboarding neo-tribe who are more fluid in their places use.

Skateboarders

For the skateboarders involved in the study, skateboarding has an influence on many aspects of their lives and associated spatial and identity practices, influencing the style of clothing they wear, the actual way they move around the town, the videos and DVDs they watch and is associated with most of the people they know in the town:

> 'It's just like something to mellow you out really. It's just something decent to do at the end of the day so you've got something to do. We used to, when we didn't skate, we used to go round on our bikes and stuff and just find anything to jump off.' (Declan, skateboarder)

This particular neo-tribe has historically cultivated their identity through embodied performances with the urban landscape. As Declan describes above, before becoming

skateboarders the group explored the terrain through biking practices. In contrast to the basketballers who have legitimate space designated for their activities, the skateboarding neo-tribe have an alternative experience of place. There is no formal skatepark within the town centre instead they are located in outlying villages that are difficult to get to for the group who live near the town centre. However, the group did not necessarily mind that they not did have access to skateparks. From previous experiences they found them too difficult to use:

> K: Do you ever go to any official skateparks or anything?
> S: Hardly, no, do we?
> A: No
> S: Hardly ever really. We don't really want to hurt ourselves (laughs)
> A: (laughs) We prefer skating on wrecks really
> S: Sometimes, like I've been to Q_____ skatepark
> D: You won't be going back though will you (laughs)
> S: No well, it depends how much you want to hurt yourself!
> A: Cos it's harder
> D: There's like massive half-pipes there
> A: Yeah like 6 foot half pipes and if you do it wrong you're on your head and bang your elbows (Scott, Andy and Declan, skateboarders)

Instead the group use informal spaces on the outskirts of the town. Though these tend to be in secluded areas, rather than the crowded spaces within the commercial area of the town centre, where they often get into trouble for skateboarding. As the following conversations describe:

> S: A lot of people judge you on how you look. Like when we skate around town you get some old people thinking rebellious little gits on their boards they skate past you. And they think we've got no control over our boards and ...
> D: Yeah that man tried to rob your board
> S: Yeah he tried to rob my skateboard cos he said I shouldn't be skating in town (Scott and Declan, skateboarders)

> L: Some people skate by the swimming baths but people come out and tell them to move on and stuff
> A: But they've put grass there. That was about two years ago cos they always had to tell people to get off. So they just took everything that was there that was concrete and they put grass there. So you can't go there
> L: By Aldi in town as well, sometimes the security guard comes and moves people off. By Aldi and Blockbuster, in-between there's like a little ramp type thing. A concrete thing that goes up and then down so people like grind across that. Like go

> across it and then jump off or olly off or whatever. But you get told to go from there (Leo and Andy, skateboarders)

In response to these exclusions the skateboarders began to explore the local landscape, seeking out alternative spaces, surfaces, ramps and steps that can be (re)appropriated for skateboarding. These spatial practices resonate with the method of derive, or drifting, meaning to wander or walk through spaces. For the Situationalist Guy Debord, the concept was useful in enabling people to (re)discover the way they looked at spaces, a process whereby participants 'let themselves be drawn by the attractions of the terrain and encounters they find there' (1981: 5). The drifter is similar to the flaneur who also wandered around the city, although whilst flaneuring usually involves consumption spaces, such as arcades and shopping boulevards, drifting is associated more with the physical urban landscape. Sadie Plant's later writings elaborated drifting to be an appreciation or acknowledgement of;

> 'the way in which certain areas, streets, or buildings resonate with states of mind, inclinations, and desires, and to seek out reasons for movement other than those for which the environment was designed. It is very much a matter of *using an environment for one's own ends*' (1992: 59 my emphasis)

Through their journeys of discovery, and (re)invention of certain spaces for their 'own ends', the skateboarders have developed an experiential map comprising the terrain of 'skateboarding spots' (Woolley and Johns 2001) around the town centre; their textures, surfaces, affordances and thrills. Significant spaces across their topology include: the space under the flyover, the superstore car park, the flat's car park, Mirror Hill and, on occasions the town centre after hours.

Photograph 6.8 Under the flyover – Photographer: Declan

The space under the flyover, on the outskirts of the town centre is the former site of a now derelict supermarket. As part of their spatial practices, skateboarders use an area of the supermarket car park underneath the support beams for an overhead road. This space will be re-visited in Chapter Seven where the polysemic uses of the sites by different groups of teenagers will be explored, but for now it is located as a socially central site for skateboarders. It is worth noting that it is not just the skateboarders involved in the study that use the space, but it is popular amongst other skateboarders in the town. The structural design of the space makes it a haven for various tricks and jumps amongst skateboarders, as Declan and Leo demonstrate through their photographic and verbal narratives:

> D: Underneath the bridge it's like an angled run up so you can olly onto it
> L: There you go you can see better on that picture like where the slant is. So you can take a run up like as high as you can normally just before it curves. So you like leave your skateboard just on the curve and then run jump on your board and you've got a bit of speed then. And then jump onto there and then do a kick flip or an olly back (Declan and Leo, skateboarders)

Photograph 6.9 Car park for skateboarding – Photographer: Declan

Photograph 6.10 Car park for skateboarding – Photographer: Declan

As the above photographs show, empty or sparsely populated car parks comprise an important element of the group's terrain, providing large open space in which to skateboard freely. In addition, the local superstore car park reveals a wealth of material resources that can be rescued from skips within the site: shelving, wooden blocks and large boards that can become used to build skateboarding ramps. In this way, such commercial or 'adult' waste objects become 'enlivened' (Skuse 2005), or given new meaning through the creative and inventive practices of teenagers. The group are not only active in their (re)discovery of spaces, but also materials which become (re)created to comprise important elements within their activities:

> L: Sometimes you can get some like scrap stuff ... some palettes or something
> D: There's usually bits like old table tops and then we use like erm those wooden palettes that things get delivered on, we use them to raise stuff up
> L: But there's always like pieces of scrap metal. There's shelving as well, like metal shelves that [the superstore] leave out the back
> (Leo and Declan, skateboarders)

The shelves become transformed into skateboarding ramps and marked with a group's identity tag. They then become further (re)constructed as other groups come along and alter their positioning, adapt the ramp and embellish it with their own tag.

In contrast to the flat, smooth surfaces afforded by various car parks, at times the skateboarders prefer the steeper surfaces of a path known locally as 'Mirror Hill' because of the large road mirror nearby. As Leo and Andy describe:

> L: Well er there's quite a bit, because it's a hill there's quite a bit to do there as well. If you're on your skateboard you can have races down there or whatever.
> A: It's got like a jump at the bottom. Cos the sides are sloping, cos there's a path going down, it's a bit like a half-pipe at the bottom
> L: Yeah you go down this big steep bit and then there's like a short bit
> A: You've got to jump over to the other side
> L: Yeah if you get some air underneath it.
> L: There's a footpath that's like little cobbles. Not cobbles like little ...
> A: Tiles
> L: Yeah little tile things and then there's the bike path which is red tarmac. That's the one we usually skate down because it's longer (Leo and Andy, skateboarders)

Photograph 6.11 Path by Mirror Hill – Photographer: Leo

Photograph 6.12 Path by Mirror Hill – Photographer: Leo

Alongside the sloped footpath that the skateboarders use is an area of grassland. The summit of the grass bank is not easily accessible, but provides a large open space, nestled amongst bushes, with views across the town. Given its inaccessibility, the space is rarely visited by anyone accept the skateboarders and a group of their friends. It is a space where at the end of their adventures traversing the town, the skateboarders meet with other friends to socialise and 'chill out'. The aesthetic qualities of the space, in particular, its vantage point across the rest of the town imbue the space with a certain 'magical' feel, as described by Leo during the go-along:

> 'This is our space. Just look at that view. Fucking amazing that view. This is our space.' (Leo)

Photograph 6.13 View from Mirror Hill – Photographer: Andy

Photograph 6.14 On top of Mirror Hill – Photographer: Andy

Interviews and the go-along revealed that the group of friends who meet the skateboarders on Mirror Hill generally define themselves as scallies. As this chapter has demonstrated, scallies and other groupings usually collide however, this is rarely an issue for this group of friends who come together in this particular space. In this way, Mirror Hill forms a node around which an alternative neo-tribal gathering forms. Here it is not about stylistic identity per se, but about identity with a particular space. There was a feeling amongst the group that Mirror Hill was a special place, a place they had successfully found for themselves and claimed. The aesthetic qualities of the space combined with the undisturbed nature of the space renders it a hybrid or third space (Bhabha 1994), between and yet simultaneously intertwined in the identity and spatial practices of both neo-tribes.

Given that all the skateboarding boys live fairly close to one another and the spaces they use, their outdoor geographies frequently become interjected by indoor spaces, in particular Leo's bedroom. Leo's house had previously been divided into flats meaning he had his own external staircase to access his bedroom. Therefore most of the time his parents were not actually aware how many teenagers were in the house. The group often smoked cannabis as part of their leisure activities. They would usually start off in Leo's bedroom,

smoking and rolling joints whilst watching DVDs before going out to skateboard or 'chill out' on Mirror Hill.

Frontline Youth

Some males involved in the study identified themselves as belonging to Frontline Youth. This group is associated with the football hooliganism grouping otherwise known as a 'firm', attached to the local football team. Within the town, Frontline supporters have a reputation for causing trouble at matches and are usually involved in violent clashes with rival teams. Although the teenagers in the study were not actively involved with all Frontline practices, they prided themselves on forming their own grouping Frontline Youth. The youth group consisted of a range of teenagers from across the town all wanting to progress into the 'adult' Frontline sector. As my conversation with Ali highlighted:

> K: So is that what you want to do become part of Frontline when you're older?
>
> A: Well we all are now. But not like proper until you're about 20
>
> K: How does it become proper?
>
> A: Well it's like proper now. But all the older lads are all like 22 and that. But we still go but us young ones are just like the youth group

Ali's father has been an active member in firm and Ali was keen to follow the generation tradition. The group's activities are based around attending the football matches together, usually after visiting local public houses in the town centre – an entrance requirement of the group is that you are able to get served for alcohol. As Chapter Four highlighted, several teenagers found the town centre an unsafe place on the days of football matches, particularly because of these unruly groups of supporters. However, for some boys who were interviewed, their engagement in Frontline especially the violent rituals, was something they were proud of and keen to talk about:

> 'I always follow the team, it's the people who always turn up for the matches, but we make loads of trouble' (David, Frontline Youth)

> 'If there's any trouble at the matches then it tends to be around us' (Alex, Frontline Youth)

'It's just like every team has a firm, and your firm goes by different names, like Chelsea's like Chelsea Head-hunters. And ours is Frontline. And you just basically go to football, go to the pubs first, get smashed off your face an then you go scrapping with the other team' (Joseph, Frontline Youth)

In contrast, Ali often chose to keep this aspect of his identity concealed from the majority of his friends outside of Frontline and even some of his family members, mainly due to the negative associations surrounding the group. Similar to Dylan who we encountered previously, Ali was therefore able to slip between roles performing a Frontline identity on match days whilst remaining covert about this aspect of his identity amongst his other friends. As he explains:

'No one else knows cos like otherwise if I tell them they'll think I think I'm dead hard and all that. So I don't bother. I don't tell um when they ask. I just say no. But when they say oh yeah I seen you in town with all them. I say 'I don't think so'. Cos I don't like telling loads of people ... Cos then they'll be thinking 'Oh he thinks he's dead hard' and that if I tell people. Me Dad knows cos he used to do it. He doesn't anymore. But he tells me to keep out of trouble, but he knows I do it. Me Mum sort of does. Me sister does because every Saturday I have to walk past Allsports and she works in there. And I have to walk that way with all me mates to go to the match and she always sees me. But I don't tell many people.' (Ali, Frontline Youth)

So far this chapter has looked at the main identity groups of neo-tribes that feature in the spaces in and around the town centre. Although these groups may appear relatively fixed, especially on Saturday afternoons, in fact the identity practices of many teenagers are more fluid, with teenagers having access to a series of other neo-tribes that they participate in. Moving away from the town centre, the next section will explore the alternative neighbourhood neo-tribes that some teenagers participate in, especially on week nights after school when the majority are confined to their local areas given the distance from the town centre and poor transport links.

Neighbourhood neo-tribes

In Chapter Three it was explained that the wide catchment area of the study school incorporated villages on the outskirts of the town, as well as neighbourhoods in more

central areas. Given the distance they live from the town centre, for several teenagers their neighbourhood spaces provided important social venues on week nights after school. These spatial dynamics are important in illuminating the temporal, fleeting and site specific nature of neo-tribal affinities, which allow for shifts in both identity and spatial practices, enabling an individual to belong to a number of alternative, but site specific neo-tribes.

Let us take for example Ryan, one of the scallies we encountered earlier. At the weekend he hangs around in the town centre, in particular outside McDonalds with Lewis and other friends from school. In contrast, during the week due to poor transport links Ryan is confined to his local village approximately 10 miles outside of the town centre. Here he hangs around with teenagers from other schools, many of whom he has known since early childhood when they first began to play together. In his local village, Ryan's identity practices tend to be associated with his village neo-tribe, more so than the scally identity that he enacts within the town centre on a Saturday. This is not to suggest that he abandons his scally identity altogether, but instead highlights an alternative neo-tribe that he has access to and participates in.

Previous sections have highlighted the importance of certain spaces in and through which particular identities are created. This is also true for neighbourhood groupings which tend to be inherently territorial given that they occupy a specific geographical area. Neighbourhoods are the areas where teenagers live, where they have grown up and therefore have many historical and social ties. Many teenagers involved in the study were strongly bound to their neighbourhoods having a direct relationship with the parks, fields, streets and alleyways that comprise the area. Therefore teenagers usually became very aware of their neighbourhood territory and collisions between different neighbourhoods sometimes occurred. As Ryan describes when talking about his village:

> 'Cos my village is right next to C___ village. And like say we'll go up to C___ and that and we've had fights with C___ a few times. You know, you'll just go up there and they'll give you evil looks and say 'what do you think you're doing in our village?' and then a fight will start' (Ryan)

Ryan's village is relatively small, he describes it as having only about 100-150 houses and not many teenagers living there. Those that do live there all tend to hang around together on the football field and at the local park. The neo-tribe includes people his own age but the group extends to include younger people who live in the village, especially when they need extra players for a game of football:

> 'Most of us have known each other since we were little. Like we've always hung around together in the park or whatever. But cos there's like only five of us it's not always enough to have a game of football or whatever so sometimes the younger ones if they're out, they'll have a game of footie with us. ... They're like my mates' little brothers and their little friends so they're alright.' (Ryan)

In contrast, some larger villages accommodate multiple neo-tribes. For instance, Ashley's village has two groups with each group attempting to claim alternative spaces within the village. As Ashley's photograph shows, one group has a graffiti tag that they have started to use across the village. Whilst Ashley and his friends know the other group, the other group's activities centre around smoking drugs, something Ashley and his friends prefer not to do so attempt to distance themselves.

