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Embodying inspiration race and disaffected young white men in Burnley

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Embodying inspiration

race and disaffected young white men in Burnley

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For Sonia

Abstract

Young white men have often found themselves bearing the burden of designs for the improvement of UK society. Official reports reprised this theme following the racially charged disturbances in Northern England's mill towns in the summer of 2001. So-called disaffected young white men were left ambiguously positioned -and immobilised- on the margins of political discourse. In response, this thesis complicates the ways in which young white men in Burnley, a town affected by the violence, may be appreciated as politically capable. In so doing, it prepares for a more imaginative mapping of roles for them in local social progress, post-2001. Ethnographies of boxing and bodybuilding gyms unpack the variety of affective capacities through which young white men live out complex masculine body cultures. These study the *inspiration* young men find in these carefully engineered and politically enabling places. Although these gyms nestle amidst Burnley's urban hinterlands, and between otherwise parallel lives, they see fragile bonds of affection grow between young white and Asian men. Those bonds represent small, fragile and politically ambiguous gains, which must nonetheless inform proposals for Burnley's future. The thesis speculates that if such proposals are to be desirable *and* possible, those same young men must find them *persuasive*. It therefore recommends placing colloquial inspirations, and a cautious affirmation of capable individuality, at the heart of visions of social progress in Burnley.

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Declaration

No part has previously been submitted by the candidate for a degree in this or any other university.

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Chapter 1

What are Burnley's disaffected young white men capable of?

'It will not be the "best" of all possible societies. But the ordinary
man... is no utopian, and he will settle for a "merely satisfactory" set
of social arrangements and is prepared to grant them a title of
legitimacy.'
Irving Kristol (1972, p.178)

1. Research context, question and themes

The summer of 2001 saw serious urban disorder erupt across Northern
England. Burnley, in Lancashire's Pendle Valley, saw some of the worst of the
violence. Although 'ad hoc, improvised and haphazard' (Kundnani: 2001,
p.105), these events were saturated with raced political significances and drew
a plethora of comment from academics, the government and popular media.
Much of what was said conspicuously lingered upon the involvement of young
people and particularly of young men in the violence. Some commentators
chose to diagnose a renewed political assertiveness, as 'young Asians... went
on the rampage to protest against a long history of economic deprivation and
hopelessness' (Amin: 2003, p.461). Others, motivated by a very different
politics, saw 'an example of the 'cricket culture' that has infected young Muslims
who's answer to things they disagree with... is violence' (Report of the Burnley
Task Force, Appendix 2a, BNP submission).

It has been well established that an increased scrutiny of young people is a
predictable corollary of social disorder in the UK's urban areas (Giroux 1996,
Back: 1999, Alexander: 2000, 2004). This has markedly been so when the
disorder noticeably involves non-white Britons, bringing never-quite-settled
questions of national belonging, culture and race under fresh review (Scarman:

1986, Benyon: 1984, Gilroy and Lawrence: 1988, more recently Salgado-Pottier 2008). The summer of 2001 saw young men from across Burnley's colour-culture divide inaugurate a new rehearsal and revision of these familiar themes. This chapter sets out the distinctive contribution that this thesis makes to debates over the role young people will play in Burnley's future, amidst the ongoing social and political aftermath of 2001.

Following the disturbances, Clarke's (2001) <u>Report for the Burnley Task Force</u> signaled the urgency of responding to the 'disillusionment felt by many young people in Burnley' (p.9). Indeed, Amin (2002) and Kundnani (2001) see the provenance of the violence in the predicament of a generation of young British Asians, driven to street protest by a sense of disconnection from democratic political enfranchisement. Cantle's (2001) report took up the theme of youth despondency through a notion of *disaffection*, explicitly linking it to deprivation (2.7, 2.10) and to social unrest (4.12); 'We have noted... that some communities have notable elements of disaffection, for example young white males and Pakistani Muslim youths' (5.8.17). Notably, Cantle contrasts disaffection with *self-esteem* and *confidence*, which he sees as sorely lacking in the lives of white youths (5.10.7, own emphasis). This thesis argues for the variegation of generic theses of disaffection and palliative confidence or self-esteem, through a closer examination of how varied and unstable feelings figure in the lives of young people. These vague notions of personal and social dysfunction and correction obscure the capable individuals and complex youth cultures they reference, and obfuscate how Burnley may move on from 2001.

An aspirational language for a 'celebration of diversity' also runs through the Cantle Report. This thesis addresses the dislocation between Cantle's fears for disaffected white youth and his hopes for convivial diversity; firstly by unpacking the totem of 'disaffected young white men'; and secondly by cultivating scepticism regarding how his aspirations for a better Burnley will play out in particular youth cultures. The celebration of diversity by confident young people

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is simultaneously a fuzzy vision of intercultural affiliation and a particular notion of social progress. It is, therefore, one that will fit Burnley's varied cultural geographies in some ways but not in others. Critical race scholars have previously considered the estrangement of young Asian men (Kalra: 2000, Alexander: 2000, 2004) and young white men (McDowell: 2000, 2002, 2003a, 2003b, Nayak: 2003a, 2003b, 2003c, 2006, Cohen: 1996) from notions of social progress arising in post-industrial modernities. These studies explore what young people are, are not and may yet become capable of, and so provide the thesis with a critical context for engaging with young men living out Burnley's racially charged urban environments. However, current literature on the political capacities of young white men does not appreciate the immediacy and intensity of culture-as-lived sufficiently to unpack the totem of disaffected white youth. Accordingly, the thesis illustrates the varied capacities and complicated cultural lives of the individuals behind Burnley's disaffected young white men, and underscores that these must feature in aspirations for Burnley's future.

The thesis makes a distinctive intervention in these debates by committing prolonged ethnographic study to a boxing club and a bodybuilding gym in Burnley. These gyms are predominantly used by the disaffected young white men that commentators have worried about, although *not* exclusively so. Where young white *and* Asian men learn to box, build muscle and socialise therein, they are enabled to participate in culturally located logics of interaction that bear complicated significance for Burnley's racial politics. Whilst undertaking these studies, the author lived in Burnley Wood for six months throughout the first half of 2005. Burnley Wood is one of the places that was most sorely affected by the disturbances of 2001. It is a materially deprived residential area, wherein a large majority of the population actively describe themselves as white. Its tightly gridded terraces are physically and culturally removed from other areas, such as Daneshouse, where a majority of the population describe themselves as Asian.

The residential, institutional and experiential raced segregations that mark Burnley are characterised, so as to place the significance of the intercultural arrangements playing out in the town's gyms. The combination of physical and cultural separateness alive in Burnley is referred to, hereafter, as Burnley's 'colour-culture line'. Where Burnley's 'Asian' and 'white' constituents are referred to, this prefaces an analysis that, whilst attentive to local vernacular and categorisation, seeks to disentangle the operation of race in Burnley's youth oriented gym cultures and so interrogate the sense of cultural dislocation stalking lives in the town. Race is perpetually reinvented through distinctive cultural histories (see Bernasconi: 2001, in geography see Jackson: 1987, Jackson and Penrose: 1993, also Gilroy: 1987, 1993, 2000) such as those adding up in Burnley's gyms. A focus upon the capable bodies of young men places under review the achieved and contingent, but nonetheless durable and divisive construction of raced separateness in the town.

Whilst in Burnley, the author regularly walked through Burnley Wood, past young white men who might be in work, on into the racially mixed but busy and impersonal town centre, and through to Daneshouse. The mutual racial segregation of these places, and the shift in atmosphere experienced when passing between them, makes it hard to avoid the uneasy feeling that things have stood still since 2001. However, the author's experiences of living in Burnley Wood and training in Burnley's gyms also signal a warning against writing predominantly white places off as disaffected and culturally moribund. The thesis introduces the reader to a cast of charismatic characters living out unpredictable events, variously funny, sad, embarrassing, aggressive, alienating and inspiring. The living out of Burnley's youth cultures entails more variety and promise than a notion of white disaffection may accommodate. Burnley's young white men are individuals capable of much more than racism and rioting. This thesis suggests rooting aspirations for Burnley's future where they might be thought least likely to find succour; amidst predominantly white and purportedly disaffected male cultures. Burnley's gyms are far removed from

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confident celebrations of cultural diversity. Indeed, this thesis explains that the social arrangements they realise are deeply politically ambiguous. But they also locate distinctive and fragile examples of urban intercultural affiliation in action that warrant close examination.

The above task remains necessary, more than five years after the disturbances of 2001, because popular imaginings of white youth delinquency militate to exclude certain places and people from aspirations for Burnley's future. Linda McDowell (2000) has noted ongoing academic interest in the notion of a 'crisis of masculinity' in cities in advanced industrial nations. Rather than a straight gender crisis, her analysis suggests that 'a fundamental transformation in the relationships between waged work, gender and class is underway' (p.201). Chapter 2 suggests that such transformations are taking place in Burnley. The combination of the rapid collapse of coal and textiles industries, multidimensional social deprivation and a period of relatively high immigration from the New Commonwealth, has fuelled rapid social change. In Burnley, as Hebdige (1979) has so evocatively suggested more broadly, working class youth find themselves at the representational intersection of such change. They come to represent a threat of the violent breakdown of social order, such as was seen in Burnley in 2001, whether as yobs, hooligans, skinheads, louts or joyriders (McDowell: 2002, Campbell: 1993).

Indeed, young men were visible participants in the violence in Burnley, a role subsequently storied in popular media and through daily conversations across the town.[1] Moreover, the youth cultures hosted by Burnley's boxing and bodybuilding gyms see young white men participating in aggressive, masculine and racially charged cultures; faces contorted, arms swinging, harsh shouting. These places might be expected to corroborate casual assumptions of youth delinquency, and to host performances redolent of the violence of 2001. Indeed,

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[1] "Race 'segregation' caused riots" BBC News archive, 11.12.2001
"Race riot reports urge immigrant loyalty" Guardian News archive, 11.12.2001
"Race problems 'must be solved locally'" Daily Mail News archive, undated

the thesis contends that these gyms are severely dislocated from official aspirations for a diverse, convivial Burnley. Yet this will make the location of intercultural affiliation in these gym cultures all the more striking, and all the more disruptive of presumptions as to what will constitute local social progress.

This thesis examines possibilities of connecting aspirations for social progress, notions of disaffected white youth and accounts of their embodied experiences. It does not offer a distinctive, normative vision of a better Burnley. Rather, it argues that the formulation of visions of local social progress must be marked by a *persuasive* dynamic. Contemporary political discourses around hoodies, ASBO culture and the voyeuristic carnival of daytime television shows such as *The Jeremy Kyle Show* and *Trisha Goddard*, buy into what Nayak (2003a, p.82, also 2006) sees as the encryption of race and class onto young, white, working class bodies. However, a review of academic and government comment on the 2001 disturbances (Chapter 2, Section 1) reveals that *young people have also embodied a promise of individual redemption and social reform.* McDowell (2002) notes that young people often occupy this ambiguous position in relation to public disorder in contemporary popular discourse, prone to being both criticised and celebrated as anti-authority figures. They variously represent nihilistic violence and political desperation (Giroux: 1996 p.32), or an excluded though recuperable constituency (Haylett: 2001) subject to moral fascination, disgust and fantasies of reclamation by white middle classes (Cohen: 1996).

These dynamics are alive in the reports that followed the disturbances of 2001 by choosing to invest hope in disaffected young people as potential brokers of social harmony and intercultural cohesion. Cantle (2001) aspires to a 'well resourced national debate, heavily influenced by younger people' (2.14). However, *in order to contribute to that debate, disaffected youth must conform to a presumption that a better future will be marked by confident celebrations of diversity.* In response, this thesis argues that for Burnley's young white men to influence debates over aspirations for their town's future, they must recognise a

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clear and compelling reason to do so; they must find those aspirations *persuasive*. If this is to come to pass, the personal abilities and social possibilities alive in Burnley's youth cultures must be examined, illustrated and where possible valued as politically propitious. A positive approach to the lively realities of youth culture must place Cantle's and any other settled aspirations for Burnley's future under permanent review.

This thesis addresses the following question:

> **What are the varied capacities that mark out individuals behind Burnley's disaffected young white men, and how might their enablement through complex gym cultures presage a better future for Burnley's racial politics?**

A response to this question gathers momentum over the course of the thesis, proceeding through the development of three major themes. Their interrelation is such that they get entangled throughout the text, rather than being set out in a linear manner. These three themes are summarised below. Their development in the thesis is subsequently mapped through a review of the linear progression of the argument, which also extends the above discussion.

> **1.** The thesis unpacks a variety of personal abilities cultivated in complex youth cultures in Burnley's gyms, to which a generic notion of disaffected young white men is insufficient.

> **2.** The thesis argues that forming political aspirations for Burnley's future, and for the role young white men may play in it, will require close consideration of how these individuals will find those aspirations persuasive.

3. The thesis contends that judgments as to what constitutes social progress in Burnley must be tolerant of the ambiguous political significances of the town's contemporary youth cultures.

2. Review of thesis progress

2.1 Chapters 1 – 3

The first three chapters develop a critique of how the personal capacities of Burnley's young white men currently feature, and may feature otherwise, in debates over the future of the town's raced geography. The present chapter introduces the aims and themes of the research, before previewing the progression of the argument. Chapter 2 then sets out a case for studying male youth cultures situated amidst Burnley's post-industrial hinterlands which, whilst locally reputed as being exclusively white, see young people from across the town's raced divide living out contemporary intercultures. Chapter 3 moves on to establish an analytic framework whereby this may be achieved.

Amidst the plethora of comment proffered in response to the violence of the summer of 2001, Cantle's (2001) remarks as to the existence of two communities living 'parallel lives' (2.1) found particular resonance in popular and academic imaginations (see Phillips: 2006, Burgess, Wilson and Lupton: 2005, Kalra: 2002).[2] Kundnani (2001) characterises this as two nations living in a single place; '[a] generation of whites and Asians was now growing up whose only contact with each other was through uncertain glances on the street or through the pages of local newspapers' (p.107). Aspects of the parallel lives thesis were corroborated by the author's experiences of living in Burnley Wood for six months. The area is overwhelmingly populated by white people. Whilst many are of working age, unemployment is high, and so young men and women spend the day idling on the streets and in their front gardens. However,

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[2] "Parallel lives" BBC Website, themed website section.
www.bbc.co.uk/lancashire/parallel_lives/
"Parallel lives" Guardian News 15.01.2002

Burnley's segregations are lived out by thinking, feeling individuals, busy getting on with their greatly varying lives in a range of places across the town and beyond. Whilst the parallel lives thesis evocatively signals an acute problem, there is a danger that a degree of nuance will be missed amidst its summary clarity. This thesis aims to show that, if the notion of disaffected young white men is to be unpacked and young individuals are to find a place within aspirations for Burnley's future, an appreciation of nuance is crucial.

The parallel lives thesis has been complemented by an interest in less resilient and perhaps fleeting encounters, wherein bodies marked by raced difference come into contact with one another to prompt intercultural negotiations (Amin: 2002, also see Sandercock: 2006, Swanton: 2008). The parallel lives thesis signals stark residential and institutional segregations that are strikingly manifest in Burnley. A walk through predominantly white Burnley Wood, or through largely Asian Daneshouse, impresses upon one the extent of segregation in the town. In response, Amin (2002) recommends a turn to an intercultural politics rooted in 'everyday lived experiences and local negotiations of difference, on microcultures of place through which abstract rights and obligations, together with local structures and resources, meaningfully interact with distinctive individual and interpersonal experiences' (p.967). Indeed, an afternoon spent in Burnley's Charter Walk Shopping Centre will inevitably entail chance meetings and short conversations that complicate the perception of *utter* intercultural separation. The author spent many days in the indoor market, on Burnley's streets and otherwise in the town's cafes and public spaces. It was notable that the cordial exchanges and congenial acquaintances that mark intercultural contact in these places very rarely involve candidates for membership of Burnley's disaffected white youth. The large park near Burnley College sees young white and Asian groups of friends conspicuously avoid one another in a dance that underscores Amin's questions; 'What is the nature of these sites, and what kind of engagement or outcome can be expected?' (ibid.).

This thesis perceives a danger that young people will fall outside a political predilection for certain kinds of intercultural encounters, peculiar to certain kinds of spaces. Cantle's preference for a future in which diversity is celebrated implies that contemporary social arrangements which point in that direction should be treasured. But the ethnographic studies offered by this thesis suggest that Burnley's gym cultures are far from seeing a celebration of diversity. The hard graft going into intercultural affiliation in sweaty, intimidating gyms largely exclusive to young, white, working class men, might be written out of Burnley's future where this is the case; perhaps where aspirations for a convivial, diverse Burnley draw attention only to genial exchanges in public places, or to exciting musical collaborations in anti-racist festivals. Should the omission of places such as Burnley's gyms go unchallenged, so too will the bland, politically illiterate homogeneity implied by a generic notion of disaffected white youth. It would be hard to see roles for those individuals in a future for Burnley that is, in any sense, better than that threatened by the legacy of 2001. In response, this thesis analyses mechanisms of intercultural affiliation in Burnley's gyms.

Chapter 2 argues that the notion of disaffected white youth may be effectively unpacked by scrutinising geographies of intercultural affiliation that sit across these contrasting sketches of Burnley's raced political geography. Somewhere between geographies of division and encounter, place-bound subcultures prompt joined up thought about the racially charged separations, affiliations and political capacities embedded in the lives of Burnley's young people. The gyms studied by this thesis are examples of such places. They are neither obdurate manifestations of social division, nor public spaces conducive to prosaic encounters. Rather, they are more like those cultures tightly bound to specific venues studied by Mitch Duneier, where sociability across a colour-culture line 'is not simply a precarious, artificial contrivance of human beings muting uncomfortable dimensions of stratification' (Duneier: 1992, p.107). Burnley's gyms are places where a meaningful and durable sociability emerges between mutually familiar characters. The achievement of sufficiently frequent meetings,

involving sufficiently regular attendees, give rise to durable social affiliations that complicate Burnley's colour-culture line.

Indeed, *encounters with diversity are themselves diverse encounters*. They involve individuals with varying abilities, and are marked by what Laurier and Philo (2006) think of as in-situ ordinal logics which condition their relevance to participants and their status as arranged or as chance meetings (p.356). Burnley's gyms do not host chance encounters. They see personal relationships develop and endogenous logics of interaction evolve between unique, living, thinking and feeling individuals. The ethnographies of these gyms trace the entanglement of race, masculinity and political capacity through these complications. An appreciation of how race operates in these gyms, and of how people capably deal with its lurking presence, will complicate notions of staid, white disaffection and aspirations for an urban politics marked by the celebration of cultural diversity.

The studies of male youth cultures offered in this thesis, focus upon how personal capacities unfold into urban intercultural affiliations. Previous studies of how young white men adapt white masculinities through periods of urban transition are reviewed (principally Nayak: 2003a, 2003b, 2003c, 2006, McDowell: 2000, 2002, 2003a, 2003b, Cohen: 1996 and Back: 1996). These studies could do more to appreciate the politically disruptive force of the *embodied experiences* of young white men. The robust and insightful social narratives by which youth behaviours are situated and explained, also deflect attention from the aleatory significances arising where young men simply get on with their immediate business, perhaps of learning to box and build muscle. Authors also often characterise young white experiences of changing urban environments through negative, monotone affects. Feelings of insecurity, anxiety and nostalgia are frequently cited, dovetailing with the generic diagnosis of youth disaffection. However, this thesis finds, as McDowell (2003b) has previously noted, that 'anxieties about the establishment of an acceptable

masculine identity among white working class youths... has little resonance in the everyday lives and attitudes of... young men' (p.218).

Authors have also emphasised practical appropriations of cultural representation. The 'properly' cultural is typically marked by raced difference, whilst creative practice is correspondingly seen as pre-cultural and, therefore, as strangely anaemic and inert. This tendency hints at an academic attraction to diversity redolent of what Hebdige (1979) saw in the attraction of Reggae music to punk sub-culture; '[i]t carried the necessary conviction, the political bite, so obviously missing in contemporary white music' (p.63); or, here, missing in white working class culture. A corollary is that *the moral agency of young white men appears essentially reactive, awaiting stimulation by encounters with raced difference*. Whilst unsatisfactory for a number of reasons, including potentially making a moral fetish of race, this implication marries uncomfortably with a starkly segregated society. Burnley's predominantly white areas and cultures, such as Burnley Wood and the gyms engaged with in this thesis, risk appearing culturally moribund and morally recidivist.

These limitations may be confronted by exposing the *variety of affectual experience* subsumed by a generic notion of *disaffection*. Cantle's notion of disaffection is doubly dislocated. It is politically disabling by virtue of its separation from the *convivial but uprooted affects* of a confident celebration of diversity, as well as by its remoteness from the affective variety and instability of culture-as-lived that this thesis illustrates. Non-representational approaches, chiefly driven by Nigel Thrift (e.g. 2000a, 2000b, 2004a, 2004b, 2004c), but also notably by Derek McCormack (2002, 2003, 2005, 2007) and others, are explored in this thesis as means of appreciating the varied and unstable affectual topographies that mark the lives of Burnley's young white men. Taking a cue from the non-representational scepticism of 'presuppositions and idealisations over the nature of understanding and meaning... built into our social scientific modes and methods of explanation' (Harrison: 2002, p.487),

thought on intercultural affiliation should not be too tightly bound to the certainty of explanatory cultural narratives, nor to the inevitability of aspired-to social trajectories of social change. Beginning analysis confident in the belief that Burnley's young white working class men should awaken from a disaffected torpor, concomitant of post-industrial transition, to inaugurate a convivial, diverse tomorrow, is, to borrow Crang's (2005, p.225) phrase, worryingly Whiggish. Moreover, this thesis underscores that the political significance of the abilities of young white men is irreducible to the articulable proceeds of intercultural arbitration, in the form of new identities or belongings or feelings that may conveniently fit into such narratives. Negotiations of *representations* of cultural difference may be relatively uninteresting in view of the *affectual* dynamics of interculture.

Chapters 3 develops the theme of embodied and affectual experiences of intercultural affiliation. It thinks alongside Benedict de Spinoza in order to work up a conceptual perspective upon *inspiration*. Thinking with inspiration better equips the thesis to recognise the politically significant abilities and affiliations being lived out in Burnley's gyms, without rehearsing an ambition to recuperate white working class men through enlightening encounters with racial difference and anti-racist logic. Rather than establishing a normative argument for positively valuing the embodied abilities of young white men, an analytic framework is developed for valuing intercultural connections where categories of difference are heavily scripted.

Where such scripts are enforced, as they are in Burnley's gyms, attention to negotiations of raced culture might miss somatic, intercultural connections occurring beneath the representational radar. This will restrict a capacity to value interculture instead of lamenting the gap between how it operates and class-coded expectations of what it should look like. In the above, an interplay is noted between ambitions for social progress, the figure of disaffected young white men and accounts of their embodied experiences. The discussion is

never sufficiently removed, for the author's comfort or complacency, from the class-coded moralism this thesis writes against. Cohen (1992) reassuringly notes that accounts of behaviours that perpetuate raced divisions inescapably take on political, moral and existential meaning (p.70). Working in relation to an acute discomfort on this point, this thesis explores how Cohen's observation is true of Cantle's notion of generic disaffection, *to the detriment of imagining desirable and possible futures for Burnley's urban geography of race.*

Cantle (2001), Clarke (2001), Amin (2002) and Kundnani (2001) all identify white racist 'extremists' as culpable for the disorder of 2001. A potentially redeemable 'non-extreme' white majority is thereby implied. They are provided with an alibi, although not an exoneration, by the excesses of their belligerent contemporaries. Burnley's disaffected white youth occupy this ambiguous position. They present a convenient receptacle for a wider societal displacement of culpability for Burnley's race problem, embodying the role Sjobo plays in Pred's <u>Even in Sweden</u> (2000); that other place, those odd people, where racism and violence have a recent history. Alternatively, by giving accounts of the inspiration Burnley's young white men find in contemporary body cultures, narrow and pejorative representations of white youth may be interrupted. In turn, recognition of the varied capacities that their inspiration enables will inform thought on their potential roles in Burnley's future, thereby supporting the formulation of progressive aspirations that they will find persuasive.

The reports commissioned in response to the violence of 2001 sought to respond to the raced exclusion of young Asians from society. They also worried for the failure of working class whites to meet the lingering criteria of what Back et al (2002) see as the remnants of Labour's erstwhile commitment to 'celebrate diversity', which went up in flames along with Burnley's fragile peace in June 2001. Scholars have begun to penetrate the silences in political discourse, such as that of Cantle and Clarke, which often falls around those who are 'too

ambiguous as victims... [t]oo unfashionably exotic... [t]oo white' (Haylett: 2001, p.353). Studies have illustrated young white men living out shifting urban environments in Northern England, by adapting social roles amidst disappearing opportunities to perform locally validated masculinities (see Nayak: 2003a, 2003b, 2003c). Taylor and Jamieson (1997) discuss how young white men craft positive discourses of self worth upon pathologised behaviours. Instead, this thesis considers how positive accounts of the abilities of young white men may confront a generic moral concern for their disaffection.

Studies have not, hitherto, explicitly focused upon how understandings of personal ability may inform, rather than be tolerably placed within, oneiric political aspirations. This thesis provides such a focus. It generates understandings of how young white men are *already* slipping the bonds of disaffection to capably influence the future of their town. They do so in unpredictable ways that frustrate neat hopes for their tidy recuperation within a diverse, convivial society. However, a commitment to the abilities of young white men, as inescapable means of Burnley's future that demand recognition, must not result in a critically mute celebration of events 'on the ground'. Representations of young white sub-cultures are replenished by 'sporadic forms of urban violence' (McDowell: 2000, p.205), such as that seen in Burnley in 2001. They are sustained, more vaguely, by persistent and relatively low level experiences of anti-social behaviour of the kind the author experienced in Burnley Wood. It is, therefore, crucial to disentangle an empirical and moral commitment to the abilities of young white men from an unqualified celebration of any and every expression of those abilities.

Casual references to disaffected young white men readily communicate with popularly established and pejorative class ridden stereotypes of the 'yob' (McDowell, 2002, Charlesworth: 2000) or the 'chav' (Nayak: 2006). Campbell's (1993) lament of the casual assumption that 'boys will be boys', echoed by McDowell in her preface to Redundant Masculinities (2003b), signals the

strange masculine coding of culpability for bad behaviour; whilst young men are guilty, one would hardly expect anything else to be true, so they are only guilty in the same way as a dog beholden to its own greed. Recently, 'ASBO culture' and 'hoodies' have become topical footballs in British political discourses about youth, crime and public morality.[3] Each young, white male in Burnley potentially embodies the white racist extremists of popular discourse, policy work and academic studies. At no point do Cantle and Clarke make a clear, compelling distinction between disaffected white male youth and racist extremists. It will be hard to distill an appreciation of the lives of Burnley's young men from popular imaginings of white youth, using a tag designed with a different political utility in mind. The notion of disaffected young white men serves to provoke a particular political and moral focus, just as does the parallel lives thesis. Whilst these foci are welcome, proceeding with them requires that they be unpacked carefully. At the point where their usefulness falls away, this thesis contributes close critical readings of the political capacities of Burnley's young white men.

Where *aspirations* for Burnley's future are intimately informed by the *inspiration* young white men find in the town's contemporary youth cultures, those men will be more likely to find those aspirations desirable, possible and *persuasive*.[4] Burnley's gyms see men practise a complicated and *culturally ingrained* temperance of inspiration and affects, as part of the immediate business of learning how to box, build muscle and socialise. The thesis argues that *aspirations for Burnley's future should study the possibilities enabled by these numerous temperances, rather than hope for the rational extension of a generic temperance of racial prejudice.* Burnley's gyms see temperate young men forge affiliations across the town's colour-culture line. Indeed, inspiration is deeply rooted in practices of intercultural affiliation in Burnley's gyms, and it is

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[3] "Cameron: Making our country a safe and civilised place for everyone"
Available on Conservative Party Website
"Cameron defends 'hoodie' speech" BBC News, 10.07.2006
[4] Fuller definitions and conceptual positioning of 'inspiration' and 'persuasion' are developed through the thesis.

important to *place colloquial inspirations at the heart of political aspirations for Burnley's future.*

The concept of inspiration set out in Chapter 3 is at the analytical heart of the thesis. The chapter addresses the problematic of how one may positively value the inspiration Burnley's young white men find in gym culture, without effecting conceptual closures that will exclude them from visions of the town's future. The chapter establishes analytic grounds for recognising their personal capacities as ethical and valuing them as politically propitious. Ambitions to examine historically located white cultures have previously pursued the exposure of a variety of identities, belongings and political interests subsumed therein (see Frankenberg: 1993 on questioning the unspoken provenance of white identities, also authors on the historical constitution of whiteness, Roediger: 1991, 1994, Ignatiev: 1995, in geography see Bonnett: 1998a, 1998b, 2000b). In contrast, and in pursuit of the non-articulable proceeds of intercultural affiliation, Chapter 3 works to open up the notion of dis*affection.*

This thesis complicates ideas of the affective capacities of the young white men training in Burnley's gyms. These capacities enable them to form bonds of affection with their contemporaries. Where these bonds traverse Burnley's parallel cultures, durable although fragile and politically ambiguous intercultural affiliations emerge. The ethnographies offered in this thesis illustrate that race operates in complicated and often subtle ways in Burnley's gyms. Indeed, the active suppression of expressions of raced cultural diversity does not establish them as post-racial enclaves amidst Burnley's urban hinterlands. Furthermore, makes it hard to understand them as sites of the negotiation or celebration of difference. The political significance of intercultural affiliation in these gyms is not best understood by the articulable proceeds of intercultural arbitration; in terms of the production of new identities, vernaculars or belongings. Instead of that familiar tale, this thesis offers stories of the affective capacities and

affiliations that mark out the social individuals behind Burnley's disaffected young white men.

In order to do so, this thesis brings literature on the lives of young white men in Britain's urban areas into conversation with ongoing geographical interest in non-representational approaches. Studies of young white men in urban environments have concentrated on monotone, negative affects and the appropriation of raced cultural discourse. Yet Burnley's young white men are shown by this thesis to have multifarious affective capacities, the moral value and political utility of which may be judged otherwise than in relation to the presence of raced cultural diversity. Chapter 3 roots this approach in a review of studies of young men capably engaged in masculine sports cultures, so as to prepare a conceptual critique that may successfully be taken into Burnley's gyms. Studies of gym culture rehearse the monotone sense of affectivity and the robust explanatory approach toward motivation criticised in Chapter 2. In response, thought on the body as an unstable site of political opportunity is explored as a means of outlining a notion of inspiration as *motivation-in-motion*. A critical space is cleared for valuing non-representational geographies as a means of 'extend[ing] the field of the ethical in which geographers move' (McCormack: 2003, p.488). Their commitment to teasing out affectual variety and instability promises to complicate the bland affectual homogeneity of a non-specific notion of disaffection.