Photograph 6.15 BYC graffiti tag – Photographer: Ashley

A: BYC it's like B____ Youth Crew or something like that. There are like two gangs in the village. I'm in one and then this is the other one. We call ourselves B___ Youth Group. ... This is the other one they have started putting all this everywhere. Everywhere you go I have seen it. In other places I have seen it. BYC. They are marking. They found a new name so they decided to put this everywhere.
K: So what is it all about this gang or this crew?
A: Well they're a lot of people and they smoke and they smoke joints and all that and that's what them lot do, but we don't really hang around with them. We know them but that's what they are all about really smoking and that. (Ashley)

Similarly, Jamie's neighbourhood also has more than one neo-tribe, however the other groups are older with some individual's having their own rented houses or flats that the groups tend to use. Because Jamie's neo-tribe have more of a visible presence within areas of the neighbourhood this often means they are targeted if anything happens. This emphasises one of the main ways in which neighbourhood neo-tribes differ from those in and around the town centre. The town centre, like other urban areas offers a degree of anonymity whereas in neighbourhoods the teenagers are often known by other residents, as Jamie describes:

'Well we were sitting in the park swinging all the swings and this policeman can and moved us on and we said 'there is no age restriction on the park' and he said 'I don't care you can move'. Because someone's shed had been burnt in the night and they are like blaming all us because we are the only like gang that hang around there. It was really annoying and unfair cos it wasn't us. We were in bed it was about 2 o'clock in the morning when it was set on fire' (Jamie)

Ryan, Ashley and Jamie all participate in the local neo-tribes attached to the villages where they live. However, it is not always necessary for a teenager to be living in a particular area to participate in that neo-tribe. As Chapter Four detailed, some teenagers purposely choose not to hang around in their local neighbourhoods because of the lack of things to do, lack of friends living there or confrontations with other teenagers. Instead, some wander to their friend's villages and become a part of their neo-tribe. As Jo and Charlotte explain, groups are not just tied to where someone lives but instead relate to where someone chooses to hang around:

J: It's not always where you live that you hang around

K: Oh OK, so you can go and hang around in G___ if you live in A___ or?
C: Yeah, if you've got mates in G___ then you go up to G___ and you hang around there. And then you become part of the G___ gang. So it's not necessarily about where you live. It's more where you go to. (Jo and Charlotte)

For these teenagers it is the place that becomes important in creating their neo-tribal identity, rather than their own identity embedded in their local area. Moreover, neighbourhood neo-tribes are not just about being a scally or a Goth or so on. This was particularly noticeable on the neighbourhood go-along I participated in with Lizzy and Emma and their friends at The Bridge, an important rural neighbourhood place in which the teenagers gather. The group that regularly met up at The Bridge comprised a range of individuals who identified themselves as Goths, scallies and 'normal'. Whilst in other spaces these identities were usually conflictual, here identity practices were re-focussed and centred around the space of The Bridge and just hanging out together.

L: Liam is a bit of a scally. Well no he looks like a scally. Cos he wears like Rockport trousers over like, no, socks over his trousers and stuff
E: It's just the way he dresses, like a bit scallyish. Whereas Jenna would say she's a Goth, she wears all dark clothes and black nail varnish and stuff, well sometimes, not so much today
L: And we're just normal (laughs)
K: But do you all get on?
L: Oh yeah, yeah we just all come down here and have fun, nobody really bothers. We take the mick out of each other sometimes but that's it really. (Lizzy and Emma)

The group at The Bridge did not have a particular name or stylised identity. Instead what was important to them was their coming together, socialising and having fun much the same as the group on Mirror Hill. For them, staying together and group solidarity was important. As Alannah describes, even though the group is quite big involving around 10 or 11 teenagers much of their time is spent wandering around together, 'travelling in a pack':

'We all tend to move together, we don't leave anybody behind here, there and everywhere. We all go together, like one big mass, and if someone walks off we follow them.

This section has demonstrated the importance of neighbourhood neo-tribes. For some teenagers confined to their local villages, especially during week nights after school, these areas are important social venues for hanging out. Neighbourhood neo-tribes, especially in small villages tend to be defined by the areas in which the teenagers live, rather than other stylistic preferences such as scallies and Goths as is the case in the town centre on a Saturday. In many ways, there is not as much choice available when associated with a neighbourhood neo-tribes, teenagers are often embedded in particular tribes because of where they live and the friendships they have developed over time with others also living in the area. They are about where teenagers are coming from, not necessarily where they are going. It is during the weekend that teenagers have greater autonomy in deciding which neo-tribe they want to participate in, unless they chose to temporarily re-locate to alternative neighbourhoods during the week.

The importance of fluid identities

While previous examples in this chapter have demonstrated how teenage identities can remain fluid as a means of avoiding collisions, particularly with scally groups in the case of Liz and Daniel, fluid identities can also be beneficial in terms of social gains. Fluid identities are changeable over time and space, usually dependent on who the teenager hangs around with. For Sophie, adopting fluid identity practices are a useful tactic when she wants to meet boys.

> 'I'm a variety. I used to be a scally like in my tracksuit and everything but like I've changed loads since then. Now I wear a variety. I like wearing 'Goth', I wear skater, normal jeans and everything really'. (Sophie).

From this interview extract we can see that Sophie seems to frequently change her style or identity affiliation. For her, such groupings are clearly based on clothing, as she talks about the various styles of clothes she wears, which thereby associate her with particular groups. This quotation seems to imply that for Sophie belonging to a particular group is more about following fashion trends, wearing certain clothes rather than because of any specific beliefs or aspirations. Although the above quotation fails to give Sophie's reasoning for her fluid identity style, later conversations with her reveal that it is because of the friends she hangs around with and in particular the boys she is interested in, which determine her identity practices and consequently the spaces in which she hangs around in. Sophie's experiences

are important in highlighting the link between identity and spaces, and how to enter another groups space, a shift in identity, in particular clothing style, is also required.

While Sophie's fluid identity emphasises the spatial aspects of identity the following quotation from Paul, emphasises how some of his friends' identities have changed over time, especially as a way of fitting in with others:

> 'Like some of our mates, that were skaters, like Pat, he's turned into a scally. Not a scally looking for fights, but the way he dresses and that. [...] He used to be a skater, but now he wears trackies and stuff all the time ... cos Nath wears that stuff, and he hangs round with Nath so he's started doing it as well.' (Paul)

The idea of identity practices changing over time is especially important during the teenage years. As the following quotation from Mickey reveals, for him, associating with particular identity groupings is now quite 'childish', as is the idea of collisions between groups on the basis of what they're wearing. Whereas Mickey used to be a scally, and would go round starting fights with other people, he now considers himself more of a 'trendy' and wants to disassociate himself with his previous identity and identity practices of judging others:

> M: I'm more of a trendy now. Like I wear my Jeans and then a nice funky top. I wouldn't call myself a scally anymore. No I've left all that behind me.
> K: Do you ever have any run ins with any Goths or Scallies or anyone?
> M: I did when I was younger. You know when you're a bit immature and like 'Ow Goths, Scallies' and all that and just like judging people by how they look and stuff. Cos I used to be a scally when I was younger in all my trackies and me tracksuit bottoms and stuff. And we used to go and cause trouble and stuff. Just like call people names like 'You're a Goth you are', just a kid thing really but we've grown out of that now
> (Mickey, 'trendy')

While some teenagers' identities are fairly fluid, as in the above examples, for other teenagers their identity practice becomes their way of life, and they are committed to performing that static identity in many aspects of their lives, not just as part of their hanging out activities. For instance, Andy, Scott and Declan are the 'known' skater boys within and outside of school and seem to enjoy this classification. For them, skateboarding is everything – the clothes they wear, the way they move around the town, what they do for most of the time when they are hanging out, how they go about searching for places they

can (re)appropriate through their skateboarding moves, the videos and DVDs they watch, and most of the other people they know in the town. Whereas for Sophie and Paul's friends, the emphasis was very much on choice and fluidity, the skater boys tend to be more rigid in their identity practices.

> K: But you're skaters, are you proud of your identity?
> S: I dunno. It's nothing to be proud of as such it's just something you do isn't it? You don't choose to be what you are, it's just what you are ... You're just kinda born into it really. ... You're just brought up like that with your mates. Or the music you're into, or you see people skating on TV and that's what you take to straight away, basically. (Scott, skateboarder)

For Scott, rather than making a conscious decision to 'become a skateboarder' it is more a 'way of life' he has drifted into, influenced by the people he hangs around with, it being something he enjoys. Skateboarders appear to place more emphasis on their identity performance as something to do, in certain places, rather than merely wearing a certain type of clothes, or hanging round with differing groups of people. Their group dynamics remain fairly stable, unlike other teenagers whose identities remain multiple and changing. While, Sophie's identity practices change, the skateboarders remain fairly static in their performance of skateboarding and wearing skateboarder clothes, another boy, Leo sees his identity as more of a hybrid, and occupying multiple identity positionings all at the same time:

> 'I'm a bit weird, cos I skate, but I'm in to dance music, and I like wear trackies, yeah so I'm a bit of a mixture' (Leo)

It is interesting how Leo perceives himself to be a bit 'weird' for occupying a multiple identity, at once enjoying skateboarding, but listening to dance music, wearing more scally-type clothes. Leo hangs around with skateboarders, who despite their own static identities are generally accepting of his identity hybridity. However, hybrid identities are not always appreciated by everyone, especially when known 'others' are encroaching elements of an alternative identity, for instance Matilda and her distain towards scallies listening to Hip Hop music above.

Spatial equilibrium

This chapter has drawn on Maffesoli's concept of neo-tribes to explore teenage identity formations and processes of identification with, or disassociation from others. Through using the theoretical approach of neo-tribes, I am not suggesting that all teenagers belong to such affective groupings however, the concept provides a useful metaphor for elaborating an aspect of teenage identities. The chapter has highlighted the importance of the spaces in and *through* which neo-tribal identities produced. This creates a performative network of neo-tribal groupings within the town centre and across neighbourhoods. The network is fluid, with many groups being interconnected, through friendships, sharing spaces, or relationships with older generations, enabling teenagers to teenagers to enact what Shields (1991) terms 'dramatis personas' in a variety of different sites. However, conflicts and tensions between neo-tribes were also revealed as significant. Scallies appeared to be the dominant grouping within the town centre, exerting significant control over certain spaces, particularly the main commercial area. As can be seen in the above examples, each identity grouping has at some point collided with a scally group. Such collisions were also far more common than being told off or moved on by adults. Instead of teenagers employing tactics to resist adult domination, tactics had to be devised to avoid conflict or to 'fit in' amongst peer groups. Emphasis is no longer upon resisting those 'above', as in de Certeau's (1984) conceptualisation but instead resisting bullying from those *also* 'on the ground'. While many teenagers were successful in devising spatial or stylistic tactics in dealing which such collisions, the perceived threat of conflict was a pressing issue for many involved in the study.

Over the course of their spatial and identity practices teenagers developed their own responsive 'routes' (passages through the town) and 'roots' (places to call their own) as strategies for avoiding conflict. Goths and skateboarders sought out alternative spaces – Goths found hidden, secluded sites on the outskirts of the town, and skateboarders adopted areas with surfaces suitable for skateboarding. Basketballers asserted their right of presence and operated an informal policing scheme within the park. Usually it was only when a group encroached another's territory that collisions would occur. However, place use was not always this static. Given the small scale of the town, and the relatively few places for teenagers to hang out away from adult surveillance, a 'spatial equilibrium' has

developed. This informal 'spatial equilibrium' enables the town, to a certain extent, to accommodate the nexus of teenage identity groupings, in three main ways.

Firstly, a *social* dimension, whereby friendships exist between tribes and across identity boundaries, for instance the skateboarders in the study reported being friends with a small group of scallies they knew through school. Basketballers and skateboarders usually tolerated each other, given shared musical tastes and energy for keeping fit. Where such friendships existed, this facilitated a sharing of space, as the groups were able to simultaneously co-habit a particular site. Secondly, a *mobile* dimension exists given the movements and multiple place use of many groups, during the course of a day. As one group gets bored with a space, or moves on to seek adventure in a new space, an alternative group can move into its place. This cycle continues, with groups moving between unoccupied spaces. This is linked to the third aspect of the equilibrium – *diurnal* and *temporal* factors. Different groups use different spaces at different times of the day and night. For instance, the basketball courts are used by basketballers during the day, who leave when the park closes and the gates are locked, this is when various other groups climb over the gates and use the park under the cover of the night. Basketballers use alternative spaces for 'hanging around', sitting and chatting during the evenings.

Rather than viewing 'the street' as a monolithic space, this thesis has (re)produced it as a myriad of differentiated spaces and neo-tribal networks. The following chapter takes a closer look at the micro-spaces that become 'lived' (Lefebvre 1991), (re)invented and (re)created through their temporary inhabitation by teenagers.

Chapter Seven

'We're just street people really': teenage 'lived' spaces

The previous chapter focussed on the intertwined identity and spatial practices of teenagers through the lens of neo-tribal sociality. It explored how certain spaces become socially central or symbolic for groups as part of the process of identity formation and identification with others. This chapter takes a closer look at the range of other outdoor spaces that are used by teenagers as part of their hanging out activities. Through placing teenagers at the centre of the research, it was the participants themselves that defined and described the spaces that form the basis of this chapter.

The empirical spaces presented here are informed by the theoretical insights set out in Chapter Three, all of which speak to the openness and creative potential of Thirdspace. In particular the chapter focuses on how the spaces become used by teenagers in ways that are inventive and unpredicted. Following Lefebvre (1991) these are the lived and experiential spaces of teenagers, that their 'imagination[s] seek to change and appropriate' (1991: 39). It will be demonstrated that through teenagers' creative practices alternative meanings are introduced to spaces that sometimes contradict the normative (adult) use of space. Through these creative transgressions, sites at certain times and through certain practices become (re)defined producing temporary and ephemeral teenage spaces.

The chapter is structured to involve a peripatetic journey through the 'real-and-imagined' (Soja 1996) places that comprise the 'street' for teenagers. The purpose of this stylised narrative is to demonstrate the fluidity and mobility apparent in teenagers' own spatial practices. From this meander across the teenage landscape it will be demonstrated that the 'street' can be deconstructed to involve a multitude of different spaces and places. The journey encompasses a tour of urban spaces such as marginal alleyways, the transitional space under the flyover, the formal space of The Park and the performative space of Wickes

car park, alongside rural spaces such as the lead mines, The Bridge and the abandoned house.

Marginal spaces

Mickey and Oli both took part in the study. For them, and their friends Rachel and Roxanne[11], seeking out 'secret' spaces within and around the town centre, where they can secretly drink alcohol is an important weekend activity. This group usually get together on a Saturday night after their shifts at a local hairdressers. The weekend is an important time for the group to socialise with each other, in contrast to their week nights after school, which are taken up with homework and other more structured activities. As Oli describes;

> 'We're not really after school people. During the week we go to the gym, stay at home, do homework, we're just weekend people really. As soon as we can get out of work on a Saturday, we're off! Cos apart from that, we're not really going out people' (Oli)

A common element amongst all the teenagers within this study is that their hanging out practices represent 'time out' or a release from the worlds of school and home, that for many have become associated with GCSE coursework and revision. For Oli and Mickey in particular, whilst the week is taken up with these seemingly mundane activities, Saturday night symbolises the time for more ludic hanging out practices. Similar to Shields' (1991) study of holiday makers at Brighton beach, the temporal shift (away from the routinised time patterns of school, home and work) is accompanied by a spatial shift (into hanging out spaces).