However, Chapter 3 argues that the field of the ethical that they open remains limited, specifically regarding the ambition of this thesis to give a positive account of the abilities by which young white men live out masculine gym cultures. Doel (1994) perceives that 'much of the theoretically inclined literature within human geography has turned to the motifs of difference and otherness as a possible basis for fostering a coming together and rapprochement of previously incommensurate theoretical-practices' (p.1041). Non-representational thought rehearses, in its own inimitable manner, the making of

ethical and political value via motifs of difference, multiplication and plurality. Yet recourse to a concept of difference, as a lightning rod for practices of ethical and political judgment, is neither inevitable nor necessary. Furthermore, it risks obscuring an appreciation of the abilities and possibilities enabled in places with dogmatic scripts for raced, gendered and classed differences; places such as Burnley's gyms.

In response, the thesis moves in the opposite direction to that suggested by familiar critiques of non-representational approaches. These have variously alighted upon an insufficient recognition given to the relationship between power and difference (Nash: 2000, Thien: 2005, Tolia-Kelly: 2006). Instead, the ethical philosophy of Benedict de Spinoza is read against its application, via Deleuze, by non-representational geographies. The ascendancy of affective capacity that Spinoza sees as the root of virtue informs the concept of inspiration built by this thesis. A notion of *inspired individuality* is sketched as an alternative referent for the making of value. Subsequently, Spinoza is taken boxing and bodybuilding in Burnley. This enables an argument regarding the political character of these gyms that is pursued in subsequent chapters; the ethical abilities of the young white men therein do not require stimulation by difference, and may be affirmed even where it is suppressed, excluded and discriminated against. Those abilities would not be lessened in the least if no Asian man ever set foot in the gym, although the significance of those places for Burnley's racial politics would, then, be very different.

2.3 Chapters 4 – 6

Chapters 4-6 establish a method for, and illustrate ethnographic studies of, the varied abilities and complex cultural lives of some of Burnley's young white men. The ethnographies concentrate on the inspiration of the affectual capacities and affiliations of young white men training in two gyms located in Burnley's post-industrial hinterlands. One is a boxing club called Butterworth ABC (Amateur Boxing Club), the other a professional bodybuilding gym called

Curzon Gym. Whilst locally reputed as being white gyms, and indeed mostly attended by young white men, both Butterworth and Curzon draw young men from across Burnley's colour-culture line into complicated, cooperative and at times contentious social arrangements.

Chapter 4 develops an ethnographic method capable of addressing the research question set out and developed in the current chapter. In order to effectively unpack the notion of disaffected young white men, and map roles for these individuals in Burnley's future, an expansive and surprising range of their personal capacities must come into view, more so than in previous studies of young men in deprived urban environments. An initial review of ethnographic literature recommends a methodologically flexible approach, able to combine an ethnographic tolerance of the complex and often messy achievement of social order with a hesitancy to hastily ascribe moral and political value. Chapters 3 and 4 argue that this is a prerequisite for a broad purview of personal capacity and an open-minded approach to inherently discriminatory body cultures, such as are found in Burnley's gyms.

For this purpose, a conversation between two hitherto estranged families of empirical perspective is undertaken; *ethnomethodological* and *non-representational* approaches. Each of these perspectives encourages, by distinctive and often disparate means, a suspicion of explanatory and aspirational narratives of the lives of Burnley's young men. This suspicion is suited to complicating the ways in which these men may be appreciated as politically capable. Non-representational approaches offer ethnomethodology a means of adopting a cogent theoretical attitude that, whilst preventing the reduction of sociality to the achievement of social order, does not ask ethnomethodology to become apostate to its own belligerent modus operandi. In turn, ethnomethodology offers non-representational approaches a relatively formalised method for tracing the practical achievement of culture, without threatening to still its modus vivendi. Together, these approaches frame an

ethnographic approach capable of developing understandings of the abilities and affiliations of the young men training in Butterworth ABC and Curzon Gym. Geographers Laurier and Brown (2004), writing from an ethnomethodological perspective, note that '[w]here we would find ourselves in accord with Non-representational theory... is in returning to embodied senses, since with the turn to geographical imagination we have consigned 'seeing' to the domain of mental psychology' (p.15). This is a promising position from which to illustrate the *lived complexity* of cultures subject to generic and politically disabling diagnoses of disaffection.

The ethnographies detailed in Chapters 5 and 6 employ the method outlined in Chapter 4 to explore how young men learn to move, think, feel and live together. The primary aim is to interrogate Cantle's generic notion of disaffection, by illustrating the affectively varied political capacities of unique personalities living out complex cultures. The entanglement of race, masculinity, personal ability and inspiration is traced through the culmination of rules, skills, attitudes and ethos in the ongoing achievement of inspired social order. Previous ethnographic studies of young white men living out post-industrial urban transitions focus upon representation-mediated and articulable proceeds of intercultural negotiation; tradings in identity, belonging, vernacular, etc. The ethnographic studies of Butterworth ABC and Curzon Gym are distinctive, in that they prefer a focus upon lively characterisations and evocative vignettes that illustrate the varied affective capacities and bonds of affection arising between participants in complex body cultures.

Under the tutelage of charismatic personalities, such as gregarious professional bodybuilder Gav, or the venerable and inscrutable manager of Butterworth ABC Donald, young men are *inspired* to learn a striking range of *capacities to affect, be affected, to temper affections and to form bonds of affection* with their contemporaries; they learn to summon aggression, temper embarrassment, instigate humour, channel frustration and much more. These ethnographies

illustrate that, whilst engrossed by the immediate practical work of learning how to box, build muscle and socialise, these young men establish relations of *empathy, trust and mutual anticipation.* The nuances of these durable, although fragile, social arrangements are too fine grained and short-lived for approaches criticised in this thesis to appreciate, including; a focus upon identity and belonging (Chapter 2, Section 2); nebulous psychological explanations of male physical culture (Chapter 3, Section 1); and affectually monotone diagnoses of the disaffection of Burnley's young white men.

2.4 Chapters 7 – 8

Chapters 7 and 8 extend analysis of the foregoing ethnographies of Burnley's gyms, and refer these to the critiques built in the first half of the thesis. Chapter 7 seeks to illustrate the complicated and politically ambiguous social arrangements through which Burnley's gyms inspire affective capacities and social affiliations. Chapter 8 argues that this ambiguous complexity demands unremitting sceptical reflection upon the intercultural affiliations enabled in Burnley's gyms.

It may seem obvious to note that how capable young white men feature in visions of social progress in Burnley, depends very much upon *how* the substance of any such vision is arrived at. Cantle's political imagining of a confident celebration of diversity emerges, however, without sufficient regard to the inspired abilities of Burnley's disaffected young white men. This thesis argues that references to progressive politics are always politically loaded and, as such, are potentially exclusive. It follows that their effects must be placed under constant review by empirical study. Ahmed (2004) eruditely warns that 'the term 'critical' functions within the academy to differentiate between the good and the bad, the progressive and the conservative, where 'we' always line up with the former' (p.9). It must be underscored that *Burnley's contemporary disaffected young white men stand to be marginalised by a progressive consensus upon how diversity should figure in Burnley's future.* Yet if any

aspired-to future may come to pass, Burnley's youth cultures will be better framed as capable contributors, rather than regrettable passengers. As such, this thesis argues that the colloquial inspirations that those cultures locate should be at the heart of visions of Burnley's future.

Cantle's hope for a celebration of diversity in Burnley's future cites an *affective consensus* of living in confidence and comfort with cultural diversity. This consensus is doubly dislocated. It is estranged from a generic diagnosis of disaffection and removed from experiences of living out Burnley's gym cultures. Thought on political agonism is engaged with in Chapter 8, regarding its suggestion that political debate should avoid a democracy sapping, rationalist search for consensus (Mouffe: 2000, p. 132). The affective quality of a consensus upon progressive politics may, however, be equally as exclusive of identities, sentiments and bodies as a broad rational agreement. If a consensus upon desirable futures for Burnley's young white men is to be a useful tool against the return of raced disorder, ways must be found of opening that consensus up to the young white men so often closely associated with Burnley's social problems.

An agonistic political dynamic is addressed by authors to whose thoughts this thesis is particularly indebted (Amin: 2002, 2003, Connolly: 2002). Amin (2002) prefers 'a culture that values participatory and open-ended engagement... between free and empowered citizens respectful of each other's claims' (p.973). In relation to this ambition, Bonnett (2000b) is correct that 'one of the most important tasks of contemporary anti-racism is to engage so-called 'white' people to bring them 'inside' the 'anti-racist project' (p.141). This thesis critically recasts this contention. It argues that for a desirable urban racial geography to emerge in Burnley, which is able to include disaffected young white men, those individuals must be *persuaded* that they have a stake in its coming to pass. In this context, the double dislocation of visions of confident celebrations of diversity, constitutes an obstacle to recognising these men as politically capable

individuals. Burnley's young white men will, however, find affirmation in aspirations that recognise the variety of their abilities and the complexity of their lives, and imaginatively connect these to desirable and possible futures.

This thesis is motivated by a sense that there is a pressing need to develop a political disposition that relentlessly opens up for questioning what exactly might constitute social progress in Burnley. A persistent scepticism as to claims regarding the improvement of irreducibly complex culture runs deeply throughout the thesis. At the margins of 'the progressive', regressive constituencies and sentiments take form. Their marginality risks hardening in the political imagination as reactionary, abject and thoroughly regrettable. Amidst the political context set in motion by Cantle's and Clarke's reports, disaffected white male youth are firmly immobilised at the margins of a hoped-for urban geography marked by the celebration of difference by confident young people.

Amin and Thrift (2005) have recently promoted what they term a principle of 'democratic experimentalism' (p.231) that valorises political actions (or for this thesis, abilities) that do not neatly fit into 'the certainty of critique or some inevitable telos' (ibid.). The political capacities of Burnley's young white men must be allowed to persistently test, rather than be expected to tamely conform to, connections drawn between confident explanations of their lives and teleological stories of local political progress. Critical engagements with Burnley's young white men must, therefore, recognise that beyond the pale of political progress lie abilities and possibilities occluded by constructions of the regressive, conservative and abject. Aspirations for Burnley's future should look toward the men living out Burnley's gym cultures, and who are under threat of being written out of Burnley's future; a future in which they will feature in some form, regardless of sanitised visions of a better Burnley.

Chapter 7 builds into this argument by extending an analysis of the ethnographies of Burnley's gyms. It argues that these cultures do not see difference negotiated or celebrated (following the critique of privileging difference set out in Chapter 3). Nonetheless, these gyms potentially bear positive significance for Burnley's future. The social arrangements alive in these gyms are indelibly marked by intricate regimes of gender exclusion, discrimination against incapacities (real and imagined) and unequal relations of authority. These intensely physical cultures are indefeasibly bound up in eye-catching performances of a working class masculinity, but also see a more subtle operation of race. In both Butterworth and Curzon, raced differences alive elsewhere in Burnley are suppressed as the condition of achieving inspired social order. Via arrangements specific to each gym, race is written out of the inspirational infrastructure that charges the gym-floor and which enables endogenous logics of interaction to draw Asian and white men into bonds of affection and durable social affiliations.

The suppression of race below the 'threshold of reportability' is, however, never complete nor irreversible; race remains latent to the achievement of inspirational culture, and is liable to divisively reassert itself where it stalls and inspired social order falls away. If the abilities that enable these affiliations are to be positively valued, then the rough treatment of difference in these gyms cannot see them cast as politically regressive or reactionary. Burnley's gym cultures locate capably engineered *topographies of inspiration*, through which young white men learn affective capacities and are enabled to form affective bonds with Asian contemporaries. If visions of the future of Burnley's racial politics are to be found persuasive by the young white men using these gyms, those aspirations must better articulate around the colloquial inspirations they are already finding amidst their daily lives.

Chapter 8 reiterates the research question and provides a concise response to it. This response is then developed through reviews of the progress made with

the three themes set out in Section 1 of this chapter. The thesis concludes by arguing that where progressive aspirations for Burnley resonate with inspirational cultures wherein young white men form intercultural affiliations, those men are more likely to be recognised as potential contributors to the town's future. Such aspirations must be capable of apprehending the complexity of the bonds of affection that grow between Burnley's disaffected young white men and their contemporaries, and the variety of the affective abilities by which these bonds emerge. Generic progressive ambitions for Burnley's young people to confidently celebrate diversity, are liable to trip over the variety of abilities and inspirations alive in the town. In response, this thesis contends that small stories about talented individuals will diminish the political silence ensconcing the abilities of Burnley's disaffected young white men, and thereby contribute to thought on how the town is moving (on?) in the post-2001 political context.

Critical aspirations *for* Burnley must be inoculated by empirically sourced appreciation of colloquial inspirations *in* Burnley. If durable bonds of affection may be noted growing between men much like those seen fighting on the streets of Burnley Wood and Daneshouse in 2001, then a small part of a desirable and possible future for Burnley might be glimpsed. Although features of the cultures that situate such bonds might sit uncomfortably with 'progressive' sentiments, this should prompt scrutiny as to how those moral and political judgments are arrived at. Perhaps these places will not be the best of all possible societies. But they mark social arrangements between Burnley's young white and Asian men preferable to those rehearsed in June 2001.

Chapter 2
Positioning Burnley's disaffected young white men

1. Segregation and unrest in Burnley

1.1 Burnley, June 2001

From the 23rd to the 25th June 2001, violence caught light across Burnley. Serious social disorder broke out in the form of street fights, stabbings, assaults and arson. The authors of the <u>Report of the Burnley Task Force</u>[5] (Clarke: 2001) noted the challenge of finding clarity on these events, citing both the number of perspectives available and the difficulty of 'get[ting] people to say what actually happened' (p.36). The bare facts, as recorded by Clarke's report (see especially p.35), appear as follows. A stabbing at a club on the night of 22nd June, apparently not racially motivated, was followed by 'violent clashes... between groups of young people, some white and some of Asian heritage'. A subsequent assault on an Asian taxi driver by a group of young white men armed with a hammer, at around 5am that same night, apparently compounded a raced dimension to the unfolding violence. Over the weekend, there were tit for tat attacks on the Duke of York pub by 'Asian young men', and on Asian owned businesses by 'white men'.

The violence in Burnley took place within a wider pattern of disturbances across Northern England that summer. In Oldham and Bradford there were 'violent confrontations between young Asians and the police' (Kundnani: 2001, p.105). 'Young Asians in the old, rundown textile mill towns of Northern England, went on the rampage to protest against... hopelessness' (Amin: 2003, p.461). The fires across the Pennines were soon to be stoked by the terrorist attacks on the USA on 11th September. Burnley's disturbances quickly became enrolled in the most recent incarnation of debates over the legitimacy of the presence of raced

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[5] Commissioned by Burnley Borough Council and Lancashire Constabulary (Pennine Division), and associated contributors.

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minorities in the United Kingdom. In particular, the position of Muslim residents has suddenly become more contentious in the new century (see Jan-Khan: 2000). Amin (2004) argues that these disturbances 'were about more than recognition for minority needs. In claiming neighbourhoods, streets, parks and monuments as theirs, the young protestors have fundamentally questioned assumptions about who owns the public sphere' (p.11). New imaginings of ethnicity, religion and extremism are effectively revising and recasting existing debates over race, 'failed integration' and 'moral decay' (Gilroy and Lawrence: 1988, p 126). Bradford, Oldham and Burnley now feature in debates on the future of minority groups in the Union, just as Moss Side (Nally: 1984) and Brixton (Greaves: 1984, Campbell: 1991, Howarth: 2002) once did. 'Angry Afro-Caribbean young men seen in the early 1980's were, a decade later, replaced by angry Asian young men' (Jan-Khan: 2003, p.37).

In the wake of the disturbances, the UK Government commissioned a series of reports that sought to set the agenda for working out how to move on from this unhappy period. Oldham (Ritchie: 2001), Bradford (Allen: 2003) and Burnley (Clarke: 2001) each had their respective enquiries. The then Home Secretary, David Blunkett, also established the Community Cohesion Review Team, which was chaired by Ted Cantle. Cantle's (2001) report was to be 'less concerned with the particular circumstances of each area' so as to provide a focus upon national policy and practice (p.5). Indeed, since 2001 broad changes in the UK Government's approach to social cohesion may be identified. Home Office publications demonstrate a significant shift in content post-2001.[6] The Government's strategy[7] for promoting racial equality and community cohesion now comes through the 'Race, Cohesion and Faiths Directorate', reflecting an intention to accommodate the new paradigm inaugurated by the particular politicisation of Islam invigorated since mid-to-late 2001. Recent legislative

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[6] Following May 2006, the Department for Communities and Local Government.
[7] Home Office 2005, 'Improving opportunity, strengthening society: the government's strategy to increase race equality and community cohesion'.
Also Home Office 2005, 'Strength in diversity, towards a community cohesion and race equality strategy: a summary of responses to the consultation'.

interventions such as the Racial and Religious Hatred Act (2006),[8] along with debates such as that over the proposed requirement for faith schools to admit 25% of 'non-faith' students (as advocated by the Cantle report, p.37) reflect that questions over race, ethnicity and belonging in the UK have broadened their range to bring the position of the UK's religious, and especially its Muslim constituents under review. Within this context, furores such as that in late 2006, over the propriety of wearing variations of Islamic veils in public as a potential 'mark of separateness'[9] subtly reference the violence of 2001.

Back et al (2002) see the disturbances as a turning point, or even as a revealing episode, regarding the attitude of the UK Labour Government's policy and rhetoric on race, immigration and nation. They criticise David Blunkett's response for 'exemplif[ying] a populist strand of New Labour rhetoric that tends to mollify rather than confront the sentiments demonstrated in increased support for the British National Party across Northern mill towns and its electoral successes in local government elections in Burnley' (p.445). Such a strategy contrasts sharply with Labour's erstwhile rhetorical celebration of diversity and valuing of cultural mixture. Placing this shift in emphasis within the localising agenda of the Labour government, these authors argue that 'multiculturalism challenges the very tension between the rhetoric of communitarianism and the realities of self-government' (p.448). Conservative Party leader Michael Howard chose Burnley, in February 2004, as the site for a denouncement of BNP politics. This firstly illustrates the continuing resonance of the disturbances in Burnley's civic and UK national politics. Secondly, it is notable that themes familiar from both faces of Labour's politics of race and belonging ran throughout his speech; Britishness, community, cultural tolerance, talent, aspiration and the 'richness' of diversity. Both of the UK's main political parties used the 2001 disturbances to position themselves against extremists, whilst settling upon positions deemed likely to garner maximum electoral support. The

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[8] See Office of Public Sector Information (2006).
[9] Tony Blair, downing street Press Conference, 17th October 2006.

result has been a politically anaemic rhetorical commitment to celebrate diversity and promote tolerance, platitudes redolent of Cantle's vague hopes for Burnley's future. This thesis studies how the talents and aspirations of Burnley's young people figure in the living out of Burnley's cultures. It pays attention to individuals working through the contradictions of local cultural difference, and speculates upon how they may feature in desirable and possible futures for the town that complicate perennial political themes of personal responsibility and civic cohesion.

Local interpretations of the disturbances, and of what it means to belong in Burnley, have been worked over in conversations in the town's homes, streets, pubs, gyms, television screens and newspaper stands. Local and national media have influenced local debates and perceptions, contributing to a contemporary local ideology of belonging (Hall: 1995, p.18) with compelling and durable racially inflected meanings. During the author's stay in Burnley, he frequently came across variously matter of fact, perhaps embarrassed or otherwise self effacing reference to the events of 2001. Such reactions suggest a resignation to Burnley's identity as a town with a race problem, one still ongoing more than five years since the violence.

> "Yeah, you know, the Duke of York, where there was all that trouble with the Asians" (Gav, local businessman and professional bodybuilder, Curzon Gym, 20th June, 2006).

> "People usually say, 'oh yeah, where all those riots were" (Gemma, a hair dresser in Burnley at Cut Above hairdressing salon, introducing the town, 1st March, 2006).

> "Where there was that trouble with the Pakistanis" (Donald, boxing manager at Butterworth ABC, explaining how to get to a boxing show at the weekend, 25th April, 2006).

The 'mechanics of signification' that sustain tabloid and other popular media tend to interpret complex issues via recognisable slogans (Ferguson: 1998, p.129). Accordingly, news media picked up on the 'divided community' dimension of official reports; "Britain's races 'leading parallel lives', says report" (Daily Mail 11th December 2001); "Race 'segregation' caused riots" (BBC News, December 11th 2001); "Race riot town 'remains polarised' (The Guardian, May 26th 2006). Within the global and national political contexts that unfolded through the second half of 2001, Jan-Khan (2003) suggests that '[t]he words Islam, militant and fundamentalism were seized upon by local media' (p.37). Whilst sounding tough on racist extremists, the official and essentially empty politics of the main political parties lacked the immediacy and emotional resonance of simple, brutal plays on popular fears made possible by this discursive context. Following the disturbances, the British National Party were able to gain a degree of legitimacy as spokesmen for Burnley's white majority, a position the party has sought to adopt in response to raced violence since the early 1990's (Ferguson: 1998, p.188). In May 2003, the BNP became the council's official opposition, and continues to return councillors to the Borough Council in successive elections more than five years after the violence.[10]

The political stakes of regaining lost ground from Burnley's fascists in local popular sentiment are high. The BNP strategy has been to target local issues for their own divisive ends.[11] The author's experiences of living in Burnley Wood and training in the town's gyms emphasised, in contrast, the remoteness and insipid persuasive effect of generic, uprooted refrains of tolerance and diversity. A great many white people in Burnley are left cold by the carefully calibrated though finally detached language of official reports and mainstream political parties. Burnley's population are not living out a celebration of diversity. Indeed, the prospect of doing so has little resonance with the author's friends, contacts

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[10] In the 2001 election the BNP gained 11.3% of the popular vote, reduced to 10.3% by 2005.
[11] In response, local anti-racist efforts have focused upon denying them uncontested ownership of such issues as local planning decisions and residential care homes. See "Burnley: tackling the Nazi conmen", Socialist Worker Online, April 2002 and "3-0! Three council by-elections, three BNP defeats", Searchlight Magazine, March 2007.

and former neighbours in the town. This thesis is written in response to the trouble that extant aspirations for a 'better' local racial politics have in tapping into local emotional resonance. Anti-racist campaigning in the area has often essentially reacted to the local agenda of the BNP. These efforts must also be able to communicate aspirations for the town that touch, move and persuade people. In response, this thesis considers the formulation of aspirations for Burnley's future, which might gain sufficient purchase upon local sentiments to contest the opportunist and disingenuous local politics of Burnley's fascists. This thesis argues that Burnley's constituents are more likely to be framed as positive contributors to the town's future, if visions of how local society may move on from 2001 strike them as both desirable and possible. In turn, this may open onto imaginative political practices including, but not limited to, electoral campaigning.

1.2 Riotous extremists and disaffected young men

McDowell (2002) has noted that '[i]n the United Kingdom, at the turn of the current millennium, youth, and in particular young men, have once again become the focus of both policy and academic debates' (p.98). Indeed, Burnley's youth are caught up amidst familiar refrains emerging across government sponsored comment and academic literature on the violence of 2001.[12] Keith (1999) has previously noted that the focus of policy makers and social commentators upon community, which is prevalent in the Cantle and Clarke reports, falls heavily upon the conduct of young people. Young men often hold an ambiguous position in this respect, their actual or potential 'lawlessness [keeping] them inside and yet outside their own community' (Campbell: 1993, p.29). Chapter 1 outlined that in Cantle's and Clarke's reports on the Burnley disturbances, young people are focused upon simultaneously as the nub of the problem and as potential means of its resolution. Previous studies of a disillusionment with 'mainstream society' amongst young Asians

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[12] On some issues there are marked differences. For example, Amin (2003) and Kundnani (2001) are more willing to cite inappropriate and ineffective policing methods as a factor in the violence than government reports are.

(Kalra: 2000, Alexander: 2000, 2004) and young whites (see Section 2.1 of the current chapter) have previously analysed issues engaging young people living out generational shifts in the urban societies they inhabit. The unique contribution of this thesis is to specifically consider the utility of Cantle's and Clarke's references to *disaffected* youth. It argues that a generic notion of disaffection provides a limited approach to placing young people in visions of Burnley's future.

Cantle (2001) and Clarke (2001) both refer to Burnley's young men, more broadly than those immediately involved in the disturbances, as disaffected. Cantle repeatedly returns to the topic of 'notable elements of disaffection, for example young white males and Pakistani Muslim youths' (5.8.17, also see 2.7, 2.10, and 4.12). Clarke reprises the theme, considering that '[t]here is now a broad understanding that social exclusion or social disadvantage is a major cause of disaffection in communities [and that it] results in a lack of social cohesion and ultimately breaks communities down' (p.13). Elsewhere, he writes about the 'continuing disaffection of male adolescents of all main ethnic groups' (p.218), linking this disaffection to a lack of employment opportunities (p.240) and a feeling of a lack of power (p.219). Cantle contrasts disaffection with palliative conditions of self-esteem and confidence. He sees these as crucial to the involvement of young people in a future urban politics marked by a 'celebration of diversity'. The language of the reports is worryingly redolent of the rhetorical commitments made by mainstream political parties. Paths between a diagnosis of disaffection and a hopeful prognosis of convivial diversity are shrouded in mystery. Burnley's disaffected youth are positioned firmly and statically on the sides of this narrative of social progress.

Amin (2003) suggests that the disturbances involved an element of 'protest against a long history of economic deprivation and hopelessness' (p.461) by young Asian men and women 'deprived of futures' (Kundnani: 2001, p.105, also see Jan-Khan: 2003). Indeed, Cantle (2001, 2.1) notes that '[w]e recognised

that some communities felt particularly disadvantaged and that the lack of hope
and the frustration borne out of the poverty and deprivation all around them,
meant that disaffection would grow'. He goes on to warn of the consequences
of communities being 'exploited by extremist groups determined to undermine
community harmony and foster divisions' (2.3). A further theme, intimately
related to that of disaffection, is that of *white racist extremist elements* having
instigated the violence, in the hope of capitalising upon the sense of
disenfranchisement amongst Burnley's Asian minorities so as to further
marginalise them (the authors noted in this paragraph each acknowledge such
provocation as a significant trigger cause). Clarke's report concurs, stating
plainly that 'white racists took advantage to exacerbate the situation and to
promote disharmony' (p.36), whilst claiming that 'there were elements within
both the white and Asian communities that were prepared for the confrontations
that took place' (p. 37). Government strategy documents accordingly underline
the necessity of marginalising extremists, a theme reflected in the rhetorical
positioning of national political parties post-2001 (see above), and explored in
more detail below.[13] For these commentators, culpability for the immediate
incitement of the disturbances rests with a white criminal minority seeking to
take advantage of the disadvantage of young Asians.

It is striking that diagnoses of the political significance of the disaffection of
Burnley's young people fall unevenly across the town's colour-culture line.
Different political narratives are lent to young white and young Asian men,
respectively. The disaffection of young Asian men informs a narrative of
deprivation, discrimination and protest, which provides a legitimising *political*
rationale for those involved in the violence. Conversely, explanations of the
involvement of young white men in the violence typically focus only upon
criminal white racist extremism. So whilst the prevalent analysis of the
involvement of Asian youth in the riots is politicising, the most common theme in
comment on the involvement of white youth is explicitly depoliticising. The

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[13] Home Office, 2005, 'Improving opportunity, strengthening society' (p.21, p.43 and p.50).

danger is that this bleeds into a wider depoliticisation of Burnley's disaffected young white men. McDowell (2002) adds considerable insight on this point by arguing that the relationships between different forms of masculinity potentially place young white men in a position of protest, *even in the absence of a coherent narrative of social revolution*; 'young white men may be ascribed masculine privileges as white men, but as young working class men they are a subordinated masculinity, subject to constant surveillance, especially in public places, where their presence is seen as a visible threat to established notions of public order' (p.102). In contrast to this nuanced political positioning of young white men, analyses of the 2001 disturbances do nothing to confront the assumption that their experiences of disaffection are uniform and (un)marked by political silence. White disaffection lacks both a coherent political narrative and a legitimating relationship with 'street protest'. Disaffected young white men only bear political significance insofar as they are potentially either racist extremists or else misfits in aspirations for a future celebration of diversity. In either case, there is little scope for gaining robust understandings, which McDowell points towards, of the varied political capacities and cultural complexities in the lives of the vast majority of Burnley's young white men who were not rioting in June 2001. This thesis aims to provide such understandings.

Burnley's young white men are caught up in dramatic shifts in the cultural expectations made of working class men. The decline of coal mining, textiles manufacture and engineering employment have contributed to the deeply ingrained deprivation and worklessness that formed the backdrop to the 2001 disturbances. Yet Haylett (2001) notes of the young white men involved, 'these rioters were not hailed as class revolutionaries or even righteously angered disenfranchised minorities; rather they were an embarrassing sign of what the white working-class poor had become – a disorganised, racist and sexist detritus' (p.358). Indeed, the designation of 'racist extremist' echoes the rhetorical moral scapegoating that MacDonald (1997) has associated with the concept of an urban youth underclass; criminal and beyond reason. Locating

culpability in extremism isolates those extreme individuals, who conspicuously and intentionally foment raced discord, from 'a culturally determined but recuperable 'other'(Haylett: 2001, p.351). Indeed, Cantle and Clarke place hope in disaffected young people as brokers of future intercultural cohesion, if only their confidence and self-esteem may be bolstered. Yet *contemporary white disaffection lacks a defining political character* that would finally distinguish young white men from the criminal, racist minority placed beyond reasonable politics. As such, the political capacities of disaffected young white men remain obscured by their abject dislocation from Cantle's, and potentially from other, progressive narratives.