As we have already seen in Chapter Five, for Mickey, the street is a positive place, somewhere that allows him to engage in 'typical teenage activities' and liminal flirtations with the adult world through drinking alcohol. For him, these outdoor places form an important arena where he can socialise with his friends away from the humdrum of everyday school life. Whilst these things are also important to Oli, at times, he does not find it such a positive experience to be hanging around. For instance, when I asked if he actually enjoys his Saturday night activities he laments:

[11] Rachel declined to participate in the study and Roxanne is a pupil at another school

'I do, but I wish there was something else to do. Some weekends I'll just say 'no I'm not coming out', cos I'd rather be at home and warm rather than outside doing nothing. ... If it's raining, it's rubbish. Like a few weekends ago it was freezing. Like we were still out till 11 but I was just cold all night.' (Oli)

Oli's comments reinforce how susceptible the group's hanging out practices are to poor weather conditions. As with other teenagers throughout the study, given that most of their activities are based outdoors, they are severely impacted upon by seasonal conditions especially rain and cold weather. However, with few other options available Oli usually relents and goes out anyway. This suggests that for him, hanging out is more of a non-decision rather than a positive decision, something he just does rather than something he actively pursues. As he went on to describe;

'If we could do more we would. But let's face it, there's no teenage places to go is there? Most of the youth club people start fights and stuff and you can't really have fun there unless you're hanging around with those people but we don't so... Or some youth clubs say you're too old to go anymore ... Some of me friends try getting into pubs, and they do actually get in. But I don't, I'm not brave enough (laughs)'. (Oli)

In echoing the experiences of teenagers in Chapter Five, Oli once again emphasises the awkwardness of being a teenager situated betwixt and between in a paradoxical space, not yet old enough (or brave enough) to enter adult spaces such as public houses and yet excluded from alternative teenage spaces for being too old. Moreover, in Oli's experience, youth clubs that do cater for teenagers often have members enacting their own informal door policy regulating who can and cannot enter the space. In addition, as mentioned in Chapter Three, the gay, lesbian and bisexual youth group that Oli wanted to join has also recently closed down due to a lack of resources. This has left Oli with even fewer spaces or 'scenes' in which to assert and negotiate his teenage and sexual identities.

Whilst some of his friends have been successful in crossing the metaphorical boundary into the adult space of a public house, Oli does not yet feel brave enough to embark on this venture. By means of compromise, his group of friends use the space of the street on a Saturday night to drink alcohol and for something to do. In this way, for Oli, the street constitutes a 'waiting space' as part of his rite of passage into adulthood and/or alternative gay scenes. Nevertheless, this is not a passive space as the term 'waiting' would imply. At

times it can be dull but the group is active in finding ways to entertain themselves through their creative inhabitation of certain spaces.

Instead of locating themselves in a single space, the group adopt peripatetic spatial practices that involve wandering and meandering around the town. For them Saturday evenings are spent walking about, in order to seek out new spaces as well as returning to regular haunts. In this way, the group can be likened to nomads, communities of people that move from place to place, usually following the seasons, rather than settling down in one location. The nomadic concept has gained theoretical significance within the work of Deleuze and Guattari (1983; 1988) who explain that the 'nomad has a territory; distributes himself [sic] in a smooth space; occupies, inhabits, holds that space' (1988:380). They go on to explain that this territory is a 'smooth', 'open space', it is not 'striated by walls, enclosures and roads between enclosures' (1988:381). Therefore, it is not a permanent space but instead constituted and claimed through continuous shifts, or ephemeralities. As the following passages will demonstrate, Oli, Mickey and their friends pass through, connect with and circulate amongst various spaces on the outskirts of the town centre. Through their repeated occupation of certain spaces, hour after hour, week after week, the group form attachments to certain spaces and claim them, even if only temporarily, as their own.

The following conversation with Oli particularly highlights how the group's spatial practices accord with ideas about nomadism. Oli describes how the group have their own 'organised geography' involving a serious of routes and wanderings between and within various spaces in the town centre. Although not always taking the same route, the group has a series of favoured places they usually incorporate into their evening. The nomadic mobility of the group's lived spatial practices is further illuminated through Oli's literal construction of the group as 'street people' and 'a walking group':

> 'There's not much to do, that's why we're street people. Yeah you don't really realise it until you think about it, but it's quite organised really. We've got all our favourite routes that we go on. We're just a walking group really. We just go round loads of different places. ... We just have a laugh. ... We don't go walking round acting hard as people say, which is what a lot of them do. That's who we try to stay away from like ... All me friends are quite street wise ... we know where

> we're going and we know a lot of people, we just know the best places to go, and places to avoid' (Oli)

According to Oli, at times the group's mobility forms a tactical arrangement to avoid the police or other groups of teenagers, whereas at other times it just forms part of what they do in seeking out new spaces. The group is relatively self-contained, with the exception of asking adults to buy them alcohol (as in Chapter Five), they tend to keep themselves to themselves avoiding other teenage groups, the police and other adults. Similar to the Goth grouping in the previous chapter, it is almost as if the group is invisible, wandering amongst the metaphorically 'underground' spaces of the town.

The spaces used by Oli, Mickey and the girls during their Saturday night adventures are reminiscent of the marginal spaces talked about by Hetherington (1998a), as in Chapter Two; 'places on the edge of things', 'insignificant everyday sites', and 'spaces normally hidden from view'. As Oli's photo-feedback interview revealed, the group purposely stay away from the central areas of the town centre or other spaces that are popular with teenage groups. Instead they prefer to inhabit the forgotten about, left over spaces where they rarely encounter others:

> 'We go to a couple of different places, we'll just find somewhere, a bit out of the way, where we can all have a laugh, hang round, whatever ... like at the backs of garages or just somewhere that you know, not many people go. Even at the back of The Park, never where people are ... somewhere hidden, not too open.' (Oli)

Photograph 7.1 Marginal car park space - Photographer: Oli

Photograph 7.2 Alleyway – Photographer: Oli

Photograph 7.3 Alleyway –Photographer: Oli

Photograph 7.4 Boarded up building – Photographer: Oli

Oli took the majority of his photographs on his way to school one morning, fearing the flash would not be sufficient on a dark Saturday evening however, the images still portray something of the marginal or uninhabited qualities of the spaces; an alleyway with closed shop shutters, car parks with few cars and a deserted building with boarded up windows. All of the spaces are on the very outskirts of the commercial area of the town centre. The group also favours 'out of hours' spaces, such as The Park and the local primary school during the evenings when the gates have been locked. Through their unique spatial practices the group occupies both spaces and times that are 'in-between'. Put simply, they choose to inhabit the gaps between buildings and other formal spaces (alleyways and car parks), as well as the gaps in time between the normative functioning of spaces (The Park and the school yard). Such practices involve the disruption and transgression of temporal and spatial boundaries, such as the gates designed to close off the space. As Mickey describes:

> 'We go to The Park at night, under the top shelters. They lock the gates to keep people out, but we climb over' (Mickey)

Their preference for such out of the way or hidden spaces is in part a tactical manoeuvre however, the excitement and thrilling potential associated with discovering new spaces and adopting them in creative ways provides another attraction for the group. In the following interview extract, Mickey describes one of the group's favourite, almost magical spaces. Through his description it is possible to understand how the group make use of underused elements within the town in ways which are creative and unpredicted:

> 'We do have a little secret place ... You know that narrow street in town by Marubi's café and the gift shop? ... By the gift shop there's a wooden door and an alley way. Honestly, honest to God this is like so cool. It's where all the bins are, at the back of all the shops, but there is just this closed space ... all the walls close you in ... and you go up the stairs, up the fire escape and it's like a balcony. And we sit on there. It's deadly. Honest to God it's just dead good. And nobody knows it's there. It's right in the middle of town, but nobody can see you ... you can hear people, but nobody can see you.' (Mickey)

Both Mickey and Oli enjoy the seclusion of it just being their group that use such spaces, in contrast to other teenagers for whom the street is an important place for meeting new people. Although the group emphasise the importance of being alone, they do provide examples of spaces they share, although not simultaneously, with other groups. Sharing is facilitated through the diurnal usage of some spaces and the mobile practices of many teenage groups that free up certain spaces. One example of a shared space is demonstrated in Photograph 7.5, a den near the town centre that is popular with Oli and Mickey, as well as other teenage groups. It can be seen in the photograph that other people have left behind traces of their presence, in some ways to exert an ownership over the space, what Tucker and Matthews (2001) in their study of teenagers and outdoor spaces liken to 'social scenting'. Through talking about the den, Oli demonstrates the competitive nature involved in claiming spaces and the importance of being the first to reach the space in order to secure it:

> 'You come through the fence and around, and there's a path which leads to the den. They've made benches can you see? It was quite popular for a while. Lots of people went there. There was smashed glass, which means people have been there before. You've just got to get there first usually' (Oli)

Photograph 7.5 The den – Photographer: Oli

Drinking alcohol forms an important element of the group's Saturday night activities, providing the group with something to do. Through their consumption of alcohol, many of their practices are experienced through the bodily state of intoxication. This creates a heightened experience of space and prompts them to engage in activities they would not normally engage in if they were sober. As Mickey explains:

> 'Cos like when we first start drinking it's dead boring cos like none of us are really drunk and then ... once we've had a drink and that then it's just fun anyway isn't it? We have a right laugh. It's just something to do isn't it? You end up doing things, don't you, when you've had a drink and stuff? Letting yourself go. Then the next it's like 'Oh my God I did that?' and 'I did this?' And like you do things that you wouldn't do when you're sober cos you haven't got the bottle ... Talk about things that you wouldn't normally talk about. Things like that ... Or one day, cos on the supermarket car park there's like trolleys, like old trolleys in places and we were drinking and I got in the trolley and was getting pushed around and that. I was being spun around in the trolley when I was drinking. It was mad' (Mickey)

The idea of 'letting go' or abandoning inhibitions and losing oneself through the consumption of alcohol can be an enjoyable experience. Although according to Hubbard

(2005) the spatial impacts of these embodiments have rarely been tackled by geographers, perhaps conscious of the difficulties in charting 'intoxicated geographies' (although see recent work by Jayne, Holloway and Valentine 2006). Throughout the study, alcohol consumption was revealed as an important and common aspect of many teenagers' social activities. As Mickey describes, without alcohol hanging around can be a fairly mundane task, whereas when his group have been drinking they begin to explore and experiment with spaces and objects, such as trolleys in ways that they would not if they were sober. Going back to Oli's earlier comments about how hanging out can sometimes be quite a dull experience, in many ways alcohol consumption can be seen to provide an 'escape' from the banality of it all.

However, the fear of being caught whilst drinking alcohol and being underage was an important influence on the types of spaces the group chose to inhabit. As we have already seen, the group typically locate their activities in out of the way spaces where they are unlikely to encounter others. A further tactic is through avoidance of CCTV cameras. This contrasts with many of the questionnaire responses outlined in Chapter Four, which detailed that for many teenagers, areas covered by CCTV cameras were thought to constitute safe spaces. CCTV cameras are a predominant feature across the landscape of the town centre, it being one of the first places to introduce cameras that 'speak out' through talking boxes attached to the cameras. Mickey and Oli now actively avoid one place where they have recently been installed:

> 'The library field, we used to go on there. But they have cameras on there now, so we don't bother.' (Mickey)

Apart from the den, the majority of spaces found by Oli and Mickey are only used by their group. In contrast, the next space in our journey, under the flyover is a more popular space amongst teenagers in the town, particularly skateboarders and a graffiti artist.

Under the flyover

The space under the flyover is the site of a now abandoned supermarket – a liminal space in-between developments. Previously a commercial site housing a large supermarket and separate outdoor market, the space now stands vacant and derelict awaiting re-development

into a new retail area. The temporal gap between demolition and new building has meant that teenagers have been able to permeate the site during its transient state. In effect producing liminal beings in a liminal space. Through the creative and inventive practices of many neo-tribes and individuals, this space has become a significant node within the teenage landscape of the town. Given its submersed location, literally underneath a road, coupled with its abandonment by adults in many ways it is a metaphorically 'underground' space. A space that teenagers can (re)appropriate for themselves with few fears of being disturbed or disrupted. However, the permeable nature of the site and it sequestered inhabitation by teenagers will only ever be a temporary phase. Once building work begins, the site will become sealed off and therefore recaptured.

It is interesting to consider this space because it is used by different teenagers within the study, each with their own spatial practices and attachments to the site. In this way, it can be thought of as a polymorphic space. The previous chapter demonstrated how teenagers exhibit multifarious identities, however, according to Massey the same can be said of spaces, as she comments, 'if it is now recognised that people have multiple identities then the same point can be made in relation to places' (1991: 3). Through the narrative and photographic representations of the space created by teenagers it was possible to uncover the multiple layers of meaning, or following Massey (1991) 'identities' attached to this particular space. Declan, Leo and TJ have all photographed the space under the flyover, although their images and subsequent narratives illuminate entirely different attachments to the space. As described in the previous chapter, Declan and Leo as skateboarders connect with the space through their literal embodiment and experiential journey along the surfaces, curves and slopes of the terrain. For them, the site is a space of performance and movement, a space of action for 'ollies' and 'jumps' and 'skids' and 'slides'. This has become encapsulated within their action shots, incorporating them on their skateboards moving through the space:

Photograph 7.6 Under the flyover – Photographer: Declan

Photograph 7.7 Under the flyover – Photographer: Leo

TJ on the other hand, contributes an alternative reading of the space. TJ's outdoor spatial practices involve a range of spaces and places. As we saw in the previous chapter, the basketball courts at The Park form an important meeting and activity space for him and other ethnic minority teenagers in the town. Similarly, as this chapter will go on to demonstrate, TJ also participates in the performative space of Wickes car park where boy racers display features on their modified cars. While The Park and Wickes car park are both very busy, sociable spaces, under the flyover is a more peaceful, out of the way space. TJ and his friends come here to sit and chat, particularly during the evenings when the skateboarders have gone home. In many ways, for TJ in contrast to his other hang outs, under the flyover enables him more space for reflection. It is a safe space, a space he feels at home in when he is there with his friends. TJ encapsulates these feelings of safety and belonging through his personal graffiti tag 'Angel' that he has adorned the space with as in photograph 7.8. 'Angel' has symbolic significance for TJ in that before he moved to the town, he lived in a large English city where he was stabbed by a rival gang of teenagers. He survived the stabbing and therefore believes he has an angel watching over him, transposing this belief through his graffiti. For him, graffiti is a way of expressing himself and gaining an alternative voice through the landscape.

As well as demonstrating his emotive biography in relation to the stabbing, he also intends to signal a utopic hope for the future through his graffiti. The idea of utopics is developed by Marin (1984) and Hetherington (1998a; 1998b) to refer to the production of an alternative or ideal outlook on life through spatial play. According to Hetherington (1998b), such ideas become 'translated into spatial practice through the attachment of ideas about the good society onto representations of particular places' (1998b: 328). TJ's form of utopics, in particular in regard to teenagers, was revealed through discussing the angel photograph and his graffiti practices in general:

> K: Why is it that you graffiti places?
> TJ: I dunno it's just like expressing ourselves ain't it? Just like a message, like people are not listening to kids, young people right now, like nowadays so we have to show them like what it is, but we cannot show them through speaking to them so we have to show them through graffiti
> K: Who are you trying to show?
> TJ: Aw well I'm just trying to say that teenagers have got more talent nowadays and all that. And we need to be listened to, we need to be heard

like what we gonna say. Cos basically, like young kids right now, like will be the future innit? Will be the ones that you know are gonna be all the stuff in the future and all that (TJ)

TJ's narrative empirically highlights many of the points made in Chapter One about the exclusion of teenagers' voices in society, from policy and research. Similar to the theorist bell hooks and her active occupation of the margins as a source of resistance and empowerment (1990), TJ refuses to accept the societal exclusons he, as a teenager, faces and instead has set about asserting his own narrative through his graffiti. TJ's spatial practices therefore, are not just something he does but involve active movements in order to gain a voice. According to TJ, the purpose of his graffiti is two fold, firstly it mobilises a space from which he can be heard, and secondly he uses it to foreground the talents of teenagers. His message also has a longitudinal dimension emphasising the role today's young people will play in the future.