Thought on the position of disaffected whites in Burnley's society should be considered in light of Nayak's (2003a) tracing of the history of 'oscillating markers of race and class projected onto the urban poor' (p.77). Different logics of raced discourse place young Asian and young white men amidst experiences of disaffection with distinctive political significances. Pred (2000) has interpreted reference to the culpability of extremists as establishing an alibi for a respectable white majority; 'buying into the social reconstruction of collective memory and a popular geographical imagination that displaces, that enables racism to be regarded as typical of somewhere else, as a phenomenon whose occurrence is primarily confined to a small set of other places and locations' (p.187). Indeed, as much seems to be indicated by the response of mainstream national political parties (see above), who have since the disturbances been preoccupied with distancing themselves from the BNP (in Michael Howard's words, a 'bunch of thugs dressed up as a political party') so as to win wider electoral respectability and support. Placing the culpability of racist extremists as a purely disruptive force beyond reasonable politics has further political ramifications. Where this dynamic is at work in Burnley's racial politics, *an alibi for a non-extreme white majority can only ever be incomplete.* Although this thesis holds no sympathy for Haylett's (op.cit.) broader ambition to 'see class through whiteness', and seeks instead to recognise the capable individuals

negotiating Burnley's social arrangements, Haylett is right to point out the absence of a political rationale available for or attributable to young whites in political discourse. The Cantle and Clarke reports provide a striking example as such, offering no more positive political positioning for these young men that their being 'non-extreme'. The complicated and debatable causes of the disturbances must, however, render anything more than a speculative distinction between the necessarily guilty and the uniformly (quasi) innocent a fantasy. The politically significant abilities of Burnley's young men must be seen through that occlusive fantasy, if their lives are to be connected to aspirations for the town's future.

A robust political rationale for disaffected young white men would, in fact, augment the strategy of isolating extremists, precisely because the defining character of their extremism is a lack of political reason. This thesis argues that appreciating such a rationale must entail *recognising the plurality of forms of political 'reason' alive in Burnley*; a plurality beyond which may lie racist criminality, but in front of which currently sits opaque diagnoses of disaffection. Fulfilling this ambition will require developing understandings of the varied political capacities of young white men, which this thesis argues will hint at more complicated and positive roles than non-extreme disaffection. McDowell (2000) has argued that '[t]here is widespread popular and academic agreement that something is troubling men and that this trouble is made visible in a *variety* of forms' (p.201, own emphasis). Burnley's inhabitants live *varied* and *complicated* lives. It is this variety and complexity that must be recognised if the simplified totem of white disaffection is to be unpacked. Burnley has a convoluted history of identity and belonging, and there is widespread (relative to the UK) electoral support for fascist politics. Accordingly, where Burnley's white youth are implicated in the violence of 2001 only as racists, and otherwise lack a vindicating political rationale, they readily come to embody a threat of nihilistic violence and political desperation (Giroux: 1996 p.32). They may not be immediately guilty as the agent provocateurs amidst the violence, but they

certainly look like those men involved in the disturbances, and so invite suspicion by evoking imaginings of the yob or hooligan (McDowell: 2002, Campbell: 1993). Burnley's young whites are therefore caught in a double bind. They are excused of immediate guilt without being exonerated of vicarious culpability, precisely because their disaffection lacks a convincing and legitimate political expression. A more nuanced approach must be taken to what qualifies as an expression of political capacity. Otherwise, these individuals may be construed as politically illiterate obstacles to social progression, simultaneously narrowly and vaguely understood as a diverse and convivial future.

Where the handful of young white men involved in the violence of 2001 are identified as racist extremists, an onus to provide proof of innocence falls upon those not directly involved. That this is the case is not lost on people in Burnley. Neither is an awareness that white men lack as convincing a position of potential victim in contemporary political discourse as young Asians do. The author regularly came across evidence of this through conversations in the town, whilst living in Burnley Wood for a six month period in research for this thesis. Complaints of white victimisation were common. The men training in the bodybuilding gym where research for this thesis was conducted, were furious one night at what they saw as the lenient sentence given to an Asian man who killed a young white girl in a hit and run incident. Indeed, reference to this kind of claim features regularly in official reports.[14] Claims of white victimisation are an embryonic protestation of political vindication, a sort of me-to-ism prompted by the lack of a convincing, alternative political narrative (see Back: 1996, p.30, Blokland: 2003). The pre-emptively defensive prefix 'I'm not racist but...' was also occasionally rehearsed Burnley's gyms, signalling a practised, wary closing down at the mention of the town's race problem. This phrase is often seized upon as likely to preface the expression of would-be-taboo racial prejudice. Yet

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[14] See Clarke (2001) on people feeling 'unable to complain or raise issues without being branded racist' (p.51) and Cantle (2001) on 'resentment' over allocation of monies to minority ethnic groups (4.10). Cantle (2001, 5.10.3) laments that the 'growing disaffection of young males from some established white communities' comes to affect their perceptions of their estranged neighbours.

it must be recognised that, in Burnley, *its use evolves against the spectre of being accused of harbouring racist attitudes generative of the violence of 2001.* Local fascist groups in Burnley have received a boon amidst the localised economy of racialised representation and psychological violence that this indicates (see Howarth: 2002, p.241). A localised economy of psychological violence accompanies active self-identification as white in Burnley, and militates against a positive political positioning of the many young white men who were at home on June 23rd, 2001. It is hard to imagine disaffection being dispelled whilst white people feel hard done by, or else stalked by enlightened logics ready to 'catch them at it'. Estrangements of popular sentiment from political discourse may be confronted where broad notions of disaffection are replaced by nuanced analyses of how race and political capacity are entangled in the lives of Burnley's young white men. Such an analysis is offered by this thesis.

1.3 Finding spaces between parallel lives

A study of the varied political capacities of Burnley's young white men must situate the capacities of those individuals amidst the operation of race through the town's urban geographies. The gyms in Burnley that are the subjects of the ethnographies detailed in Chapters 5 and 6, bear political significance as sites of intercultural affiliation set amidst Burnley's racially segregated geography. Social possibilities are enabled in those gyms that are broadly disabled by Burnley's raced divisions. Reference to the deep polarisation of Burnley's communities is a recurring feature of official reports on the disturbances (Cantle: 2001, Section 2.1, Clarke: 2001, p.47, also Ouseley: 2001, Denham: 2001). Cantle's contention that Burnley's communities live parallel lives, delineated by race, found particular resonance in popular and academic imaginations (see Phillips: 2006, Burgess, Wilson and Lupton: 2005, Kalra: 2002). Two nations within a single place, '[a] generation of whites and Asians... now growing up whose only contact with each other was through uncertain glances on the street or through the pages of local newspapers' (Kundnani: 2001, p.107). In response, encouraging Burnley's 'diverse' constituents to

develop a 'cohesive, inclusive community' (Clarke: 2001, p.5), has proved a uniting theme of recommendation since the 2001 disturbances (see Cantle: 2001, Home Office: 2005). Geographers have contributed to debates on these social divisions by studying the degree and nature of residential segregation in the de-industrialising towns of Burnley, Oldham and Bradford, which bore the worst of the disturbances (see Johnston, Poulson and Forrest: 2002, Simpson: 2004, Phillips: 2006). However, the parallel lives thesis warrants caution, just as does the diagnosis of white youth disaffection. The notion of parallel lives is a further broad geographical imagination, similarly designed to evocatively signal an acute problem. In doing so, *it fails to pick up on the varied experiences young white men have of Burnley's complex cultural geographies*. This thesis explores spaces of intercultural affiliation that thought on parallel lives omits, as sites suited to unpacking the political significance of the personal capacities of Burnley's disaffected young white men.

The parallel lives thesis does not tell the definitive story of Burnley's society. However, the quantity, quality and raced distribution of Burnley's housing stock is undeniably depressing. Cantle and Clarke agree that housing provision contributes to the challenges the town faces. 'Integration and Segregation' constitutes one of the thematic proposals of Cantle's report (p.11). Cantle notes that housing 'is clearly a major determinant of the shape of communities and will have profound implications on the relationship between different races and cultures' (5.12.1). Clarke (2001) concurs, stating that 'housing is probably the key to unlocking the way to resolving a number of related issues, e.g. property values, deprivation, regeneration etc.' (p.39). A surplus of housing is a particular problem in Burnley, 'much of it in a very poor state, and a significant proportion unfit for occupation' (ibid.). 'Low value Victorian terraced housing is the dominant feature of Burnley's housing... in inner Burnley it is estimated that around 15% of these properties are vacant and nearly 27% are unfit as homes' (Clarke: 2001, p.7). A significant proportion of the terraces in Burnley Wood are boarded up. In some cases, entire streets have only a handful of occupied

properties. 'We saw street after street of terraced houses that were mainly boarded up [in Burnley], but amongst them were a few houses which were still occupied' (Cantle Report: 2001, 5.12.4). The forlorn appearance of these streets seems a fitting material counterpart to fears for disaffection, writing Cantle's lament into durable and familiar physical manifestations of urban decline.

Figure 1. Hale Street, Burnley Wood

Much of Burnley's housing stock developed from the mid-Nineteenth Century through to the decline of the town's textile industries after the Second World War. The period from 1850 to 1870 saw the number of houses in the town increase dramatically, from 5000 to 9000 (Bennett: 1951, p.8). This period of development remains evident in grids of terraced houses in Burnley Wood, Fulledge, Rosehill, Daneshouse and elsewhere in the town. However, the Twentieth Century saw a steady fall in Burnley's population, setting the scene for the contemporary surplus of ageing housing. The net decline in population continued despite the attraction of labour from South Asia from the 1960's, drawn by the demands of North West England's textiles industry (see Kalra: 2000, for a tracing of the reasons and character of this period of migration).

Post-1960, this employment base shrank 'unremittingly as a result of job displacement by new technologies and the closure of mills unable to compete with cheaper textiles from the developing countries (Amin: 2002, p.962). Kundnani (2001) explains that new industrial technologies were worked throughout the night. As night shifts were unpopular with the existing white work force, Bangladeshi and Pakistani workers stepped in. Textiles technology developed further still, requiring less labour whilst what labour was needed could now be done more cheaply elsewhere.

The 2001 census maps out a robust material basis for the parallel lives thesis, emerging from the ongoing legacy of this dramatic period of social transition to underscore that Burnley's divisions are entrenched by a poverty of opportunity for social mobility.[15] A lasting legacy of post war immigration is that Burnley's contemporary population includes significant numbers of British ethnic minorities. Mainly of South Asian heritage, they constitute around 7% of the population and are geographically concentrated in one ward, Daneshouse and Stoneyholme, which is sandwiched between the M65 and the A682. In the Index of Multiple Deprivation (2000) 'Daneshouse is shown as the most deprived ward in the Borough and among the worst 1% in England' (Clarke: 2001, p.7). This thesis aims to demonstrate that arising amidst the deep social-historical roots of Burnley's deprivation and divisions, there are cultural niches wherein capable individuals forge distinctive and politically valuable intercultural social arrangements.

Burnley, taken as a whole, has a slightly higher proportion of 'White British' residents than the national average, at almost 92% versus just under 91%, although it is less white than the regional (North West England) average of 94%. There is a numerically significant population who identify themselves as 'Pakistani British' or 'Bangladeshi British'. They constitute the vast majority of the 7% of self identified 'Asian British' residents.

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[15] See UK Statistics Authority Website.

Figure 2. Ethnicity in Burnley [16]

Source: Census of Population 2001 - *Ethnicity*
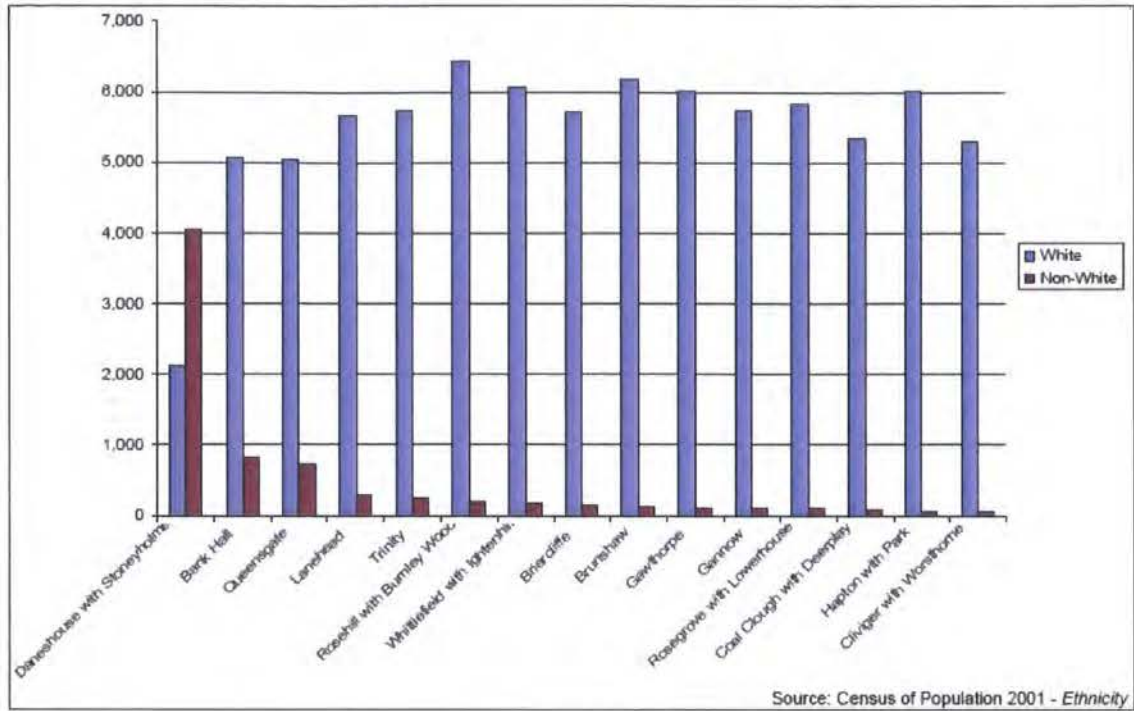
Whilst every ward but three have a self identified 'White British' population of between 93% and 97%, and two of the remaining ones a figure of between 80% and 90%, in Daneshouse and Stoneyholme 33% are self identified 'White British' and over 60% self identified 'British Asian'. Queensgate Ward and Bank Hall Ward, which border Daneshouse and Stoneyholme, have figures of self identified 'British Asians' at around 10%. No other ward has a comparative count of more than 3%.

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[16] Burnley District Profile, available from Lancashire County Council, Directorate for Children and Young People.

Figure 3. Wards in Burnley[17]
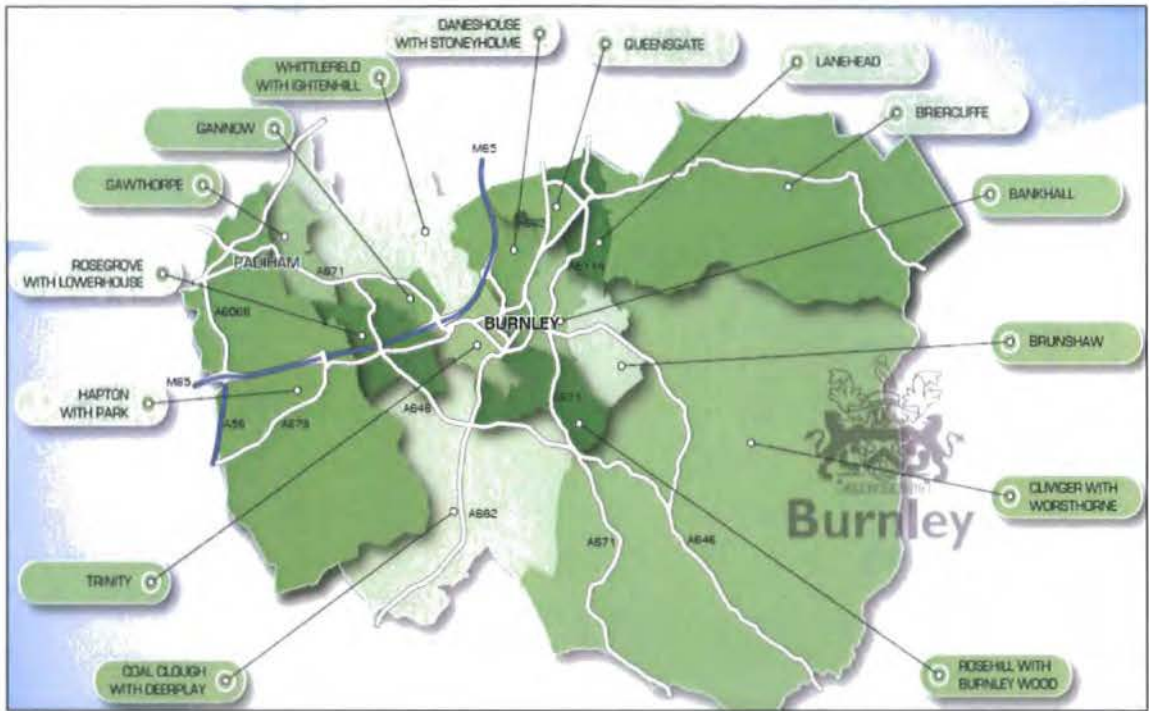
Geographies of active identification with Islam and Christianity, respectively, closely shadow this raced residential segregation. Long term unemployment is highest in Daneshouse and Stoneyholme, in Queensgate and in Bank Hall. In Daneshouse and Stoneyholme almost four times as many people (over 20%) have never worked as compared to the next highest figure in Bank Hall. Long term illness and poor health are far more significant in the central, densely populated wards with a higher presence of self identified 'British Asians'. Burnley's population is therefore dramatically residentially segregated along lines of ethnic self identification, seemingly corroborating the parallel lives thesis. Statistics cannot, however, tell the full story of the complexities that arise where unique individuals capably live out Burnley's multiple cultural geographies. The men who train in Butterworth ABC and Curzon Gym live in many cases in Rosehill, Burnley Wood and Daneshouse. The parallel lives thesis misses the relevance of the intercultural affiliations that these men

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[17] Available from Burnley Borough Council.

capably strike up. This thesis argues that the roles young white men will assume in the future of Burnley's racial politics, are better understood through examination of geographies of affiliation situated in the interstices of parallel lives playing out amidst Burnley's post-industrial urban hinterlands.

The author lived in Burnley Wood for six months whilst conducting research for this thesis. Over that period of time, it became clearer that Cantle's parallel lives thesis is an important analysis, albeit one with limitations. Conversations with a number of people in Burnley, including neighbours, hairdressers and the men training in Butterworth ABC and Curzon Gym, revealed that Burnley Wood was locally reputed to be one of Burnley's impenetrable, white and 'rough' areas. Burnley Wood's name, already locally synonymous with deprivation, was further marked by the concentration of violence on its streets in the summer of 2001. Keith, who lived next door to the author, once said rather hopefully that the area was 'coming up'. Contrastingly, a visiting gasman advised the use of a flak jacket in the evenings. Gerald, another neighbour, was vigilant to the point of paranoid when it came to locking the communal gates in the evening; forcing the author to climb over them more than once to get home from the gym. When an estate agent warned that the empty houses near the train line were sitting empty because they were being 'bought up' by 'rich Asian businessmen' ahead of families being 'flown over', he seemingly corroborated that 'any serious measure of poverty and deprivation, of which housing is clearly one, will enable discontent to fester and for people to look to blame someone else' (Cantle: 2001, 5.12.3). Burnley Wood is quite physically separate from the rest of Burnley. One must either cross Fulledge Bridge or else come up through the town to enter it. A chimney beside Fulledge Bridge had a large 'Vote BNP' banner hung from it throughout the duration of the author's stay, adding to the sense of a racially exclusive neighbourhood.

Figure 4. Areas of Disturbance in Burnley, June 2001[18]

The contention that Burnley's Asian and white constituents live mutually disaffected, parallel lives is, however, significantly complicated by experiences of Burnley Wood and of the town more broadly. This thesis pays attention to

[18] Clarke (2001, p.26).

immediate, emotional and sensate inhabitations of Burnley by unique individuals. In Chapters 5 and 6, studies of male youth cultures in Burnley's gyms are used to focus upon such experiences. Yet lively and varied social events also mark life in deprived and disaffected Burnley Wood. Material poverty at the margins of society does not flow uncomplicatedly into a thoroughgoing usurpation of public life, which may remain marked by the deployment of creativity, competence and cultural knowledge (Duneier: 1999, p.313). Daily dramas played out in Burnley Wood during the author's six month stay; couples argued in the street, children played together and friendships were built between young men using the recreation ground in the evening. During the summer, the streets are busy with white men and women of a working age either enjoying their front gardens and the weather or perhaps drinking on the broad, concrete recreation ground. The tightly packed houses and narrow streets provide a setting for a busy social life. During the FIFA World Cup in June 2006, street parties were a daily feature. Houses and street furniture were decorated in England's colours, whilst the recreation grounds were packed with a mixture of children and adults enjoying games of football, chatting and drinking.

Crucially, however, the racially exclusive residential areas in Burnley are lived out by individuals whose complex participations in the town's urban geography extends beyond their conspicuous public presence in these places. Given the apparently steady pace and genial atmosphere of daily public life amidst these grids of terraced housing, it is hard to image the extent of the violence on those streets in the summer of 2001. It is equally difficult to imagine how these conspicuously white streets and the people living in them will feature in a more cohesive Burnley marked by confident celebrations of diversity. The daily public rituals of setting out deckchairs, drinking cider on the swings and the regular appearance of familiar characters, gives a sense of timelessness far removed from the excitements either of rioting or of convivial multiculture. The evocative materiality of Burnley Wood's housing contributes to this sense of stasis. Long

streets of uniform stone terraces have been part of Lancashire's working class heritage for long enough that they generate an impression of intransigence, which bleeds into one's experience of place. As with a generic notion of disaffection, however, the impression of uniformity and stasis is misleading. Chapter 1 noted an ambition to form aspirations for Burnley's future against unlikely backdrops. This thesis is preoccupied with refusing to allow tacit assumptions about Burnley and its inhabitants to occlude the complexity of their cultural lives and the variety of their political capacities. Many of the people who live in Burnley Wood spend summer days sitting on deck chairs and drinking in the street. Yet these are not all of the people who live in Burnley Wood, and this is not all that residents of Burnley Wood do. Furthermore, these are not the only spaces in Burnley that their lives are lived through. Many of the young white men using the gyms studied by this thesis also live in Burnley Wood, or in similarly deprived and segregated places in and around Burnley. The micro-geographies of intercultural interaction realised in these gyms gain political relevance in relation to the cultural divisions that more conspicuously mark and divide Burnley.

This thesis responds to the pressing task of placing Burnley's young white men in futures better than that threatened by the town's stark divisions and the violence of 2001. Where there is a dislocation between the lived experiences young white men have of Burnley's divisions and critical geographical imaginations of the town's racial geographies, the task of mapping roles for these men in Burnley's future becomes more difficult. It is important not to take apparent manifestations of the parallel lives thesis at face value. Whilst a high degree of racially charged separateness in Burnley is undeniable, the lived experience of segregated places is not so uniform, nor so predictable, as local perceptions of racial homogeneity might suggest. The author's neighbours in Burnley Wood are unique individuals, living out a degree of cultural complexity potentially missed by the combination of fears for white disaffection and cultural separation. Indeed, there is further political urgency to seeing politically

significant abilities through race *and* class. The occupation of housing by recently immigrated people is an emotive resource competition issue (see Phillips: 2006, p.31, also Back: 1996, p.30), appropriated by fascist groups in Burnley, as elsewhere, to capitalise upon the perception of white victimisation noted above. It will be worthwhile contrasting popular stories of a hard-done-by indigenous population, with stories that underscore the many ways in which Burnley's young white men may positively contribute to their town's future. This will remain hard to do through the lens provided by grimly uniform caricatures of urban decline and the politically ambiguous figure of disaffected young white men. Critical engagement with personal experiences of Burnley must not paper over the varied, complicated lives that uniquely capable individuals lead in and beyond disaffected white areas. It is with this task in mind that this thesis addresses intercultural affiliations in Burnley's gyms.

The studies of those gyms generate apprehensions of the immediate, sensual and emotional complexity of living in Burnley. Yet this must not become an apology for a poverty of social opportunity. Much of Burnley's population, both Asian and white, live in significantly deprived areas. The empty houses and vandalised street furniture in Burnley Wood provide props upon which discourses of decline find purchase, provoking rumour and sustaining pejorative reputations. Graffiti covers the more obviously disused houses in Burnley Wood in the form of personal tags and references to Burnley Football Club or the BNP. Other objects turn up here and there to similarly add to a sense of social decline. During the author's first week in Burnley Wood, fellow residents warned that the disused house on the corner of Hale Street was a 'crack house'. Similar suspicions came to be attached to houses with newspaper pasted on the windows. Trainers, hung from telegraph wires, were reputed to indicate that drugs could be bought in a nearby house.

Figure 5. Familiar motifs of urban decline

Cantle (2001) notes that 'constant visual reminders of how the area has deteriorated must be extremely dispiriting for the residents' (5.12.4). The author's experience of living in the area concurs with that assessment. In conversations with the residents of Burnley Wood and of the town more broadly, there would often be complaints of (white) youths indulging in drugs and violence. Discontent would fix upon aggressive confrontations on the street, or upon motorised scooters racing on the recreation ground late into the night. It is stressful to have the windows of one's house facing onto a recreation ground full of noisy and energetic young bodies late into the night. An ambition to give a positive account of Burnley's young white men must cautiously regard the emotional and psychological pressures of living amongst the caricatures that this thesis seeks to look beyond. Ascribing a political rationale to young white men should not proceed by blindly affirming whatever it is they get up to. Burnley's gyms are turned to as sites that enable a *critical* and specific affirmation of aggressive, young, male physicality.

Caricatures of deprivation have the analytical use of a hammer in search of a nail. Whilst familiar features of a poverty of social opportunity are readily found in the town, this should not excuse careful and sensitive analysis of the social possibilities of living out racially segregated and deprived areas. Crucially, when not on the streets, *young men may be engaged in any number of activities*

across and beyond the town, in places shared with Asian contemporaries in complicated ways. It is places such as these, integral to the operation of race but missed by the geographical imagination of parallel lives, that this thesis pursues. This study responds to the danger that the broad diagnoses of parallel lives and disaffection will combine to depict deprived and segregated places like Burnley Wood, and the young white men living therein, as obstacles to Burnley's future. It argues that aspirations for a better Burnley must take shape through multiple connections with the innumerable personal stories *already* underway in the interstices of the town's parallel lives.

Figure 6. Aspirations for Burnley[19]

2. Capable young white men and intercultural affiliation

2.1 White masculinities in a changing urban context

The cultural contexts that Burnley's young white men are living out emerge from dramatic shifts in the region's economy, over the last 100 and particularly the last fifty years. The final coal mines and textiles mills closed in the early 1980's, leaving a legacy of unemployment and deprivation that local society has yet to recover from. From April 2005 to March 2007, the number of people of a working age who are economically inactive rose by 5%, even as regional and national figures improved marginally.[20] Those aged between 18 and 24 and claiming job seekers allowance continued to rise over the same period, significantly exceeding the relatively modest rise in regional and national figures.

Burnley's acute problem of youth unemployment is compounded by persistent levels of low educational achievement and a high number of young people without qualifications. A dramatic shift in the town's employment profile now sees almost 75% of employment in Burnley in the services sector, particularly in hospitality and public administration.[21] For a society built upon the proceeds of the industrial revolution and Imperial power, this represents a transition every bit as dramatic, and more sudden, than its experience of industrialisation. Nayak's (2003b) suggestion that 'we must ask how young people with familial labouring histories are adapting their identities to fit the demands of the new post-industrial economy' (p.7) is well placed within this context. Just as the parallel lives thesis does not tell the full story of urban intercultural affiliation in Burnley, neither do these depressing statistics provide exhaustive account of the talents and abilities of Burnley's young people. It is necessary to take a closer look at spaces between parallel lives, where Burnley's young white men capably confront the town's colour-culture line amidst their daily lives.

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[20] Office for National Statistics: Website accessed: 2.08.08.
[21] Nomis, Website accessed: 2.08.08.

This thesis is interested in the achievement of masculine cultures within a changing town. Ethnographic studies address performances of masculinity in sports gyms that draw young men together from across Burnley's colour-culture line. Whilst wary of imputing a masculine manifesto as the indispensible vision of Burnley, this thesis underscores the political significance of masculine embodiments of the town being worked out in intensely physical subcultures. The ethnographies of Burnley's gyms underscore the variety of political capacities that the town's disaffected young white men are already cultivating. Later chapters illustrate young men capably achieving fragile and ambiguous intercultural affiliations. These social arrangements gain political significance within the social context outlined above, where segregation and lack of social mobility combine to militate against intercultural communication.

Achievements of masculinity are much more conspicuous in Burnley's gyms than are the subtle operations of race. Indeed, race features rather more obliquely in these ethnographies than does the performance of eye-catching masculinities. Understanding how race operates in these gyms will require study of young men living out a society marked by 'a fundamental transformation in the relationships between waged work, gender and class' (McDowell: 2000, p.201). This thesis argues that the purported disaffection of these individuals does not mean that race, gender and class figure uncomplicatedly in their lives. Rather, social difference and personal capacity combine to produce social arrangements of political import, which significantly complicate theses of parallel lives and youth disaffection.

Although deeply interested in the entanglement of race and masculinity with the capacities of Burnley's young men, this thesis is not a study of the negotiation of identity and belonging amidst vectors of race, gender and class. Nayak's (2003b) interest in the 'adaptation of identity' by young white men is familiar from work that studies youth subcultural responses to urban transition. Taylor and Jamieson (1997) characterise the response of young white men in Sheffield

as 'protest masculinities'; protest against a lack of opportunity to live out locally received notions of hegemonic masculinity. Taylor and Jamieson trace the historical provenance of the figure of the 'little mester', a powerful masculine role of master craftsman predominant in Sheffield's industrial history. These young men are seen recasting criminal activity, 'grafting,' as a surrogate for socially valued work. Thinking about such performances as a 'protest' offers a counterpoint to the complaint of a failure to extend a political rationale to young white men. Yet there is a danger that responding to the accordance of a rationale to young Asian involvement in the 2001 disturbances, by interpreting low level antisocial behaviour of the kind seen in Burnley Wood as protest, will descend into a de facto affirmation of bad behaviour by young men.

In contrast to Taylor and Jamieson, McDowell (2002, 2003) has argued that young white men may alternatively be conceived of as engaged in negotiating a 'domestic respectability' that is *not* best understood as a political response to a crisis in masculinity. As Hebdige (1979) contends, the 'style' of youth subculture may be such that its significances are rather ambiguously political. Hall and Jefferson's collection (1976) recommends caution regarding the apparent novelty of youth subcultures; it remains perhaps too seductive to read purposive projects of social protest into their eye-catching performances. The political significance of the capacities of Burnley's young white men may not be best understood by highlighting connections between identities, belongings and social transition. This thesis looks elsewhere than tropes of protest to understand the political capacities of Burnley's young white men.