Photograph 7.8 Under the flyover –Photographer: TJ

The Angel tag provides a trace of TJ's presence in the space under the flyover. However, his is just one such symbol of occupation or claim on the space. As Sennett comments, 'in a city that belongs to no one, people are constantly seeking to leave a trace of themselves'

(1990: 205). The space under the flyover contains many such traces, in part demonstrating alternative claims on the space, but also highlighting the transient nature of the space. It is home to a series of temporary or ephemeral inhabitations by groups, all attempting to modify the space in some way. Alongside TJ's angel tag are various other patches of graffiti, no doubt all imbued with their own meanings and social narrative. Similarly, the multiple neo-tribes of skateboarders that use the space have also left layerings of wax, a substance that improves the quality of surfaces for boarding. As Declan describes:

> 'Yeah loads of other boarders use this area, we see them there sometimes, but you can tell as well because the curves are waxed cos loads of people go up there ... It's covered as well so the wax doesn't get washed off in the rain' (Declan)

Under the flyover, like the marginal spaces inhabited by Mickey and Oli are relatively informal spaces, let us now turn to consider the more formal space of The Park.

The Park

Chapter Six demonstrated that The Park forms a central meeting and gathering point for the basketballers on the basketball courts, but it is also used by a variety of other teenagers as well. Numerous interviews revealed the popularity of The Park for recreational sports such as football, tennis, basketball and jogging and more relaxed activities like sitting and chatting. Before continuing, it is interesting to consider for a moment the social history of The Park. When I was a teenager in the town, nobody ever seemed to venture to the space. As such I was surprised when I began doing fieldwork and participants were telling me how popular it is now. The main reason is that The Park was refurbished in 2000, through funding contributions from the Heritage Lottery; Urban Parks Project; the Welsh Development Agency and the European Regional Development Fund. As a result basketball courts and tennis nets have been put in place and the children's play equipment has been improved. The development and improvement of the area was also commented upon by teenagers in the study:

> 'The Park, it used to be full of like druggies, didn't it? ... They've got this like shed thing and they used to inject themselves and that, and it wasn't very nice, you know, when you were little, and it attracted like loads of police and that didn't it? It wasn't a very nice place to go ... Then they did it all out though and made it nicer' (Danielle)

'The Park has changed a lot. They've done all paths and stuff now and have just got a massive play area. Although there's two play areas there now though. One for babies and one for older kids. And the basketball courts and nets that they've put up and tennis courts.' (Leo)

Today The Park is an important gathering place for many teenagers as the following passages will demonstrate. The purpose of this section is to explore The Park through the experiences of a friendship group of girls; Bethan, Ceri and Matilda. As part of the go-along with Bethan and Ceri (Matilda was on holiday), the girls chose to give me a guided tour around the path in The Park pointing out landmarks or nodes significant within their activities. Many of these elements had been captured earlier through the girls' photographic diaries. For instance the bandstand and covered area where they run to for shelter when it rains (photographs 7.10 and 7.12); the basketball courts (photographs 7.15 and 7.16); important benches that they use for sitting on and chatting (photograph 13) and 'the big gates' that control entrance into The Park, although as Mickey described earlier he and his friends often climb over these gates to access the space at night (photograph 7.11).

Photograph 7.9 The Park – Photographer: Ceri

Photograph 7.10 View from the bandstand – photographer: Matilda

Photograph 7.11 The big gates – Photographer: Matilda

Photograph 7.12 Sheltered area in The Park – Photographer: Bethan

Photograph 7.13 The bench – Photographer: Bethan

The scale of The Park enables it to encompass a range of different spaces and therefore activities. As Bethan describes:

> 'There's all sorts of different types of places that you can go, but it's all one place. But you wouldn't think that. It's like separate places all in one. ... If you've got a basketball you can have a game of basketball. Erm, I don't know, like sometimes people have got cards in their pocket and you have a game of cards. Anything. Sometimes you kick a ball about if there's like someone with a football. You go over to like the bowling green and that and there's like toilets and that there, or there's the shop over there, you know what I mean. There's just loads to do.' (Bethan)

The above quotation emphasises the spontaneous nature of many of the activities in The Park and how they often make use of multiple spaces. This division of spaces was particularly useful for Bethan in that allowed her to perform a variety of different identities or behaviours, as she explained on the go-along:

> 'Generally if you're down in the shaded area and there's a few of you, you can generally be yourself in your group of people, you can be as hyper as you want. Whereas up there, it's more open, so if you're being more childish or babyish, they're all gonna be able to see you, all the other teenagers and people here, so it's good having the different divide of spaces.' (Bethan)

Bethan's narrative resonates with the ideas about frontstage and backstage spaces detailed by Lieberg (1995) in his study of teenagers in Sweden. Although Lieberg's teenagers relied on such spaces as a means of confronting or avoiding adults, Bethan places her emphasis on avoiding other teenagers. Like Zoe and Lindsey in Chapter Five, Bethan was mindful of her 'childlike' performances, choosing only to act that way in certain spaces out of the view of other teenagers.

Photograph 7.14 Flowers at The Park – Photographer: Matilda

In addition to the multiple spaces that are important for Bethan, Matilda chose to photograph the flower arrangements in The Park as something that was important to her. For Matilda, the non-human elements of The Park are important because she does not have a garden at home, as she described during her photo-feedback interview:

> 'The flowers look really neat and it's nearly summer, so it's nice to see something bright. When I'm really bored I just look at the plants and things. I just look at the trees for no reason and there's squirrels in The Park. ... There's usually loads and sometimes they just sit there next to you and they don't get really scared unless you move ... We don't really have much of a garden ... I just go [to The Park] cos it's like free, and it's like peaceful' (Matilda)

Alongside the physical and material elements within the space, the go-along with Bethan and Ceri revealed more about their psychological or emotional attachments to The Park. For both the girls The Park is a safe place away from the perils of their local neighbourhoods[12], where they have both previously suffered bullying at the hands of groups of teenagers. As the girls each describes:

> 'We don't get on with our next door neighbours, and I was bullied by one of them at a certain time. And she makes your life hell, really badly. The whole family didn't get on with my family at all because we've got posh accents or we're different or whatever. ... I know there was some graffiti about me in one of the flats near where I live, saying just some rude names cos they don't like me where I live. Cos I don't hang around with their type of people. I don't smoke, I don't do drugs and they didn't like it. ... But here it's fine.' (Bethan)

> 'There are places around [village name] that are dead rough and scary so we don't go down there ... in [village name] there is loads of drugs. Um people spread around everywhere, hanging around, taking drugs or dead high like so we don't tend to go there. But here, you can just be yourself. Be dead hyper or whatever. You don't have to watch your back all the time. Like at home, you just don't know who's gonna be around looking at you, which other groups of teenagers are about' (Ceri).

It was noted in Chapter Three that recent initiatives in geography have looked to consider the role of emotions within the process of collecting data. However, this is not just a methodological consideration, but can also be extended to consider people's relationships with particular spaces. For instance, as Bondi et al describe:

> 'there remains a common concern with the spatiality and temporality of emotions, with the way they coalesce around and within certain places ... much of the symbolic importance of these places stems from their emotional associations, the feelings they inspire of awe, dread, worry, loss or love' (Bondi et al 2005: 4).

Both Bethan and Ceri exhibit an emotional attachment to The Park as a safe space outside of their local neighbourhoods, which had become invested with bullies and drug users inspired the feelings of 'dread' and 'worry' talked about by Bondi et al above. At the beginning of the project, the girls had only just started going to the space, the weather was

[12] Bethan lives on the outskirts of the local council estate and Ceri lives in a village on the outskirts of the town

getting warmer and it was where they would go with Matilda to sit and watch the basketballers on the basketball courts. Bethan had moved to the town from England about a year or so before, in many ways this is what had initiated her problems with bullies in her local neighbourhood for 'being from a different place'. She felt lonely and isolated and afraid to be outside in her neighbourhood for fear of encountering the bullies or more derogatory graffiti. Through becoming friends with Matilda and Ceri in school, the group began to visit The Park on a Saturday. The space now provides an important element in the girls' hanging out practices.

The previous quotations from the group of girls have all hinted at the freedoms they feel within The Park however, teenagers are not completely able to (re)interpret the space for their own ends. As described in the previous chapter in relation to the basketball players, The Park warden exerts strict levels of governance and control over the area. Like Sibley (1995) describes, teenagers are often seen as discrepant on children's play equipment. This is the case in The Park, where a policy is in place that you must be under 14 to use the playground area. Although the girls attempt to disrupt this ruling, they are usually questioned and moved on by the warden:

> B: You should have seen us two last week playing on swings
> C: And the roundabout
> B: Yeah we were going round the roundabout but you've got to be careful because the caretaker comes in and says [puts on a stern voice] 'Are you under 14? Well you shouldn't be in here'.
> K: What's this about being 14
> B: You shouldn't be in the park, if you're over 14 you shouldn't be in the play park but we always go in there anyway (Bethan and Ceri)

This age restriction on the playground equipment was also talked about by George, someone Bethan and Ceri introduced me to on the go-along. George is one of the basketballers that have a regular presence on the basketball courts. However, being a 'known figure' within The Park often means he is targeted by the warden, as he describes:

> 'We sometimes go to the playground, but we're not allowed in anymore cos we're over 14. The guy [warden] walks around, strutting around like he owns the place. He gives us hassle all the time. Cos whenever there's rubbish around, we get blamed. Whenever something goes wrong, we get blamed. (George)

George was just one of the individuals I was introduced to on the go-along, however for Bethan and Ceri The Park provides an intensely social space where the girls can meet new people. As a consequence they have begun to develop strong social bonds with many other teenage groupings especially the groups around the basketball courts. Bethan, given her constant presence almost every Saturday during term time and most days during the summer holidays, has come to know or 'know of' most of the groups in The Park. Through her description of the social topology of the space it is interesting that she talks about the groups or categorises them in terms of their age or the school year they are in. The Park is used by teenagers from other schools besides the research school. While relations between different schools were usually good, at times teenagers in the study felt they were targeted or bullied because of the religious denomination of the school. This was not confined to any particular space but widespread across the town. However, Bethan's group had fairly amicable relations with teenagers from other schools. What is interesting is that Bethan talks about the moral geography she and her friends operate in The Park, effectively 'othering' those groups who come to the space to drink alcohol. While this did not happen much during the daytime, Bethan and her friends actively disassociate the drinkers from the other groups:

> 'There's the gang from [another school] that are the year 10 ones ... they're the four that come down only on Saturdays. And they always like sit on the field and wait for the boys to come over and talk to them. Then there's the group of girls, the 'rejects' as Shane and the basketball crew call them ... all these ones are year 11s that have just left [another school]. Erm, and then there's like us where there's me, Matilda, and Ceri. And then there was a group here last night I think they're from [another school] and they're like year 9s, 10s and 11s all mixed together, but they don't really get on with that group. And then another group came last night but they were drinking and that. And it's like they were kind of like a different group cos we don't really come here drinking.' (Bethan)

As well as the division between drinkers and non-drinkers, the area around the basketball courts has a distinct gender dimension. As Bethan and Ceri described during the go-along, the male basketballers are usually active on the central areas of the court while girl groups sit around the outside chatting with friends but also competing for the attention of the boys. Previous studies (see for example Cohen 1979; Griffin 1985; Hall and Jefferson 1976; McRobbie 1991) have emphasised the dominance of males in central areas of public space, thereby relegating girls to the margins, causing girls to feel 'the wrong gender' and 'in the

wrong place' (Skelton 2000: 80). However, for Bethan, Ceri and Matilda occupation of this marginal (boy) space forms an important aspect of their hanging out practices in The Park. Within this space the girls are actively entertaining themselves through chatting and socialising but also by devising tactics to gain attention from the boys, as the previous chapter demonstrated with the ball prop. The girls are also not excluded from the courts as shown in Photographs 7.15 and 7.16. Similar to the girls in Skelton's (2000) study of a youth club in the South Wales valleys, far from being the wrong gender and in the wrong place, the girls have turned these marginal spaces to their advantage.

Photograph 7.15 The basketball courts – Photographer: Ceri

Photograph 7.16 The basketball courts – Photographer: Bethan

Wickes car park

Photograph 7.17 Wickes car park – Photographer: Sophie

On the outskirts of the town centre is a retail park, known amongst local teenagers as 'Wickes', conveniently named after the DIY store located there. During the evenings, when the DIY store and other outlets have closed the car park takes on a new life. What appears to be an abandoned space becomes a performative and interactive space for boy racers (or 'modified car enthusiasts' as they prefer to be called) to congregate and showcase their cars – this event itself is also known as 'Wickes'. Although not old enough to drive, many teenagers involved in the study often hang around at Wickes as passengers in cars belonging to older friends or siblings. Wickes becomes an act of spatial (re)production for its participants. On Saturday evenings the motorists and their passengers come together to claim the space through their own practices, which often deviate somewhat from the usual intention of the space but which nevertheless fits their own needs. Before continuing to explore the space, it is important to note that these are not joy-riders or the TWOCers talked about by Campbell (1993), those who 'take cars without the owner's consent'. Instead the grouping is made up of older teenagers with cars they have spent much time and money adapting or modifying to embody certain stylistic features.

Although Wickes occurs in the already existing setting of a car park, it (re)invents the space, applying alternative meanings and creating different uses to construct its own event space. For instance, cars participating in Wickes do not park within the conventional grid block spaces marked on the tarmac surface, instead their arrangement is far more haphazard, with cars congregating in clusters - enabling people to chat through car windows - or large circles with headlights illuminating the centre. Moreover, as I observed during the go-along, the atmosphere becomes a sensory soundscape filled with music, revving car engines, screeching brakes and the hum of chatter and applause when another car pulls up. This was a noisy but exciting space to be in. It becomes more than just a space to park a car, it becomes a performance space to show off, to compare body work features, neon lights, headlamps, stereo systems and so on. As TJ, a teenager who participates in Wickes with his old brother and his modified car explains:

> 'Basically we just sit there chatting and showing off cars ... It's just hanging around cars showing off parts. You know showing a new engine, new interiors, you know computers inside of cars. PS2. X-boxes, you can have anything ... It's just hanging around, showing off stuff innit' (TJ)

Chapter Five discussed how some teenagers in the study had older friends or brothers with cars who they were sometimes allowed to drive around with, allowing for a flirtation at the boundary of adulthood. Driving round in cars was a way of showing off, drawing attention to the modified bodywork through loud music pumping out from the stereo. Being in the car, at Wickes or driving around the town centre exemplifies a performative space, a space in which to participate and to be seen, as demonstrated through the following quotation from an interview with Josh talking about his brother's modified car:

> 'He's got a dead smart blue Corsa, and like when we drive anywhere everyone will stop and stare at it. It's just a dead smart car, and it's dead smart being in it. You get noticed. Everyone looks at you. It's well good.' (Josh).

As well as being a performative space Wickes also provides an intensely social venue mainly due to the volume of people gathered there. As Sophie, a girl who often visits with her friend as passengers in the friend's boyfriend's car describes:

> 'About 30 to 40 people gather there in cars. There are loads of different cars - there are like loads of cars together. So they are all like huddled, well parked all together. People are just sitting in cars or they meet up with their friends ... The lads all sit around talking about cars and stuff, so we're just sitting in the back ... just talking or we go and join in with the lads' (Sophie)

For Sophie as well as being a social space, Wickes also provides a welcome alternative to walking around the streets in the cold. Earlier in the chapter, we explored the experiences of Oli who similarly commented on how weather conditions impact upon hanging out. Generally teenagers have few spaces to shelter in outdoor spaces however the micro space of the car provides an alternative. Moreover it is also a mobile space. For the majority of teenagers in the study, walking was their main way of getting from place to place, although some used skateboards or bikes. However, for the teenagers who hang around with boy racers their spatial practices are enacted through the car enabling them to travel further and quicker increasing their overall spatial range.

While Sophie values Wickes for its social dimension, for another teenager Leah, Wickes is a safe place. As explained in Chapter Three, Leah had been severely beaten up at the fairground a year before I interviewed her. Still traumatised by her ordeal, she rarely ventured into the town centre especially on Saturday afternoons and nights after school,

through fear of encountering the girl who abused her. Instead, when Leah did go out, it was usually in her friend's car and to places like Wickes which reduced her feelings of exposure and anxiety. The crowded atmosphere, being surrounded by older people and in particular the cocoon like structure of the car all provide her with an ontological feeling of safety (see also Hubbard 2005). It is interesting that Leah actually took the majority of her photographs from inside the car, confirming the safety she feels being 'sealed off' from others. Through occupying this space, Leah is able to remove herself from the seemingly dangerous places where she was previously bullied. However, this is not a permanent place of safety, as it borders the neighbourhood where Leah's bully lives. Although Wickes affords a temporary safe space away from bullying encounters, Leah has to remain vigilant, and sometimes enact tactics and seek cover within the space of the car:

> 'I like it on Wickes. But then sometimes, she [the bully] lives on the other side of the car park in [the council estate] ... And you see her coming sometimes and like you duck down, but it's a good job Dawn has got tinted windows, so she can't see you. But it's quite intimidating. And she's like stopping me from doing what I want to do.' (Leah)

Photograph 7.18 Inside a car at Wickes car park – Photographer: Leah

The spatiality of Wickes is transient and not solely confined to the space of the car park. Often the site becomes a meeting place from where modified car enthusiasts and their teenage passengers drive in laps around the town centre, known as 'the Macca Run'. As Jo explains:

> 'We just all meet up on Wickes and that, and just all get in cars and start driving round town, and basically we just go like in a big circle, and then we will go like past McDonalds and just like drive around' (Jo)

As well as local laps around the town, modified car enthusiasts often travel further a field to participate in larger gatherings with others from around the region. In this way, Wickes is just one node within the wider more diffuse network known as 'Cruise North Wales'. The groups come together not just in physical meeting places but also through virtual spaces across the Internet. In many ways this organisation is similar to the Front Line football neo-tribe who operationalise a localised identity but are also part of a larger network. Although football meetings are usually based on rivalry and sometimes violent conflict, Cruise North Wales gatherings centre more on performance, mutual appreciation of car body work and features. Although some competitive ventures are involved when the cars participate in races, as Leah and Sophie describe:

> 'They just go and meet each other and then sometimes there are cruises. Like I'm a member of Cruise ... when everyone comes and sees like different cars and sees who's got what ... And there's like racing on a Sunday night.' (Leah)

> 'They do like cruises where they just drive somewhere. Loads of them with the cars. Or sometimes we go street racing ... it's mainly in [nearby city] that they all go. They go there like to show off their cars and all that. Some people find this street and then people just race down there and like everyone watches them.' (Sophie)

Cruise events utilise spaces similar to Wickes, roads and car parks in-between their regular uses, usually on industrial estates or out of town retail parks. These types of spaces are used because they do not have the speed bumps and speed cameras that are usually found in town centres. Cruise, similar to Wickes, operates as a temporary autonomous zone (Bey 1991), temporarily (re)appropriating a space (Lefebvre 1991), transforming seemingly mortal spaces into occasional festival sites. Despite the semi-illegal nature of the races,

they are seemingly legitimised through the presence of key actors wearing official looking neon yellow jackets and using walkie-talkies. As Jordan and Josh, teenagers who frequently attend such events with older friends explain:

> 'Loads of them meet up. And then you go like to another road thing. And they like block the roads off. These people wearing yellow jackets and they've got walky-talkies.' (Jordan)

> 'These people wearing yellow jackets and they've got walkie-talkies. One stands at one end and another stands at the other because it's a race isn't it. So they've got to clarify who's won and when they're going to start off in case something's distracting them in the road' (Josh)

While for some, particularly males, this kind of event is filled with thrills and excitement, Leah and Sophie describe how the racing can sometimes be quite scary, so is not something they always participate in.

> L: I don't race cos ... it's just I wouldn't like to be in a car when the lads are racing because ...
> S: It's quite vicious sometimes isn't it? They really do race against each other
> L: Yeah it can be quite scary at times, you know when they're going dead fast down this road (Leah and Sophie)

Cruise racing transgress the limits of the imposed order of the roads and spaces. Speeding is illegal and other features modified car enthusiasts add to their cars often lands them in trouble with the police, especially flashing neo-lights and stylistic number plates. Consequently, the activities often meet with adverse reactions and police interruptions at Wickes are common. During the go-along, every half an hour or so a police car would come and drive around the car park. Although they would usually just drive around and then leave everyone would make an effort to turn off their flashing neon lights. Other police experiences are described by Sophie:

> 'Well the police do turn up at Wickes at times because there has been reports of people like bad driving. So they drive round and check on all the cars, like if they've got neons on they're like 'Oh no you've got to get them off', cos they're distracting to other drivers I suppose. ... And er they check for different things, they check if like er you've got M.O.T and insurance, they check details like that.' (Sophie)

Despite its popularity amongst some teenagers, Wickes was not seen as a favourable place to be by all the teenagers involved in the study. For instance, Hayley, although she hangs around with Sophie in school prefers not to engage with her out of school activities, as she describes:

> 'Well we went once to Wickes but it was rubbish, it was really rubbish so we left early ... It was alright but we were just sitting in the back of a car. I just thought it was boring ... I dunno I've just got better things to do than just sit there. I think that's what Sophie likes doing but I dunno. I'd like rather be watching TV to be honest' (Hayley)

This quotation is useful in exploring the multiple meanings attached to a space. Whereas for Sophie, Wickes is an intensely exciting and sociable place and for Leah it is an emotionally safe space, for Hayley, the space reveals little inspiration or excitement. It is a space she has experienced, but chooses not to revisit. Similarly, Hayley and her other non-Wickes going friends also despair at the 'lapping' activities of boy racers within the town centre:

> S: Boy racers [in town], they're really annoying as well
> B: They go past all the time
> H: Yeah it's just a circuit round town, past McDonalds
> S: Yeah, and then you'll see the same car like ten times
> H: It's like we're trying to cross the road by McDonalds and they're just speeding
> S: With their duff duff duff music (Sarah, Ben and Hayley)

Wickes, like many other teenage spaces is a temporary, ephemeral space taking place only at night, in-between the conventional use of the car park when the retail stores are open. Although some teenagers would visit the space during the day with friends in cars, the atmosphere was not as dramatic as at night when modified cars are able to claim and spread themselves across the whole space. It is not as easy to disrupt or subvert the car park during a conventional 'shopping day'. Instead, Wickes only becomes enacted at night when all the regular shoppers have gone and the shops have closed meaning modified car enthusiasts (re)claim the space. In this way it is an impermanent spatiality, it (re)appropriates but it does not permanently manifest itself. When the modified car enthusiasts and teenagers leave, the performative ethos of Wickes evaporates, returning the car park to its previous conventional state. No physical traces are left behind, unlike the

graffiti markers and skateboarding wax. Instead, to return to ideas of nomadism used previously, teenagers' relationship with Wickes can be likened to the nomads' relationship to the earth, that is:

> 'one of transitory attachment and cyclical frequentation; the antithesis of the farmer, the nomad gathers, reaps, and exchanges but does not exploit' (Braidotti 1994: 25).

Rural spaces

As previously discussed, given the dispersed catchment area of the research school some pupils live in rural villages on the outskirts of the town. The purpose of this section is to explore how rural spaces are important in the hanging out practices of some teenagers. Chapter Six demonstrated the problems other groups of teenagers, in particular scallies, presented for some participants in the town centre. However, the interviews revealed that similar problems also occur in rural areas. Take for example Lizzy and Emma. The girls live a few streets apart in one particular rural village. The previous chapter associated the girls with a neo-tribe that gathered at The Bridge however, this has been a fairly recent development in their social activities. When I first encountered the pair, they usually just socialised with each other outside of school, rather than interacting with other groups. Mainly because Lizzy had previously told me she felt shy about interacting with other teenagers, but also because Emma had been bullied close to her house, as they described during our first meeting:

> E: I don't go out on my own. It's cos the neighbourhood where we live, I live on Bottom Road and the next road down is the next village, and that's just not a nice place. That's where all the scallies are, but they're gradually moving up into our neighbourhood
> L: Yeah, they're kind of taking over our territory if you know what I mean
> E: I'm confined to two houses at the moment, because of the kids in the neighbourhood - my house and Lizzy's
> L: Yeah that's why we go up the field and the lanes because they don't go around there
> E: They stay around the houses whereas we like to go away into more open spaces
> L: Cos there's loads of back lanes and stuff in the village so we just go for walks, they don't go there (Emma and Lizzy)

As the above conversation highlights, Emma and Lizzy prefer not to go out on their own around where they live because of the other groups of teenagers. However, the scallies

tend to confine themselves to the residential areas of the villages, leaving space for the girls to escape into the surrounding rural areas. Not only do these spaces provide safe areas for the girls, the deserted nature of the lanes and fields, away from both the scallies and adults allows them a freedom they do not have in more residential areas:

> E: We just go for walks and mess around, adventures, we go walking up hills
> L: It's great when you're walking around cos no one can hear us. There's like no houses so you hardly see anyone for like a few miles, so I don't know you can just run around and be free
> E: Yeah we can do what we want can't we? We don't have to be careful (Emma and Lizzy)

The girls' conversations emphasise the freedoms associated with rural areas where they are largely left to their own devices, without the fear of being watched by others. This was also the case for Zoe, who lives in another rural village. Zoe similarly gets annoyed by large groups of other teenagers hanging around the main street in her village, as she describes when talking about the photograph she took of the street:

Photograph 7.19 Main street in the village –Photographer: Zoe

'There's the main street in the village and you always find teenagers there, loads of teenagers just go there. When I used to walk by myself, I used to try and avoid it because I had an unpleasant experience once from walking near there and I didn't want to go through that again. They're weren't very nice to me. I was walking by myself with Toby [the dog] and they weren't very nice to me so I did avoid that road for ages. This was in the mornings though [that I took the photograph] so it didn't really matter.' (Zoe)

Zoe goes on to explain how she feels like an outsider to the other groups of teenagers in her village. Instead of socialising with them, she prefers just to hang around with her best friend Tom and sometimes her sister Ruth. As Zoe describes when talking about other young people in her village:

Z: Yeah a lot of people my age live in the village. But they're like usually in groups. Me and Tom we're sort of like the outsiders sort of thing, cos we just hang around with each other
K: Would you like to be part of the groups?
Z: No. Well Tom knows them and he's like 'Oh Hi Hi', but I'm just like okay Tom can we just go and walk, I just want to go for a nice walk. I don't like the looks they give me, I don't like these people I just want to go away
K: What is it that you don't like about them?
Z: I don't know really, they're like, they're quite gobby.

In Chapter Five, we saw how at times Zoe feels she must perform an older role when with her peers, especially in school and when they go to the park. She feels that when she is with them it is no longer appropriate to jump around and act silly and child-like, instead she has to undertake a form of Goffman's (1959) 'impression management'. However, as the following conversation about her photographs reveals, when she is with Tom and her sister in quieter rural areas, like the White Bridge and the lead mines, she is able to perform a more childish role inventing games to play:

'Well places like the White Bridge and the lead mines are the places we mainly hang around in, because they're like nice places, like White Bridge has a river. Lead mines is our own area, it's one area like further up but there's like a patch of grass in front, in front of the road and we just sit there for ages like. Last Saturday we spent about 4 hours there just like listening to the radio and just muck about, that's really the time when we really muck about like kids and stuff like that again ... Cos usually it's cars or bikers going past and when some go past we shout 'hiya, how are you?', and then it's like oh he's nice he waved, he didn't wave, aww! And we just sit there doing that ... Or for some reason we always have to start a competition - who kicks the shoe the furthest. ... I think that's Tom's, is that Tom's

shoe there in the photo? Oh is it. Yes, Tom's shoe, Tom's shoe on the floor, and you can see Ruth's shoe flying through the air (laughs).' (Zoe)

Photograph 7.20 The White Bridge – Photographer: Zoe

Photograph 7.21 Who can kick their shoe the furthest? – Photographer: Zoe

Photograph 7.22 Climbing at tree at The Bridge – Photographer: Lizzy

To return to Lizzy and Emma, over the course of the research they became friends with two other girls in school Kelly and Alannah. Through this new friendship, Lizzy and Emma were introduced to The Bridge neo-tribe. From then on, most afternoons during the week all the girls would travel home with Kelly on the school bus. Kelly's house provided the central meeting point for other members of the neo-tribe who went to different schools. The group would then venture on to The Bridge.

The Bridge is in a different village to where Emma and Lizzy live therefore they avoid many of their previous confrontations with the scallies. Given its location at the bottom of a steep hill, The Bridge provides a useful terrain for bike races. Although it is a road open to traffic, very few cars actually travel through the space, meaning the teenagers are able to use the width of the road. While at times the group do just sit and chat, they also engage in more active pursuits such as climbing trees, particularly the boys as shown in photograph 7.22, bike races and during the warm weather they go swimming in the part of the river

photographed by Emma (photograph 7.23). The spontaneity and variation in their activities was by described by Lizzy and Alannah when asked what they do at The Bridge:

> L: Well, we think we don't do much cos basically all we do is hang around The bridge, go home, go to school, hang around The Bridge, go home. That's all we do, day after day
> A: Yeah, but for some reason we go to the same place everyday but always some more happens. Something different
> L: Yeah something different happens everyday

Photograph 7.23 The river at The Bridge – Photographer: Emma

At first, the girls berate their activities as seemingly boring and repetitive because they have the same routine day after day. However, as their photographs and conversations revealed the group are always inventing new things to occupy themselves. This was particularly highlighted on the go-along. While I was chatting to some of the girls, one of the boys, Stu, began to tear down some orange coloured plastic fencing that he had found at the side of the road. Stu attached the flexible fencing to the top of The Bridge and began to haul himself up from the water below. This prompted an audience from the rest of the group at the top of The Bridge, who were all looking down and shouting things like 'go Spiderman,

climb Spiderman!'. Following Stu's Spiderman adventures, the fencing was then held across the width of the road by two other teenagers for the bike riders to cycle underneath. The fencing was lowered each time so the riders had to effectively 'limbo' to pass under, as in image 7.24.

Image 7.24 Biking under the orange fencing – still image from filmed go-along

Through repeated interviews, Emma, Lizzy and Alannah commented on how being in the countryside provided space for them to run around and mess about, a popular term they used to describe their behaviour was 'hyperactive'. However, this type of behaviour, especially when in such a large gang of approximately 10 or 11 teenagers, at times meant they received stares from other adults walking their dogs near to The Bridge. As a large group wearing Goth and scally style clothing, a scene perhaps more common in urban rather than rural areas, the girls felt they often looked 'out of place' in the countryside. As a way of counteracting the disapproving looks they received from some adults the girls make sure they are polite. While this was not a major problem for the group, they had never actually been in any trouble, they were aware of how they could be perceived by adults:

> L: I think it's weird though, like when we're all there, like people are walking past thinking 'oh there's a big scary gang'
> A: yeah
> L: It's quite strange that. Cos we're not scary, we're loud and a bit mad so people walk past and probably think oh look at them.
> E: But we are quite polite
> L: Yeah we do say 'hello, hello' (Lizzy, Alannah and Emma)

Similar problems involving encountered adults also influenced Jamie and his friend's choice of places to use in their local village. As described in the previous chapter, Jamie and his group of friends are the only visible gang in the village so tend to get targeted if any trouble occurs like for example, when the shed was set on fire. The group try therefore to seek out hidden spaces in the village out of the way of adults. A popular place is an abandoned house, known as 'The Arches' after the family who used to live there. As Jamie describes, through his photo-feedback interview, the house provides a sheltered space for him and his friends:

Photograph 7.25 The Arches – Photographer: Jamie

> 'This is a run down house in the village. It has got a roof on it so we go in there when it's raining and that ... it's almost pitch black inside but you can just have a laugh and a chat' (Jamie)

The house also has an old car in the back garden which the boys often use as part of their imaginative play. Similar, to the Goths and their use of trolleys and the skateboarders who make ramps out of shelving they find in rubbish skips, the group are inventive and creative in the ways they recycle elements left behind by adults. Photograph 7.25 shows Jamie and his friends at the car.