The theme of masculine respectability communicates with Cantle's framing of confidence and self-esteem as prophylactic to disaffection. Skeggs (1997) suggests that constructions of respectability are rarely recognised as such by those they normalise. Burnley's young white men may experience a form of self-esteem that is misaligned with the sense preferred by Cantle. As McDowell (op.cit.) suggests, respectability amongst young men emerges from ongoing

negotiations with no grander ambition than to get by and achieve domestic conformity (see later discussions on demonstrating respect in the boxing gym). Commentators such as Cantle have been criticised for missing these everyday ambitions. Cohen (1996) warns of a 'middle class' desire for the 'moral reclamation' of the working classes, which he sees in the simultaneous disgust and fascination of broad social discourses of respectability. Haylett (2001) sees these discourses as bound up in projects of neoliberal modernisation and middle-class multiculturalism (also see May: 1996).

Cantle's lament for the disaffection of young whites, alongside his hope that self-esteem will allow them to celebrate diversity, echoes in the complaints of these authors. Broad framings of disaffection and self esteem are significantly removed from the author's experiences of living in Burnley Wood. Moreover, the ethnographies offered in later chapters argue that the sort of liberally disposed self-esteem Cantle would like to see is desperately remote from the complicated forms of self-esteem achieved in Burnley's gyms. Yet it remains pressing to build aspirations for Burnley's future upon cultural spaces where young men capably get on with their lives. Prospects for Burnley's young white men to participate in intercultural affiliations are contingent upon the *specific* regimes of masculine respectability, confidence and self-esteem they capably achieve in these gyms.

For those reasons, later chapters take up themes of self help and personal improvement. Phil Cohen's (1996) study of young white men living in South London illustrates the capable recasting of local mythologies, including 'heroic stories of self-help, self-sacrifice and self-improvement' (p.179). Yet his analysis retains a sense in which narratives of place and identity are part of a 'prevailing sense of impotence and isolation... easily connected to the experience which this group had of being excluded from due political process' (p.195). For Cohen, local narratives of self worth dissimulate a more deeply embedded social dysfunction and alienation. This is redolent of Cantle's fear for youth disaffection

and his corresponding hope for a palliative sense of confident self-esteem. The ethnographies of Burnley's gyms study how self-help is practised and evaluated by Burnley's young men, and how this presages possibilities for interculture.

We must be cautious in view of the baggage attendant upon a notion of heroic, working class self-help. MacDonald (1999) has argued that the rhetoric of opportunity and choice surrounding urban post-industrial transitions is remote from the insecurity and depressing acceptance arising where 'cultural values no longer find obvious outlets in employment for many young working class adults' (p.181). The political vision Cantle sets out for Burnley is similarly remote, although MacDonald's reference to insecurity is problematically generic. The idea that cultural transition will see young men move from disaffection to confident celebration of diversity lacks clarity. It obstructs understanding of the roles these men will play in Burnley's future. Experiences the author has shared with Burnley's young white men suggest that it is impossible to tidily explain the complexity and immediacy of their lives as a response to the uncertainties of urban transition. In response, this thesis offers personal stories of self-help and improvement that young white men are *already engaged in*.

Stories of capable young white men engaged in self improvement *and* intercultural affiliation are underway in Burnley's gyms. Studying active white bodies as sites of political capacity represents a means of expanding thought on how these young men may be thought of as politically significant actors. Anoop Nayak (2003b) has previously argued that embodied rituals in fields of leisure and consumption act to recuperate white industrial masculinities threatened by de-industrialisation. It is tempting to transpose this analysis onto Burnley's gyms, where there are continuities between working out and working in the mill; repetitive, manual, exhausting and manly work. Yet it is important not to tether the political capacities of Burnley's young men to inevitable trajectories, whereby their actions are primarily seen as a rehashing of cultural history.

Rather, this thesis considers how the abilities of Burnley's young men exceed strong explanatory narratives to make surprising interjections in the town's racial politics. Cantle maps out a particular narrative whereby youth disaffection contributed to the 2001 disturbances, and must be replaced by confident self-esteem to usher in a convivial, diverse and cohesive local society. Yet there is a risk that strong narratives, whether explanatory or aspirational, will lead to a limited purview and interpretation of political capacities. This thesis argues that the physical, sensual and emotional abilities of the men training in Burnley's gyms are politically significant, precisely because they frustrate ambitions both for final *explanation* and for tidy ideas of social *progress*.

2.2 Intercultural negotiations and embodied capacities

This section engages with Amin's (2002) consideration of intercultural encounter, so as to more clearly define a rationale for focusing upon Burnley's gyms. Cantle (2001) laments that the 'lives [of residentially separate raced groups in Northern English towns] often do not seem to touch at any point, let alone overlap and promote any meaningful interchanges' (2.1). In preference to these bare images of separation, Amin (2002) notes that Burnley is an 'urban context... where mixture has failed to produce social cohesion and cultural interchange' (p.960). For Amin, it is not simply segregation that is a problem, but also and more specifically the failure of social cohesion to emerge where parallel lives cross paths. Amin offers a complementary geographical imagination to that of parallel lives, by attending to cultural venues whose 'effectiveness lies in placing people from different backgrounds in new settings where engagement with strangers in a common activity disrupts easy labeling of the stranger as an enemy and initiates new attachments' (p.970).

This potential for intercultural encounters to situate performances of social cohesion has increasingly preoccupied scholars of race (Amin and Thrift: 2002a, 2002b, Houston et al: 2005, Sandercock: 2006, Swanton: 2007). These authors explore 'times and places where routine, prosaic interactions between

adults can erode long-standing stereotypes and lead to meaningful relationships (Houston et al: 2005, p.700). Encounters locate the 'hybridity and confusion of urban multicultures' (Swanton: 2007, p.32), and so bear potential to extend social affiliations across parallel lives. Later chapters argue that Burnley's gyms see opportunities for intercultural mixture *and* durable affiliation. Where this is the case, the capacities of men using these gyms are significant for the town's segregated geography of raced culture. The ethnographies of Burnley's gyms illustrate possibilities of interculture that are missed by characterisations of Burnley's young men as utterly divided and mired in disaffection.

Ambitions to clarify Cantle's diagnoses of disaffection and absolute separation should cautiously value the *specific* features of *particular* intercultural encounters. 'The everyday city provides the prosaic negotiations that drive interethnic and intercultural relations in different directions; one reason why we find *so much local variation*' (Amin and Thrift: 2002a, p.292, own emphasis). Yet, as Amin (2002) suggests elsewhere, whilst existing sites of prosaic interaction may 'bring... together people from varied backgrounds engaged in a common venture, unsure of themselves and their own capabilities, potentially more receptive to new influences and new friendships' (p.970), it is also true that '[t]hese openings do not automatically lead to cultural exchange' (loc.cit.). Intercultural mixture is no guarantor of intercultural exchange or solidarity.

It remains necessary to ask *how the political value of jarring encounters with raced Others translates into settled and durable intercultural affiliations*. Mitch Duneier (1992) has argued that it can be through 'living with an acute sense of moral isolation' (p.83) that microcosms of sociability come to weld together 'an embodiment of power, cultural diversity and behavioural expectations' (p.107). This 'welding' would require a degree of durability and regularity quite distinct from the model of prosaic cultural destabilisation that Amin evokes. A sense of moral isolation amongst Burnley's young people is profoundly complicated by the mutual estrangement of the town's colour-culture line. This thesis responds

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to the possibilities of places where intercultural encounters are routinised but not prosaic; places where *inspiration* is deeply ingrained in the personal, emotional and sensate experiences that young men have of Burnley. The mechanics of interaction in Burnley's gyms give up clues as to how some intercultural encounters give rise to durable affiliations whilst others do not.

The ethnographic component of this thesis traces the interrelation of particular masculinities with subtle, though pervasive, operations of race. Where young Asians and whites meet in Burnley's gyms, there is potential for durable intercultural affiliations to emerge. Within Burnley's divided society, these fragile and ephemeral connections have rare political significance. The mechanics of encounter by which they are achieved signal distinctive ways of living out interculture in Burnley. Amin (2002) argues that 'sports associations… draw on a wide cross-section of the population, they are spaces of intense and passionate interaction, with success often dependent upon collaboration and group effort, their rhythms are different from those of daily habits, and they can disrupt racial and ethnic stereotypes as excellence often draws upon talents and skills that are not racially or ethnically confined' (p.970). Until these dynamics inform aspirations for a future better than that suggested by the 2001 disturbances, Cantle's misty path between mute white disaffection and politically literate interculturalism will remain opaque.

Authors have previously considered how race and personal capacity collide in youth cultures. A theme emerging from these studies is the appropriation of black cultural forms by white youths. Hebdige (1979) evocatively characterises the adoption of 'two ostensibly incompatible sources' (p.55) of culture by 1970's skinheads; West Indian immigrant and white working class culture. Underscoring the political ambiguity and multiple racial identities at play, 'the Pakistanis were singled out for the brutal attentions of skinheads, black and white alike. Every time the boot went in, a contradiction was concealed, glossed over, made to 'disappear' (p.58). Similarly, Bennett's (1999) study of young

white people in Newcastle notes the contradiction by which 'an acceptance of black music and style goes hand in hand with an intolerance of black minority groups' (p.18). Comparable observations have been made elsewhere (see Gilroy and Lawrence: 1988, p.129), notably by Back (1996, p.57) who observes men deploying racist insults to manage social boundaries whilst simultaneously denying that race is meaningful to them.

Similar studies also give positive accounts of political possibility where white youths indulge in black culture. Back (1996, p.51) argues that political opportunities arise from the ejection of raced common sense from peer groups that develop a 'shared speech community'. Jeater (1992) offers a further approach, promoting retreat from exclusively white identity in favour of an eclectic, selective approach to culture. Hebdige (1979) characterises such cultural bricolage as 'capable of infinite extension because basic elements can be used in a variety of improvised combinations to generate new meanings within them' (p.103). Within this context, we may place Bennett's (1999) contention that personal tetherings to whiteness may dissolve as relationships to racially marked cultural idioms such as rap, Rastafarianism and hip hop are established. Progressively unpicking the credibility of raced meanings, as cultural influences migrate across raced divisions, is a seductive premise. Yet the notion of young white men creatively appropriating raced discourse is limited, and specifically so regarding the aims of this thesis.

Gilroy (2004) has underscored the political ambiguity and instability of celebratory appropriations of raced culture; today's ethnic chic can quickly become tomorrow's racially charged threat. As much is illustrated by the shifting position of Britain's Asians in popular discourse, which has accelerated since 2001, from respectable success stories to potential terrorists. Furthermore, cultural exchanges that may destabilise such imaginings are premised upon existing urban geographies of race and culture. Burnley does not conspicuously provide generous opportunity for the sort of intercultural encounters that might

establish shared speech communities; not least because, as seen in Curzon Gym, Burnley's young Asian and white men at times communicate in respectively different languages. Moreover, it is hard to imagine the glances across the street that Kundnani (2001) imagines instigating intercultural exchanges that unfold into durable affiliations.

Accordingly, the focus of this study is upon cultural niches where otherwise estranged young men meet with sufficient regularity to engender affiliation. Later chapters illustrate that those affiliations are not conspicuously marked by exchanges of racially charged culture.[22] As such, if these cultural niches are not to remain estranged from aspirations for Burnley's future, *those aspirations must be able to take shape against places not marked by intercultural bricolage.* Cantle's hopes for a future celebration of diversity will struggle to accommodate Burnley Wood, Butterworth ABC and Curzon Gym. Conceiving of political progress in exclusive association with raced cultural eclecticism, would write off swathes of Burnley as homogeneous, disaffected and regressive.

Any progressive behaviours on the part of Burnley's disaffected young white men that might contribute to social cohesion, will build upon 'certain structural influences and... rules of citizenship and belonging that influence *the ability of people to interact* fruitfully as equals' (Amin: 2002, p.960, own emphasis). Previous studies of the raced rules of peer belonging, reprise the themes of vernacular and symbolic appropriation. Nayak's (2003a) study of young white men in Newcastle depicts individuals drawing upon the signs, symbols and motifs available in their urban environs (p.167) to creatively appropriate meanings through pastiche and bricolage (p.177). However, as noted above, the extent of Burnley's physical divisions suggests that hopes which closely associate the 'ability of people to interact fruitfully as equals' with conspicuous

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[22] Whilst these gyms are used by both Asian and white men, it is the suppression of raced difference below the 'threshold of reportability' (Chapter 4) that facilitates the achievement of an inspirational culture, enabling bodies and potentially binding them through 'bonds of affection' (Chapter 7).

trading in cultural representation, will meet frustration where a mixing of cultural material across the colour-culture line seems unlikely.

Indeed, Taylor and Jamieson's (1997) study of the appropriation of representations of Sheffield's industrial past suggests that productions of 'new cultural texts' (p.152) in 'non-diverse' areas are interpreted as melancholic, if inventive, recapitulations of antecedent white-raced notions of place and identity. The 'rich corona of cultural production' that Back (1996, p.51) finds in the lives of young, white working class men may not appear quite so rich where the colour-culture line is not traversed, *as is likely across much of Burnley*. The risk of passing over these places must prompt reflection as to how intercultural encounters are judged as being charged with progressive possibility. Accordingly, this thesis will *complicate the ways in which we think of young men as capable of social affiliation*. The political significance of intercultural encounter may not be entirely divined from articulable negotiations of identity and belonging. Indeed, Burnley's gyms see a contentious suppression, rather than a negotiation or celebration, of the raced differences that mark Burnley.

A focus upon the representational content of intercultural performance obscures the political significance of Burnley's gyms. A stronger account of embodied experiences of white masculinity will complicate the ways in which young men may be thought of as capable. The operation of fragments of 'black' vernacular heritage 'without' racial marking is often seen as an opportunity to 'articulate these rituals with alternative forms of representation' (Back: 1996, p.97). Essentially transposable skills such as bricolage, mimicry and syncretism are cited by authors. Where a disjuncture exists between *typical* examples of creative practice and the reportage of culturally *located* effects, the cultural texts subject to appropriation have been marked as 'properly' cultural by virtue of their 'black' heritage (as in Back: 1996, Bennett: 1999) or 'local' (i.e. white) antecedence (Taylor and Jamieson: 1997, Nayak: 2003b). Social progress is only seen in appropriative relation to *racially marked cultural representations*,

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and practice takes on a pre-cultural, anaemic character, significant only in mobilising raced representations. Cantle similarly casts Burnley's disaffected whites as politically significant only in relation to possible celebrations of diversity. Young whites appear as a passive audience to cultural poverty and political redundancy. This thesis responds by studying how the emotional and sensate abilities of those men realise intercultural affiliations with Asian contemporaries.