Photograph 7.26 The abandoned car – Photographer: Jamie

> 'It's just pretend. Like when we are messing about we pretend we are driving around town in it, like pretending to run people over and that.' (Jamie)

Jamie and his friends are not the only people to visit the abandoned house it is also used by two drug users, Paul and Andy who are similarly attempting to escape the watchful eyes of other residents in the village. Although Paul and Andy are never in the house when Jamie and his friends go their, the boys often find used syringes on the floor. Somewhat worryingly, one of Jamie's photographs was of his friend holding a syringe. Although we talked about the dangers of picking up used syringes during the interview, faced with few other sheltered places to go, the abandoned house remained an important part of the group's hanging out activities.

This chapter has taken a discursive wander around the spaces and places that teenagers use as part of their hanging out activities. Through probing various sites through both the visual and verbal narratives of teenagers and the ethnographic go-along, the chapter has set about deconstructing the metaphor of 'the street'. It has been demonstrated that 'street' comprises a multitude of spaces, each used in different ways by groups of teenagers.

Chapter Eight

Conclusion

This thesis set out to explore the experiences of a group of young teenagers occupying the ambiguous space(s) between childhood, youth and adulthood. From the onset the aim of the research has been to give teenagers a voice within children and young peoples' geographies, which has traditionally focussed upon the place use of younger children and those in middle to late childhood. Apart from a few significant studies (Matthews et al 1998; Matthews et al 1999; Matthews et al 2000; Skelton 2000; Matthews 2002), the experiences of young teenagers have remained relatively neglected. This research has intended to address this neglect, through involving a group of 14-16 year olds and exploring their subjective experiences and narratives. The study has sought to bring together theoretical ideas about identity and space, in order to interpret the multifarious identities and spatialities enacted by teenagers during their hanging out practices. The purpose of this final chapter is to bring together the main contributions and themes of the research, critically reflect on the journey and to suggest directions for future research.

Theoretical contributions

In developing a new theoretical approach to study teenagers' identities and spatialities, this thesis has developed a three-part framework based upon the concepts of liminality, neo-tribes and Thirdspace. Whilst other studies within children's geographies have drawn upon elements of these (see for example James 1986; Matthews et al 2000; Matthews 2000), the theoretical originality of this research comes from blending the three concepts together. Through this unique weaving of theoretical ideas, an alternative framework has been constructed to engage with and illuminate the experiences of teenagers in relation to their identities and spatialities. This section will now re-visit the framework laid out in Chapter Two, summarising and critiquing each concept, its relevance to teenagers' geographies and contribution to the study.

The first concept is the anthropological notion of liminality. Liminality has direct relevance to the study of teenagers, given its understanding of age as a stage in the life course. The concept has previously been used to highlight the 'in-between' positioning of those moving between culturally defined ages, states or spaces as part of the rites of passage process (see van Gennep 1960; Turner 1969; 1974). For this reason, it is a worthwhile idea for exploring the age-related experiences of teenagers wedged between childhood and adulthood. The liminal phase is viewed as a particularly ambiguous phase characterised by various contradictions and paradoxes, what Turner (1969; 1974) refers to as 'betwixt and betweeness'. In effect teenagers inhabit a borderland space located at the edge of two cultures. Parallels can therefore be drawn between the anthropological discourse of liminality and more contemporary work by post-colonial theorist Bhabha. For Bhabha, a liminal space or what he terms 'third space' is a space of ambivalence and hybridity, in which liminal beings are 'neither One not the Other, but something else besides, in-between' (1994: 224). The ideas of Turner and Bhabha dovetail in that they both recognise the transformative potential of the liminal or third space, particularly in relation to the creation of new identities. However, the concept of liminality does less to embrace or capitalise on the productive potential inherent within the space. Liminality in effect, is a structural phase through which individuals temporarily pass through between ages, stages or spaces. Subjects enter as 'A' undergo a period of transition and then leave as 'B', ready to enter the next structurally defined category. It is viewed as a necessary space of transition, rather than a creative and empowered space as implied by Bhabha and other theorists who locate their work within borderlands or spaces in-between (see for example Anzaldua 1987; hooks 1990; Soja 1996; Routledge 1996). Moreover within Turner's work on liminality, little attention is devoted to exploring the experiences of those undergoing the transition, meaning their subjective narratives of identity creation and transformation remain largely unexplored (see Myerhoff 1984). From the onset the intention of this thesis has been to explore the experiences of teenagers themselves, particularly in relation to their age and social and cultural identities.

Liminality forms part of the rite of passage process involving the symbolic crossing of borders and thresholds associated with changes in the life course. The rites of passage studied by van Gennep usually involve ritual ceremonies to celebrate the permanent transition between states. They tend to be 'one-shot only' affairs marked by clearly defined

boundaries and thresholds. However, this conceptualisation can not be readily transferred to contemporary societies where formal rituals are diminishing in importance and contradiction and confusion surround when childhood, youth and adulthood actually begin and end. Similarly within the process of individualisation (Giddens 1991; 1994; Beck 1992; 1994) the passage between childhood and adulthood is more fluid. Rather than consisting of a straightforward linear transition as in pre-modern times where individual biographies were scripted and embedded in factors such as class, gender and family background. Instead in contemporary reflexive societies the transition is experienced in different ways by a range of individuals (Wyn and White 1997; Valentine 2003). Nevertheless, the idea and practice of crossing thresholds or boundaries are still salient within teenage experience. Although formal institutional boundaries remain ambiguous, other informal passages exist that teenagers choose to enact for themselves. These may appear relatively trivial or banal activities, such as gaining access to the adult defined space of a public house, engaging with adult icons such as alcohol and adult practices such as driving in cars or getting drunk. However, they all involve the transgression of age related borders or boundaries. They are not necessarily 'complete' rites of passage, nor do they confer a permanent change in status but instead can be described as temporary or 'quasi rites of passage' (Crapanzano 1992; Northcote 2006). For these reasons, it is useful to theorise young teenagers as occupying a borderland territory. Such an approach engenders a more flexible space from which to navigate and traverse the borders and beyond. In this way, boundaries or thresholds can be (re)crossed time and time again without conferring a permanent change in status. Thereby engaging more with the ephemeral, or weekend identity practices of teenagers.

Liminality and borderlands theories have been used to illuminate teenagers' identities and practices in relation to their age. Teenagers' identity practices can also be considered in terms of the social and cultural identities that they construct for themselves and with others. This leads us onto the second pillar of the framework – neo-tribes. Traditionally teenage identities have been studied through subcultural analysis, originating in the work of the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) in the 1970s. For members of the CCCS, the dominant focus of study was the styles embraced by youth cultures, which were seen as signifying resistance to class based structures. The main emphasis of the work was on the forms of rebellion expressed by groups, particularly working class males through

deviant and unruly behaviours. Studies concentrated far more on 'spectacular events' rather than the everyday or weekend identity practices this thesis concentrated on. In an attempt to move away from conventional subcultural theory with its overriding focus on resistance to class and adult authority, this thesis drew upon recent work on neo-tribal notions of identity practices, alongside individualisation theory. This combined approach follows the thinking that teenage identity practices, rather then being solely dependent upon sociological parameters such as class, ethnicity and gender are following Bennett (1999), constructed by teenagers themselves and fluid rather than fixed.

The concept of neo-tribes is particularly useful for looking at the social and cultural groupings teenagers form through processes of identification with others. Neo-tribes, in contrast to more permanent anthropological tribes, are characterised by temporal and fleeting memberships, fluidity and localised gatherings. All of which resonate with the hanging out practices of teenagers, in particular on a Saturday afternoon in the spaces in and around the town centre, or week nights after school in local neighbourhoods. The groups are maintained through the shared beliefs and styles of its members and highlight the intensely social aspect of hanging out, whether with a few friends or a larger group (see also Shields 1992a; 1992b; 1996; Malbon 1998; 1999; Bennett 1999).

As detailed in Chapter Two and demonstrated throughout the empirical chapters, identity is a spatially situated process (Shields 1991; 1992b; Hetherington 1998a). In this way, particular sites take on alternative meanings as they become socially central in the practices of the neo-tribe. This highlights the importance of hanging out places for teenagers in spaces in and around the town centre and local neighbourhoods, as well as event spaces associated with particular occasions such as football matches for Frontline Youth or Unchained for Goths. These spaces are important for teenagers as sites where they can gather to perform and affirm their group identity.

What neo-tribal theory fails to consider however, is the potential collisions that occur between rival groups. This becomes particularly relevant when, as this thesis has demonstrated, an area is occupied by variously complementary and competing neo-tribes. As a way of addressing this neglect within the framework, it is useful to draw on ideas of 'entanglements' to explore how power becomes intertwined or entangled between groups

(Sharp et al 2000). Moreover, the concept of entanglements can also be applied to the power struggles between adults and teenagers, as well as between teenagers themselves. While pervasive discourses have tended to rely on the adult/child binary that predicts a uni-directional flow of power, considering the influence of power as 'entangled' and inherently spatial means that this process becomes more complex. So far the framework has concentrated on aspects of teenagers' identity in relation to both their age, as liminal beings in-between childhood and adulthood and also the alternative cultural and social identities they construct for themselves and with others through neo-tribes. All these ideas can be brought together, or more importantly geographically located within the realm of Thirdspace, the foremost pillar in the framework.

Thirdspace presents the potential for expanding the scope of our geographical imaginations about the spatiality of life. To summarise what was explained in Chapter Two, for Soja (1996; 1999), this involves moving beyond a Firstspace perspective that focuses on the 'real', material world and a Secondspace perspective conceived in the realm of the imagination to meet a Thirdspace of multiple 'real-and-imagined' or 'realandimagined' places. For him, echoing Lefebvre (1991), two terms or oppositional processes are never enough, for example Firstspace/Secondspace, adult/child, centre/margin, domination/resistance. Instead, there is always a third term that disrupts and disorders binary conceptualisations, re-ordering them into a form that is more than just the sum of two parts. The adoption of a Thirdspace approach within this thesis is two-fold. Firstly, it seeks to disrupt existing academic research and policy that have relied upon the adult/child binary, effectively excluding or silencing the experiences of teenagers who are located both within one side of the binary and also between the divide. Through occupying a Thirdspace stance, the conventional adult/child dualism becomes subverted and teenagers' are effectively given a voice and space in which to narrate their own experiences.

Secondly, Thirdspace is productive in illuminating the ways in which spaces are used by teenagers through their hanging out and identity practices. Matthews et al (2000), in their study of teenage hanging out practices draw on the concept of Thirdspace to explore the 'street' as a place where 'young people can gather to affirm their sense of difference ... places [that] are 'won out' from the fabric of adult society' (2000: 64). This thesis sought to build upon this study through exploring the topology of alternative spaces and places that

comprise the 'street' for teenagers. It has been found that the metaphor of the 'street' can be deconstructed to involve a range of spaces and places from informal to formal spaces, from underground to performative spaces. Some of which have been 'won out' from the fabric of adult society and others from the landscape that has become (re)produced by other teenagers. What is most important is the creative and inventive practices that teenagers engage in to ensure their claim on certain spaces.

In empirical terms, as a space of 'radical openness', Thirdspace speaks to a range of different spatialities; lived spaces (Lefebvre 1991), marginal spaces (Shields 1991; Hetherington 1998a), homeplaces (hooks 1990), temporary autonomous zones (Bey 1991) and heterotopic spaces (Foucault 1986; Hetherington 1997; 1998a), all of which where detailed in Chapter Two. Through uncovering this topology of Thirdspace, these spatialities became relevant in illuminating the spaces teenagers use as part of their identity and spatial practices. Therefore Thirdspace, or more importantly the journey into Thirdspace was important in deconstructing the 'street' and revealing the range of different spaces used by teenagers, what Soja would call the micro- or site geography of Thirdspace (1996: 157). This framework was developed in order to engage with or illuminate teenagers' experiences in relation to their identity and spatial practices when hanging out. In order to access these experiences a methodological approach was needed that engaged with their lifestyles and enabled teenagers themselves to (re)present their own subjective experiences and narratives. The next section considers the methodological contributions of the research.

Methodological contributions

The methodological contribution of this research lies in its innovative mutli-modal approach, encompassing a range of methods and places that sought to access teenage lived experience. Moreover, the actual experience of 'doing research' provides much insight for others engaged in work with teenagers. The purpose of this section is to summarise the methodological process, drawing out and reflecting upon key moments and highlighting important issues that have much to contribute to the field of teenagers' geographies.

First and foremost the thesis is about the experiences of young teenagers, therefore a methodological approach was needed that placed teenagers are the centre of the research. Throughout the project teenagers were actively engaged in defining their own identities and the spaces and places they used to hang around in. In order to achieve this, initial stages of the research were based in a secondary school. By adopting this location, many of the problems detailed by Leyshon (2002) and that I had previously encountered when attempting to access teenagers in public spaces were overcome (see Jones 2001). Moreover, choosing this detached location meant teenagers were active in defining the spaces and places they use for hanging around, which then formed central themes within the research. In the first instance the school was a useful location in which to mobilise the research, enabling access to a range of teenagers all with alternative identities and spatialities. Similarly the school provided daily contact with participants across a long period of time, which meant I was able to develop deeper relationships with teenagers than would have been possible during one off or shorter research encounters. These personal bonds infiltrated the research, with teenagers often revealing more intimate and nuanced accounts of their activities than if I had been a 'stranger' researcher.

The power (in)balance between adults and children or teenagers in research is well documented in existing literatures (Mayall 1994; Qvortrup 1994; Morrow and Richards 1996; Matthews 1998; Matthews and Tucker 2000; Matthews 2001). This issue becomes particularly relevant within the context of the school where adults are naturally afforded positions of authority and teenagers have to comply with the rules and regulations dictated by these figures. In an attempt to disrupt these relations, drawing on the work of Soja (1996), Routledge (1996) and Anderson (2002) and the ideas explored in Chapter Two, the research adopted a Thirdspace approach. This method was useful in enabling me to access and yet weave between, what Valentine (2000) calls the two worlds of school life: the official world of teachers and authority, which I was reliant upon in gaining access to pupils and maintaining a place within the school, and the informal world of pupils whose hanging out experiences I wanted to uncover. Through my tactical inhabitation of the school, in particular adopting unusual places such as the school storecupboard and associating myself with 'lunchtimes not lessons', I was able to weave between this two worlds and create my own productive Thirdspace.

Through placing teenagers at the centre of the research, the use of methods they felt able to engage with and (re)present their experiences through was vital. Therefore a range of 'teenager-negotiated' methods became incorporated into the project. Discussions with volunteers revealed emphasis should be more on 'talk' rather than writing and a preference for visual methods such as photography and film. Given that these activities are already incorporated into teenage hanging out practices, the use of such methods created a more naturalised research process successful in engaging a range of participants.

Initially a questionnaire was distributed amongst all year 10 and 11 pupils, the aim being to gather broad data about teenagers experiences in the town. Whilst this was useful in generating themes for discussion, later more in-depth research highlighted many of the nuances that had remained hidden within questionnaire answers. It was only through later more verbal and visual methods, was I able to engage more fully with teenagers' lived experiences. The use of teenager photographs resembled a portable method, creating a bridge between the detached research setting of the school and the more informal hanging out places. Through their photographs teenagers were able to reflect and detail many of the spaces and places they used as part of their identity and spatial practices. Later stages of the research involved mobilising the research through go-alongs that involved participating in the hanging out spaces of teenagers. Go-alongs provided a practical means to explore the movements of participants between and through spaces, encompassing the fluidity of teenagers' spatial practices. Similarly, they also provided opportunities to discuss activities or events as they occurred, capturing something of the spontaneity of teenage practices alongside the more mundane and banal routines. Some participants also felt more at ease than within the school context in revealing their intimate and emotive attachments to some places, as safe places or therapeutic spaces. Moreover, the insights revealed through interacting with participants and places as part of the go-along were complemented by my own experiences of the same situations. In particular the sensory experiences such as sitting on damp grass or cold walls, the smell of petrol fumes, the noise of car stereos and mobile phones, all of which come together to define what Latham refers to as the 'sensuous, embodied, creativeness of social practice' (2003: 1998). Through my own experience of specific spaces and actually participating with teenagers, I felt better able to understand and appreciate many of their hanging out activities.

The actual 'doing of research' highlighted two issues in particular which have rarely been reflected upon within existing literatures involving research with teenagers. The first concerns situational ethics. This type of ethics differs from the procedural ethics mandated by institutional ethics committees concerning informed consent, confidentiality, privacy, harm and so on. These issues and practices are often covered within existing literatures however, little has been written about the alternative form of ethics in practice and how to deal with unpredictable, often subtle yet ethically important moments in the field. Several of these 'moments' occurred during my research with teenagers centring upon drug use, under-age drinking, abuse and bullying. It is hoped that through critically reflecting upon these issues, insight can be offered to other researchers who might face similar problems. Secondly, the research highlighted the issue of emotions and the potential although at times unexpected, for interviewing to uncover, or even promote in participants highly emotive responses.

The adoption of this unique multi-modal and longitudinal approach, and through continually reflecting on the research process both myself and with participants, enabled the research to access important elements of teenagers' 'lived' experience. The following sections detail the main empirical contributions through (re)engaging with the main themes that have permeated the research.

Empirical contributions: research themes

- **Teenagers' negotiations of their identities in relation to 'age'**

This research has highlighted the multifarious experiences of teenagers in relation to their 'age'. In particular the ambiguities associated with occupying a liminal position betwixt and between childhood, youth and adulthood were emphasised with teenagers describing the contradictory and paradoxical discourses they find themselves located in, such as: 'You're young you can't do that, you're old you should know better'. It was revealed that teenagers experienced various exclusions on the basis of their numerical age and demonstrated how within certain spaces, usually commercial areas, they become perceived as unruly 'devils' by adult security guards, police or other users of the space. Moreover, particular styles of clothing, such as Goth clothes and hooded tops were also presented as factors in teenage demonisation by adults. However, such processes of exclusion were

often resisted by teenagers as they sought to create alternative spaces for themselves. In addition, several teenagers sought to manipulate aspects of their performance or identity to create an older role, enabling them to access adult-regulated spaces such as public houses and nightclubs, which operate under specific age entrance requirements. In order to ensure an 'older' performance, elements of the physical body such as tallness or bodily hair were important, as well as stylistic rituals such as dressing up or wearing make-up.

The research adds further empirical texture to the work of Sibley (1995) through exploring how teenagers go about actively negotiating, resisting and traversing boundaries in relation to their age. The empirical detail similarly highlighted the heterogeneous experiences of teenagers in their creation and negotiation of identities. While some were content enacting what they described as 'typical teenage' activities, such as hanging around and under-age drinking, others feeling they have outgrown these activities and instead attempt to associate with adult spaces such as public houses and nightclubs or older friend's houses and cars. In contrast, some teenagers felt pressured to perform a specific teenage role whilst still wanting to retain their links with childhood. In summary, the research demonstrated that it is useful to conceptualise the teenage years as a revolving door, in-between childhood, youth and adulthood, enabling teenagers to oscillate and engage (even if only temporarily) with each world.

- **Teenagers' social and cultural identities**

The research explored the performative topology of identity clusters within the town and outlying villages as defined by teenagers themselves. The main groupings in the town centre comprised scallies, Goths, basketballers and skateboarders and the more peripheral or event based group Frontline Youth. Other groupings, although they did not have specific names comprised teenagers all hanging around together in the same space, such as neighbourhood groupings. The groups exhibit characteristics similar to the concept of neo-tribes in that they are fluid and changeable across time, space and social relations rather than fixed. Emphasis is also upon individuals being able to choose which identity groupings they associate with, rather than being tied purely to class as with previous subcultural analysis. Similarly, although emphasis was on the creation of alternative social and cultural identities, the groups were not formed as a way of resisting adult domination,

instead it was about sharing an identity and interest with others, about being different and embracing a particular style of dress, activity or taste in music.

Similar to other studies that have focussed on the neglect of females within subcultural analysis, the research reveals that participation in neo-tribes is just as important for girls as for boys, with girls readily identifying themselves as scallies, Goths, Hip-Hop girls and so on. The findings add further empirical texture to more recent studies within children's geographies and anthropology which have focussed upon teenage identity groups as 'micro-cultures' (Wulff 1995; Matthews et al 1998). While micro-cultures have previously been used as a term to describe such groups, this research has gone on to explore how teenagers move between 'micro-cultures' or neo-tribes across time and space, and to explore the more affective and emotive feelings of 'being together' that become heightened during specific occasions such as at the Unchained nightclub for Goths and the performative festival space of Wickes car park, similar to Malbon's (1999) study of on clubbing cultures.

- **Identity spaces**

The topology of neo-tribes also highlighted the importance of space in the creation and performance of identities. Such sites comprise a vital part in the formation of these groups with certain spaces becoming associated with certain neo-tribes, particularly on a Saturday afternoon within the town centre or week nights in local neighbourhoods. In this way, certain spaces have a social centrality in that they provide a focus for the articulation of identities and create a sense of belonging and togetherness (Shields 1991; 1992b). In other words, particular settings take on a symbolic significance around which alternative neo-tribal identities become enacted (Hetherington 1998a).

In exploring the network of neo-tribes across the research town, a variety of spaces were identified as important in the creation and maintenance of these identities, with groups having a reputation for inhabiting certain spaces. For instance, central areas of the town centre, in particular the space outside McDonalds became associated with the scally neo-tribe, a site from which males scallies performed territorial 'laps' exerting control over other teenagers attempting to encroach the space. In contrast, a group of Goths chose to occupy more marginal spaces on the outskirts of the town centre out of the way of other

teenagers, particularly scallies who the group often collided with and also adults who perceived their style of dress to be demonic. Another group of Goths sought refuge in the nearest city where they felt more 'at home' amongst a larger Goth population, again out of the way of scallies. For the majority of Goths, a feeling of 'temporary communitas' or 'being togetherness' was generated through the occasion space of Unchained – a Goth theme night for under 18s at a local nightclub. The Park provides a socially central site for basketballers to enact their identity through their association with the basketball courts. However, The Park has a dynamic temporal ordering in that it is used by the basketballers during the day, but at night, when the gates are locked the site becomes a hanging out place for teenagers engaged in under-age drinking practices, away from surveillant adults and the police. The skateboarders in the study utilise a range of spaces, each of which becomes important for the performance of their identity through their actual embodiment of the space. Rather than simply passively inhabiting sites, skateboarders use the boards as an extension of their bodies to physically experience the surfaces and textures of the landscape.

It is important to note that it is not only for specific named neo-tribal groupings that certain spaces become significant. Other spaces were similarly inhabited by teenagers who, although not identifying themselves as a named identity grouping, equally valued the collective spatial experience of coming together. An overview of the topology of neo-tribes and their spatial associations resonates with the cultural heterotopias talked about by Foucault (1986) and later Hetherington (1998a). The idea of heterotopia as 'capable of juxtaposing in a single real place several spaces, several sites that are themselves incompatible' (Foucault 1986: 25) accords with the matrix of heterogeneous identity spaces that become created through the spaces in and around the town centre. As detailed in Chapter Six, this heterotopia, or juxtaposition of usually incompatible neo-tribes has meant a 'spatial equilibrium' has developed across the town. The equilibrium is usually achieved through harmonious social relations between groups and individuals, the mobile practices of groupings enabling a sharing of space and similarly a shift in the temporal occupation of spaces. However, at times these social, mobile and temporal orderings become disrupted which leads to collisions as will be discussed below.

- **Entanglements of power**

The research has demonstrated numerous examples of what Tucker (2003) calls 'generation' based exclusions. Throughout the study teenagers recalled incidents when they had felt excluded or discriminated against on the basis of their age, for example by security guards and assistants in shops, adult users of public spaces and the police for loitering around in large groups. While it cannot be denied that the teenagers do certainly withstand much adult jurisdiction and at times rebel against it, adult and teenager relations are often more complex. For instance, CCTV cameras have conventionally been viewed as an adult method of surveillance and control over perceived unruly teenagers, resonant with attempts to exclude teenagers from public spaces. Inversely, however, questionnaire responses revealed that CCTV often enables some teenagers to feel safer within the town centre. This echoes findings from a study by Woolley et al (1999) in a range of UK cities, who similarly found that young people felt safer in areas where CCTV was operating. Although Woolley et al's study involved younger children (aged 10-12), it is interesting to observe how some teenagers express positive support for such mechanisms as guarantors of safety, rather than devices designed to control and monitor their behaviour. Although of course, this was not the view of all teenagers as some chose specifically not to use spaces covered by CCTV cameras.

While interactions with adults do comprise an important part of their geographies, teenagers negotiate and embrace identities and difference other than those centring on age. This thesis has demonstrated how conflicts and collisions between both teenager neo-tribal identity groupings and individual teenagers comprise a significant element of hanging out practices, often more so than adult collisions. Teenage identity performances and spatial practices can therefore more usefully be seen as 'entanglements of power' (Sharp et al 2000), a scenario in which the 'knots or nodes' of teenage tribes are connected by a 'multitude of relations variously of domination and resistance' (Massey 2000), with various groupings simultaneously dominating or controlling certain spaces and others resisting or (re)claiming alternative sites. As Chapter Six demonstrated, scallies appeared to be the dominant grouping within the town centre, exerting significant control over certain spaces, particularly the main shopping area and space outside McDonalds. Through repeated interviews, it appeared several teenagers had at some point collided with a scally group, although it was not limited to conflicts solely with scallies. Instead of teenagers employing

tactics to resist adult domination, a common theme within the geographical literature, tactics had to be devised to avoid conflict or 'fit in' amongst peers. While many teenagers were successful in devising spatial or stylistic practices in dealing with such collisions, for example Goths retreated to out of the way spaces not used by scallies, and others adopted fluid identity practices in order to blend in with dominant groupings however, the perceived threat of conflict was a pressing issue for many involved in the study. Collisions ranged from symbolic acts of violence such as staring, name calling and intimidation to physical acts, some of which had deeply traumatic effects on the individuals involved. These findings highlight the importance of enabling teenagers access to safe spaces in which they are able to socialise with friends, unhindered by others.

- **Deconstructing the 'street'**

A major theoretical and empirical objective of the research was to deconstruct or unpack a more nuanced understanding of the spaces and places that comprise the 'street' for teenagers. The previous empirical chapters have demonstrated how spaces are used by teenagers in ways which are inventive and sometimes unpredicted. It was shown that through teenagers' creativity, alternative practices are introduced that often contradict the normative use of space. Through these creative transgressions certain spaces, at certain times and through certain gatherings, become (re)defined, producing temporary or ephemeral zones inhabited by teenagers.

For instance we have visited marginal spaces in and around the town centre, alleyways, abandoned car parks and dis-used spaces; the disordered space 'under the flyover' itself in-between developments; the more formal space of The Park; Wickes car park as a festival or performance space and a range of rural village spaces. These examples emphasise that it is not always necessary to provide 'activities' for teenagers, instead an important part of their spatial practices involve accessing relatively unstructured spaces that can be made their own through their inventive practices. Teenagers have shown similar creativity through their effective recycling of many of the materials found in some spaces. For instance, abandoned trolleys become an important part of games and messing around, skateboarders often reclaim pieces of shelving and wood they find in skips and use them to build ramps and jumps, and similarly, many materials from the abandoned house became used by the boys in their rural village, especially the car in the back garden that became an important

part of their imaginative play. It is important to note that although the main focus of the research was on outdoor spaces, the routes and wanderings of teenagers are often interjected by indoor spaces such as friend's bedrooms, older friend's rented houses or bedsits, public houses when they can pass at being older and get served alcohol, some youth clubs and the micro-space of cars.

In the same way that teenage identities are constantly changing, heterogeneous and 'becoming', the same can be said of spaces. This research set out to challenge the normative construction of the street as adult space, through demonstrating how teenagers (re)order or (re)produce an alternative landscape through their identity and spatial practices. Using the theoretical concept of Thirdspace and a range of other spatialities which resonate with the idea (such as heterotopic spaces, Lived spaces and crumpled spaces), we have already seen how normative binary constructions of space can become disrupted. Such ideas imply a (re)ordering of space and therefore converge with the spatial logic of fluidity and multiplicity.

Moving on...: future directions for research and practice

Extending the methodology:

Action research films

The multi-modal approach of collecting data is one of the strongest elements of this thesis with each method revealing particular insight into teenagers' lived experiences. Here I would like to reflect particularly on the use of video within the project. The video camera alongside go-alongs allowed participant's to create their own fluid representation of spaces and was useful in exploring their relationships with particular places. However, I feel there is scope for future research projects to engage further with this method. Given my time in the field came to an end after the go-alongs were completed, it has not been possible to include participants in the editing of the videos. Similarly, I feel the video data within this project, has not been used to its full capacity. The narratives were transcribed thereby turning them into textual format and removing the important visual element. Moreover, given the ethical issues surrounding the use of images of children and young people any recognisable people have been edited out of the footage when I have used it to present at conferences. Perhaps I worry unnecessarily, but I feel this is a particular grey area within

research (a feeling iterated at the Ethics in Participatory Research session at the RGS/IBG conference 2006). Taking a critical stance, the video camera in this research was used primarily as an 'access' tool, a tool for accessing the hanging out space of teenagers, their interactions with and use of spaces, and recording their visual and verbal narratives of a space. I feel there is the potential however, to develop this method further, enabling more of an action research approach whereby teenagers work with professional film makers to produce and edit their own films about their local areas. Unfortunately the lack of technical and financial resources meant this what not really possible during the course of this project.

Creating a Facebook group

Similarly, I feel it an ethical weakness that the resultant thesis has not been more fully shared with participants, especially now it has reached its final stages. Whilst I was engaged in many discussions with participants throughout the fieldwork about the direction of the project, this contact diminished when I left the research school thereby removing the possibility of providing feedback or updates to participants. However, given recent developments in social networking sites on the Internet such as Facebook, I feel this could be a potentially fruitful way of maintaining contact with participants, sharing findings and receiving their input after leaving the field. For this reason I intend to attempt to make contact with participants through developing a Facebook group. The group would be designed to enable only those teenagers who participated in the project to join rather than outside strangers. The site could also be used to collate many of the photographs amassed during the research providing consent from participants was received.

Themes the research has raised:

Neo-tribal links with class

As discussed above and in Chapter Two, neo-tribal theory is based upon the idea that identity is not necessarily tied to class. Whilst no substantive data was collected from participants about their socio-economic backgrounds or 'class', some participants felt that identity groupings could actually be related to class, or more specifically to where a teenager lived. For instance, it was revealed through interviews that scallies lived on the council estates, whereas Goths and skateboarders tended to be more middle class. However, this did not always appear to be the case and, whilst being mindful of these considerations it would not be appropriate to homogenise either teenagers or identity

groupings in this way. Future research could however engage more with ideas about class in determining its influence in the creation of neo-tribal groupings. In particular, within the discourse of individualisation theory it would be fruitful to explore the significance of class and its relation to neo-tribes to determine whether it is a defining feature of the groups, or to use Beck's (2002) term, a 'zombie' category.

Neighbourhood bullying

The research revealed significant issues around bullying within the spaces of place of the town centre and local neighbourhoods. In contrast to school environments where bullying has increasingly been recognised and measures put in place to attempt to deal with the problem, neighbourhood bullying remains a neglected or hidden area of research and understanding. One study that has begun to address this issue is Percy-Smith and Matthews' *Tyrannical spaces* (2001), based in two contrasting neighbourhoods – the inner city and suburbs in a large east Midlands town. The study focussed on the experiences of 10-15 year olds and identified four main types of neighbourhood bullying: 'barging in' whereby older children move in on younger children's games, 'extortion' when children are threatened or coerced into participating in anti-social forms of behaviour, 'intimidation' involving threats, insults and taunts, and 'name calling'. Intimidation and name calling were frequently experienced by some teenagers within this thesis and were often linked to colliding neo-tribal identity practices. However, given that the teenagers in the thesis were older than those involved in Percy-Smith and Matthews' study, problems with 'older' young people were rarely, if ever a problem given that they tended to be the oldest teenagers hanging out.

In addition to intimidation and name calling, several female participants described how they had suffered violent physical attacks from other girls in their local neighbourhoods. As well as the physical injuries, the attacks had clearly had a great emotional impact upon the girls concerned; one was still received counselling and all still felt scared about being out in certain spaces. This contradicts findings in a review undertaken by Andrews and Chen (2006), which found that males are more likely than females to be involved in bullying. According to the review, males engage in bullying through the use of direct forms of aggression such as physical harm, whereas females tend to use more indirect forms such as spreading rumours and social exclusion. Empirical data within the thesis has

therefore highlighted a further hidden element to the already under-researched area of neighbourhood bullying, that of girl violence and further iterates the need for more substantive research on the problem.

Drug use/abuse

In addition to fears of neighbourhood bullying, the research revealed that for some teenagers their spatial practices are further curtailed by drug users in their local areas. For some participants, in particular those living on the local council estate but also outlying villages, encountering drug users and used syringes was a significant part of their everyday geographies. Whilst the teenagers concerned were quick to refute the habits of drug users as 'stupid' or 'dangerous', there still remains important concerns about the social environments in which these teenagers live and hang out. Moreover, several teenagers involved in the study themselves engaged in recreational drug use, such as smoking cannabis and drinking alcohol on a regular basis. Future research directives could explore the role of drugs (and alcohol) in the lives of teenagers, as an external factor they encounter in their day to day lives as well as drug use amongst young teenagers. The research also highlights the need for resources in local areas to enable out-reach work by health promotion and alcohol and drug advisors, in order to further educate teenagers about the dangers.

Young teenagers 'coming out'

Work by Valentine and Skelton (2003) has demonstrated the importance of the 'scene' comprising support groups and information for young people 'coming out' or identifying themselves as lesbian or gay. While their research focussed on youths aged 16-25, this thesis has highlighted the difficulties experienced by one particular young teenager in accessing help and support in negotiating his sexuality. For him, locating such a 'scene' within the town had been virtually impossible – the support group he was about to join had closed down because of a lack of resources and little information was available about other networks within the local area (both his mother and I had joined the search). Valentine and Skelton (2003) discuss the emotional and practical difficulties associated with coming out, especially for young people who often rely on support groups as a source of information about lesbian and gay culture, social and political rights and sexual health. This leads us to question what happens when such spaces are not available? Although Oli was the only

participant who identified himself as gay and talked about the problems he was experiencing, this does not mean he is suffering in isolation. Negotiating their sexuality is an important issue for many young people. Oli's experiences raise important issues in smaller urban and particularly rural areas, where gay and lesbian 'scenes' or at the very least, support groups are less common. I would therefore suggest that further research be orientated to investigate the provision of support groups for young teenagers. In doing so, I echo Valentine and Skelton's (2003) suggestions that there needs to be more funding allocated to create supportive spaces for young lesbian and gay teenagers.

Boy racers

Still within the realm of teenagers' or youth geographies, I feel it would be interesting to go on and undertake future research into the identity and spatial practices of boy racers or 'modified car enthusiasts'. This thesis has begun to engage with the work in geography and the social sciences about mobilities through ideas about roots and routes (Clifford 1996), nomadism (Braidotti 1994) and the use of a mobile ethnography, although there exists the potential to take this further and engage with the recent 'new mobilities paradigm' (Sheller and Urry 2006; Cresswell 2006), especially in relation to the spatialities and practices of youth car ownership and processes of car modification. While the social sciences have generally ignored the car and its consequences for urban life (although see special issue of *Theory, culture and society* 2004), studies of youth geographies have similarly neglected the place of the car within contemporary youth cultures (although see Barker's (2003) work on the experience of the car for young children). Studies which have considered cars and young people focus on joyriding as an expression of masculinity (Campbell 1993) or accidents amongst young working class males (Walker, Butland and Connell 2000) and road rage (Groombridge 1998). Such research however is limited to a focus on negative aspects of car usage and prominently male based research. In contrast the mobile ethnography at Wickes car park revealed both males and females as participants within the 'boy' racing culture, thereby disrupting the emphasis of previous studies. Similarly, the group's activities did not centre on particularly negative behaviours such as joy-riding or road rage but were instead focussed around the cultural significance of the car as a vehicle of identity expression. Using a similar go-along or mobile ethnographic approach as within this thesis, I would like to go on and explore the contemporary youth culture of 'modified car enthusiasts'. This could involve looking at the modified car as a vehicle for the

expression of their cultural (youth) identity; the place of girls within the 'boy' racer culture; the importance of the car as an aesthetic, emotional and sensory response to the city; and the network and nodes of boy racers across the virtual space of the Internet and localised spatial gatherings.

Concluding thoughts

This thesis set out to explore the identity and spatial practices of teenagers. Particular emphasis was on contributing to teenagers' geographies and giving participants a voice to detail their own experiences. The research found that teenage identities in relation to both their age and their neo-tribal groupings are fluid across time and space, with teenagers actively negotiating and transgressing the boundaries that attempt to define their worlds. The importance of outdoor spaces in for hanging out was highlighted and the creative and inventive practices teenagers engage in to (re)claim and (re)produce these spaces for their own ends. Moreover, the research demonstrated that teenagers are not only engaged in collisions with adults, but also with other groups of teenagers in forms of entanglements which becomes spatially manifested. Finally the thesis has generated new questions relating to teenagers' geographies and future research in this field.

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Appendix I: Access letters to Cardiff Schools

Mr Hoole
Fitzalan High School
Lawrenny Avenue
Cardiff
CF11 8XB

Dear Mr Hoole

I am an ESRC funded PhD student in the Department of City and Regional Planning at Cardiff University, studying young people and their use of public spaces within the city. My research aims to explore the importance of such spaces in the lives of young people in their transition between childhood and adulthood, and consequently how their appropriation of spaces interacts with other interests in the space.

As part of my research I would like to involve year 10 and 11 students from your school. Although I am aware of timetabling and national curriculum pressures, given the strong geographical focus of the project I am keen to introduce the initial stages of research as part of a geography lesson, or alternatively within a PSE session.

If possible, and at a time convenient to you I would like to come in and discuss my ideas and research with you, and in particular explore ways in which my work might dovetail with other project work that you might be planning. In particular I am interested in introducing a questionnaire into the work which I feel that the students themselves might contribute to.

All pupils who partake in the study will be assured confidentiality and privacy through the use of pseudonyms, as will the school.

I am currently in the process of going through police checking, as I know this is vital for me to access schools. However, if I could arrange a meeting with you or a colleague in the school, perhaps involved with geography or PSE, to discuss my ideas as a starting point I would be very grateful.

I look forward to hearing from you

Katie Jones

[contact details]

Appendix II: Access letter to research school

18th October 2004

Headteacher
School name
School address
North Wales Town

Dear Mr X

You may remember I visited school a few weeks ago to do some observational work in preparation for my PhD research about young people and public space. Although it was my original intention to carry out fieldwork in Cardiff, [town's name] has since presented itself as a more favourable, compact study area in which to base the study. As a former pupil, given my relations with staff at the school and my own knowledge about [school name], I would like to involve school name] pupils within the project.

As I explained to you briefly when I visited school, I am an ESRC funded student within the School of City and Regional Planning at Cardiff University. My research aims to explore the importance of urban public spaces in the lives of young people in their transition between childhood and adulthood, and consequently how their appropriation of spaces interacts with other interests in the space.

The initial part of the research will involve a short questionnaire to be distributed across years 10 and 11, as a means of setting the context for the research and as a tool for recruiting volunteers for more in-depth work. The in-depth work would include activities with disposable cameras, simple creative mapping exercises, discussions about newspaper reporting and focus group interviews. I realise the majority of research will probably have to be carried out within the students' own time, however when I was visiting school, it was mentioned that the potential exists for some elements to be included within PSE sessions. Although the research is mainly about young people's activities outside of school, pupils will be encouraged to think about issues such as community, sense of place and belonging, and positive and negative stereotyping, elements which I am interested in incorporating within the remit of PSE. At this stage there is great scope for parts of the research to be formulated in a way beneficial to both the study and [school name].

All pupils who partake in the study will be assured confidentiality and privacy through the use of pseudonyms, as will the school. The information collected will be used solely for the purpose of my PhD thesis.

I look forward to hearing from you

Katie Jones
[contact details]

Appendix III: Parental consent form

Dear Parent / Guardian

Your son/daughter has volunteered to take part in a research project about young people and their use of public outdoor places. The research forms part of a PhD student's work from the School of City and Regional Planning at Cardiff University and is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council. The PhD student, Katie Jones is a former pupil of [school name]. Your son/daughter has already completed a questionnaire as part of a PSE lesson and has subsequently volunteered to take part in further research.

For the next stage of the project pupils will be supplied with a disposable camera and be asked to make a photographic diary of the public places they frequent during a typical week. Pupils are not expected to pay for the camera or the cost of film processing. Pupils will then be interviewed about the photographs they have taken. Pupils will be supplied with an information sheet beforehand about how to take photographs safely. For ethical reasons, as with most research projects, your child will be ensured confidentiality and anonymity. Names will be changed in the final project preventing individuals from being identified.

Later stages of the research with involve young people taking Katie on a guided tour of the outdoor public spaces they frequent with the use of a video camera. With your son/daughter's agreement, selected photographs and video recordings may be included in the final PhD thesis to be stored in Cardiff University Library, in published academic journal articles and as presentation materials in conferences.

If you consent to your son/daughter being involved in the project please sign and return the consent form below. Further information about the project can be obtained directly from Katie Jones:

[CONTACT DETAILS]

Yours sincerely

[Headteacher]

Katie Jones PhD Research - Young People and Public Outdoor Places

Pupil Name ______________________________ Form Class ________________________

I have received the letter dated 17th March and consent to my son / daughter taking part in the research project

Parental / Guardian Consent Signature ____________________________________

Appendix IV: Questionnaire

Questionnaire

This questionnaire is about you as a young person and the spaces and places you go to, to be alone or for hanging out with friends, when you are not in school. All answers given will be kept confidential and anonymous.

Age		Post code	
Form class		Gender	Male Female

SECTION ONE: YOUTH CLUBS AND AFTER SCHOOL CLUBS

1.1 Are you a member of any youth clubs or after school clubs? E.g. Scouts, football

Yes No

1.2 If yes, how often do you go?

Name of club	How often you go

SECTION TWO: XXXX TOWN CENTRE

2.1 How often do you go to XXXX town centre? (Please circle one)

Everyday Every other day Weekends Once a fortnight Once a month

Very rarely / Never Other (please state)

2.2 What is the main day(s) of the week you go there?

2.3 What 3 things do you like about the town centre?

1. ______________________________
2. ______________________________
3. ______________________________

2.4 What 3 things do you dislike about the town centre?

1. ______________________________
2. ______________________________
3. ______________________________

2.5 What are the main indoor and outdoor places you go to in the town centre, what do you do there, and for how long?

Place	Activity	How long
E.g. McDonalds	***Eat, meet friends***	***30 minutes***
E.g. Asda car park	***Skateboarding***	***All afternoon***

2.6 Have you ever been told off or moved on from somewhere in the town centre? Please give details

2.7 Do you feel the town centre is a safe place to go? Think about differences between day and night and whether you are with friends or on your own

SECTION THREE: YOUR LOCAL NEIGHBOURHOOD

3.1 How often do you spend time in the outdoor spaces of your neighbourhood (near your house)? (Please circle)

Everyday Every other day Weekends Go to question 3.2

Once a fortnight Rarely Never Other Go to question 3.3

3.2 What kind of things do you do there?

3.3 Why do you not spend much time in your local neighbourhood?

3.4 Have you ever been told off or moved on from somewhere in your neighbourhood? Please give details

3.5 Do you feel your neighbourhood is a safe place to hang out? Think about differences between day and night and whether you are with friends or on your own

SECTION FOUR: OTHER PLACES AND SPACES

4.1 Are there any other spaces or places (indoor or outdoor) that you go to when you are not in school for your own leisure? E.g. Friend's house, Chester, cinema, garden, playground, skateboarding park

Place	Activity	How often
E.g. Friends house	***Play computer games***	***Every day***

4.2 Would you describe yourself as an indoor or an outdoor person?

Indoor Outdoor Don't know

4.3 Do you consider yourself to belong to a youth subculture, 'gang' or 'group'? e.g. 'skateboarder' or 'goth'

4.4 How important is the town centre or your neighbourhood as a place for you to go?

4.5 How much does the weather impact on where you go to spend your free time?

4.6 Do your parents set limits or boundaries regarding where you can go and what time you have to be in by? Please give details

4.7 Please tick which of the following you have:

	Yes	No
Mobile phone		
TV in own room		
Computer (PC)		
Games console		
Bicycle		

4.8 Do you think there are enough things for young people to in XXXX (or where you live)?

Yes No

4.9 Please explain your answer and what else you would like to be provided for young people in XXXX?

FINALLY – if you would be interested in being involved in further research about these topics please fill in the details below. The research would involve:

- Being interviewed about your experiences and opinions
- Making a photographic diary with a disposable camera
- Showing me around the places you hang out

Name ____

THANK YOU for completing this questionnaire

Appendix V: Questionnaire covering letter

Hello ... my name is Katie Jones and I am a student at Cardiff University, although I used to be a pupil here at xxxx.

As part of my University work, I am undertaking research about teenagers and their use of outdoor public spaces and I would like your help.

I am interested in finding out what people of your age do when you are not in school.

Attached is a questionnaire for you to complete so I can begin compiling a picture of teenagers in xxxx, and learn about your experiences and opinions.

The questionnaire is anonymous and all your answers will be kept confidential (not shown to teachers or your parents) so please be as honest as you can – you will not be judged or get into trouble. I am a researcher from Cardiff University and in no way associated with the police, the council, social workers or any other organisations. Once completed, fold over your questionnaire and seal it with the sticky label provided nobody else can see your answers.

Further to the questionnaire I am looking for some volunteers to be involved in more in-depth research. This will involve talking to me about your experiences as a young person in xxxx and making a photographic diary. If you would be interested in this, or would like to know more, please fill in your details at the end of the questionnaire.

Appendix VI: Photographic diary instructions

PHOTOGRAPHIC DIARY

You have been given a disposable camera to make a diary of your after-school and weekend activities

Make sure the first photo you take is of yourself and then it will be easier to identify your film

It is up to you what you take pictures of, but they should include:

- The spaces/places you go
- What you do there
- Who you go there with
- How you get there
- Positive or negative aspects of the space
- Anything else of interest

Please make sure you get people's permission before taking their photograph, and be careful taking photographs in shops, on buses etc

Bring your camera into school and I will have the photos developed for you