2.3 From disaffection to bonds of affection

This thesis pushes a conceptual engagement with the ontology of white, working class masculinities, so as to unpack the notion of disaffected young white men. Such an examination is necessary if the varied abilities of those men are to be imaginatively connected to possible and desirable futures for the town. Studies have built explanations of youth culture by viewing cultural performance through a lens of linguistic and visual representation; racially marked vernacular, clothing, etc. As such, youth cultures become subject to 'the classical cognitive model of representation, in which the passive representation of the world is followed by inference' (Thrift and Dewsbury: 2000, p.415). In contrast, this thesis locates the political capacities of young white men amidst the uncertainty of 'direct perceptions of the unfolding of action-in-context' (ibid.). It builds a more conceptually developed approach to understanding the *embodied capacities* of young white men in Burnley's gyms.[23]

In order to analyse the political potential of Burnley's gyms, this thesis apprehends the emergence of intercultural affiliation through *immediate* events of sense and feeling, rather than by interrogating the *mediation* of interculture through representation. The ethnographies of these gyms depict social bonds rooted in common bodily experiences of sensation and emotion. Such affiliations are potentially missed by a focus upon encounters marked by the movement, alteration and exchange of representation. This thesis develops an

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[23] A conceptual positioning of embodiment is provided in Chapter 3.

ontological account of the *capacities* of white, working class male bodies, whilst avoiding fixing racial meanings to flesh, muscle and bone in a deterministic sense. It is interested in how capable, embodied inhabitations of Burnley's gym cultures situate possibilities of intercultural affiliation that are bound up in, but irreducible to, representations of cultural difference.

Studies of young men grappling with race in urban environments have previously turned to the emotional and sensate qualities that mark their daily lives. The emotional and psychological dispositions of these men have been thought of in terms of a propensity to feel-in-common. Gilroy (2004) and Taylor and Jamieson (1997) are among those to use Raymond Williams' 'structures of feeling' to suggest emotive overtones to culturally dominant ideas of belonging. One common gesture has been to link realignments in urban culture to a vague sense of insecurity, anxiety or crisis. Nayak (2003a) interprets the active appropriation of cultural texts by respondents as a response to the 'insecurity' and 'uncertainty' of the post-industrial transition they find themselves amidst (p.167). So where young white men trade in raced representations, authors have turned to emotion as a means of offering culturally specific explanation.

A range of scholars, including Bennett (1999), Nayak (2003a, p.153), and Gilroy and Lawrence (1988, p.127) have cited 'moral panics' as a constitutive dimension of place based racial exclusion. A further familiar refrain is the identification of an anxious character to local regimes of white belonging. Back (1996) identifies the 'withdrawal and defensive occupation' (p.41) of neighbourhood resources in response to a combination of deprivation and the presence of recently immigrated individuals. More explicit theorisations of white anxiety have sought to evidence collective manifestations of a common psychological condition (Hesse: 1992, Hage: 1998, Nast 2000). In these studies, anxious emotions act as a sort of glue. They lend a stickiness to the gathering of places and groups. The capacities of young white men lie ambiguously between practical negotiations of cultural representations and a

rather nebulous, emotionally toned instinct. These studies recognise the very real stress young men are facing amidst dramatic cultural change. However, the manner in which they discuss emotion might corroborate assumptions that disaffection is a generic, unvarying and immutable condition.

Previous studies have suggested an exclusive affinity between deprived places, young white men and negative feelings. Back (1996) references 'nostalgic' discourses about a perceived 'golden age' of community (p.29-46), a harking back to a time of plenty and often of a perceived ethnic homogeny (also see Wells and Watson: 2005). Nostalgia also features heavily in Gilroy's narrating of the white racial thread running through UK cultural identity (1987, 2004), in Nayak's studies of local white identities in Newcastle (2003a, 2003b) and in recent work by Alistair Bonnett (2005). Taylor and Jamieson (1997) use the following words to characterise emotion in the lives of their subjects; anger (p.153); nostalgia (p.158); desperation (p.155); and agitation (p.154). A concern with 'race hate' is a further example of the analytical association of expressions of raced sentiment with negative feeling (see Grandon: 2001, also Athwal: 2001).

These characterisations of places that suffer serious social problems are perhaps unsurprising. Indeed, it would be disingenuous to ignore the negative psychological effects of living in deprived urban areas. However, these characterisations jar with the author's experiences of Burnley's young people. The time spent in Burnley was marked by varied encounters with unique individuals. Firstly, these encounters were often funny, sad, boring, energising, uncomfortable or thrilling, and so exhibited emotional *variety*. Secondly, this variety was energised by a thoroughgoing *instability* and unpredictability that 'cannot be reduced to a range of discreet, internally coherent, emotions which are self identical with the mind of an individual' (Anderson: 2006, p.735). Analyses that persistently return to negative affective summations might surreptitiously buy into a notion of disaffection that misses the variety, instability

and complexity of lives unfolding in context. This thesis offers a more thorough treatment of the political significance of how emotion and raced difference add up in the lives of young white men.

The omission of an account of the political capacities of Burnley's disaffected young white men, in analyses of the 2001 disturbances in England's Northern mill towns, must be addressed. This chapter outlines a response, comprising a commitment to complicate the ways in which young white men in Burnley may be thought of as capable political actors. The thesis will focus upon youth cultures that sit comfortably with neither of the complementary geographical imaginations of parallel lives and prosaic intercultural encounters. Later chapters provide ethnographic studies of male gym cultures that, although locally reputed to be exclusively white, in fact draw together young men from across the town's colour-culture line.

Later chapters illustrate race operating off the representational radar in Burnley's gyms. Where affiliations arise between young Asian and white men, they are only vaguely tangible and obliquely reportable. Yet rather than responding to this ambiguity with familiar attention to exchanges and inventions of representation, this thesis unpacks the *affective dynamics* of interculture that are obscured by a generic notion of *staid disaffection*. Following Anderson (2006), '[t]hinking through an expansion of the affectual and the emotional begins from an alternative attunement to affect as a transpersonal capacity' (p.735). Attuning to the affective immediacy of contemporary youth cultures will entail an apprehension of capacities that bind together capable individuals;[24] young men who otherwise live mutually estranged lives in Daneshouse and Burnley Wood, but are nonetheless capable of sharing *bonds of affection*.

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[24] A positioning of Spinoza's concept of affect is provided in Chapter 3. The significance of the concept of affect for this discussion is that it allows a framework for understanding how emotion, sensation and representation are creatively encountered in the living out of culture. Chapter 3 considers alternative frameworks for considering emotional and bodily capacities, including feminist approaches. The chapter positions a specific concept of affect as well suited to making positive political evaluations of cultures marked by restrictive scripts for expressive difference.

Chapter 3
Inspiring temperate interculture

1. The body as site of intercultural connection

1.1 Race, interculture and the body

Chapter 2 set out a commitment to study the affectual dynamics of interculture. In doing so, longstanding debates regarding race, culture and representation will be opened onto. By clarifying a position upon how the body along with its sensate and emotional involvements sit within these debates, we will be able to more confidently intervene in thought on Burnley's intercultural politics. Critical race scholars have, for some time now, worked to emphasise race as a contingent ideology rather than a given essence (see Jackson: 1987, Jackson and Penrose: 1993, Goldberg: 1993 Gilroy: 1987, 1993, 2000). This thesis remains committed to the consensus, within the academy, that raced thought and practices are fed by a series of located, generated ideologies. Race is not, however, an unchanging thread running through a single, dominant Western narrative. Rather, constructions of race subsist variably in multiple modernities emerging through plural global histories (Bonnett: 2005). In order to more fully recognise the ideological provenances of raced thought and practice, a nuanced treatment of how bodies are marked and divided within particular societies is required.

Simplistic associations between pigmentation, phenotype and valuations of personal worth have been complicated by authors mining the historical contestation of raced ideologies. Nonetheless, as critics of raced ideologies work within a period, intellectual context and sphere of experience that fundamentally shapes their thought, they have come to varying conclusions. For example, WEB Du Bois' language of inter-racial partnership within a unified Republic, and his aspiration to raise the Veil separating his two Americas (1905), enabled a timely source of political aspiration. In turn, Frantz Fanon

documented the psychical damage imposed upon black subjects by racial ideology, trapping people within a neurotic orientation occurring where a white perspective 'breaks up' the black body in an act of extreme epistemic violence (Bhabha: 1986). Fanon's recognition of the tragic interplay of skin and psyche, which he sought to unravel, grew from his professional and personal experiences of race, psychiatry and colonialism. An encounter with these authors reveals that by relating culturally ingrained metaphysics of race to the historical locations from which it is visualised and perceived, we are better positioned to critically review and update our renunciations of race as a real or useful category (Gilroy: 1998).

The conceptual framework developed in this chapter enables a culturally located denunciation of race as a natural and inevitable source of division in Burnley, post-2001. It is significant that it does so by working with, rather than simply to dispel, the durable categories of racial difference that will feature in local vernaculars for the foreseeable future. The text frequently draws upon the terms 'white' and 'Asian', in reference to the unproblematic application they find in Burnley's gyms and across the town. This does not imply sympathy with the supposedly natural, inevitable divisions that their casual use promotes. Rather, by employing them within a critique of the divisions their partiality engenders, the thesis will be better placed to engage with possibilities of interculture via frames of reference familiar to Burnley's inhabitants. This well rehearsed dilemma of terminology stands for a greater one here, regarding how a functioning interculture may emerge in Burnley, whilst people in the town continue to see their neighbours as *either* 'white' *or* 'Asian'. Ambitions to lift the Veil of raced separateness that falls across the town will stall where we lack a novel negotiation of the tired sociological refrain that situations defined as real are real in their consequences (Thomas: 1929).

Working with these categories of language will be of use when engineering political aspirations that young white men in Burnley might find plausible. A

decision to do so need not bear the assumption that adopting racial categories 'knowingly' provides antidote to the operation of raced ideologies in everyday languages. The task of imagining social progress in Burnley can only be achieved in view of the ideological dynamics of cultures that bear raced thought and practice (Bowser: 1995). Conscious regard must be given as to how formal ideologies of race permeate everyday cultures (Pred: 2000) and institutional arrangements (Ahmed: 2004), which then exhibit the having-become-routine of structures of white perception and privilege (Back and Ware: 2002, also Cohen: 1992). At the same time, an ability to glimpse modest gains within cultures pervaded by race is necessary, if 'racist cultures' are not to be held as *only* insufficient to progressive sensibility. Political aspirations for Burnley that seek local resonance must avoid assuming the role of 'moral policing' (see Nayak: 2003a, p.174) as the sort of moral revanchism anti-racists have long been wary of (Gilroy: 1992). It is against such a risk that this thesis privileges a political dynamic of colloquial intercultural affiliation. The thesis does not, however, purport to resolve these difficult issues by participating in a local language game compromised by a white-Asian Manichaeism, one divisively mapped out across Daneshouse and Burnley Wood.

This thesis responds to a need to study how intercultural affiliations persist and subtend realities of racial estrangement, as will complement more familiar questions about how raced ideologies come to be seen as real or how they may be undone. It does so by exploring how bodily co-presence and ability are implicated in intercultural affiliation. As Amin (2002) suggests, Burnley is a town where points and passages of mixture between white and Asian Britons have failed to produce affiliations sufficiently binding and stable to enable civic harmony. Back and Ware (2002) offer an effective culmination of the logic, reviewed above, that raced ideology is contingent and as such may be undone. They see a weakening of the essentialist connotations of race as prefacing its eventual denudation from language. In Burnley, where categories of raced culture are deeply ingrained in local vernacular, the mitigation of separateness

is a more immediate and achievable task for local politics. Whereas Gilroy (ibid.) underscores the need to link anti-racist ambitions to culturally located practices of perception, *ambitions for interculture must attune to practices of embodiment* that come into play where white and Asian men meet.

Complicating a sense of Burnley's young white men as capable will help us to imagine roles for them in the town's future. These roles will frustrate confident placement of them in overly tidy and exclusionary narratives of political progress, such as that which passes from white disaffection to confident intercultural literacy. Thinking primarily with the body, rather than with ideology and discourse, presents a promising means of doing so. Chapter 2 notes that authors often focus upon the trading of discourse by young men mired in negative, monotone experiences of place. As such, practice takes a mute, appropriative cultural role. This approach makes it difficult to trace the mechanisms by which intercultural affiliation emerges amidst a culture shot through with raced assumptions and epithets. If the moving, sensing, beating, humming human body can be recognised as bringing its own portion of liveliness to interpersonal relations, then the powers and limits of raced discourse will be placed in sharper relief. A new range of tools will be gained for unravelling ideologies of race from a society peopled by capable individuals.

Indeed, authors have recently returned to the contentious notion that, whilst contingent and constructed, race has an ontology, as 'material differences between bodies, things and spaces become sites of intensive differences as race comes to matter' (Swanton: 2007, p.69, also see Lim: 2005). Saldanha (2006) has recently suggested that race 'may be approached ontologically, as a real process demanding particular concepts and commitments. Not so much representations, but bodies and physical events' (p.9). These perspectives offer to reconnect cultural representations and bodily practice, enabling a more nuanced understanding of how young men capably engage in intercultural contact. However, the interest of this thesis in ontology is not a means of

exploring the connection of raced categories to bodies or bodily abilities. The objective is not to consider the ontology of whiteness, but rather to *examine how intercultural affiliations are reinvented through creative bodily praxes*. The ethnographies of Burnley's gyms explore possibilities of intercultural affiliation where capable bodies interact amidst latent, enduring, although mutable raced differences.

Authors working at the crossroads of race and ontology have experimentally and contentiously considered how raced difference and bodily capacity collide (see Tolia-Kelly: 2006). In respect of racial ideologies, it remains true that the 'potential of events is always constrained. Events must take place within networks of power which have been constructed precisely in order to ensure iterability' (Thrift: 2000, p.217). This thesis argues, however, that the political significance of intercultural affiliations in Burnley cannot be fully understood through the aspects of cultural difference and communication more readily lent to representational culture; language, images, clothing, identities, belongings, etc. Indeed, the intercultural affiliations arising in Burnley's gyms entail affectual dimensions that are vaguely tangible and obliquely reportable. Those affiliations are located by performances of working class masculinities marked by repetitive practice, and emerging in gyms used predominantly, although not exclusively, by young white men. The operation of raced ideology is subtle. Few materials are provided for appropriations of raced cultural representation. In order to understand how interculture works in these gyms, a thorough understanding of the body cultures they locate is necessary.

1.2 Fighting bodies

By gaining understanding of the embodied capacities of Burnley's young white men, this thesis refuses to place an interest in the progressive value of their abilities ahead of study of what their abilities are, and how they work through particular cultures. Where this balance is not carefully struck, purportedly progressive values stand to be politically immobilising, similarly as is Cantle's

hope for Burnley's disaffected youth to confidently celebrate diversity. In continuing this critical narrative, the current chapter develops a conceptual account of capable embodiment, one able to complicate the ways in which Burnley's young white men may be recognised as capable. It develops a concept of inspiration as *personally enabling, bodily experiences of motivation-in-motion*, as the kernel of a conceptual framework that makes sense of how experiences of race and affect articulate. A good place to begin is with consideration of the historical articulations of race and somatic capacity in boxing and bodybuilding cultures.

Boxing and bodybuilding cultures are charged with racial ideologies. Indeed, the male body cultures underway in Butterworth ABC and Curzon Gym are inescapably violent, operating through a series of gendered exclusions, systemic discriminations against bodily incapacity and social arrangements marked by unambiguous authority and deference. A worry that drives the following analysis is that thought on capable embodiment has not typically warmed to social arrangements of the kind noted in Butterworth and Curzon, and seen in the histories of boxing and bodybuilding. Accordingly, the conceptual narrative of the thesis aims to head off the danger of missing the possibilities of interculture in these gyms, by regretting what they otherwise close down and exclude. The ethnographies of these gyms illustrate that, although locally reputed to be exclusively white, these uniquely passionate and enabling places stage intercultural interactions. The conceptual framework of this thesis seeks to connect the varied abilities of the men using these gyms with desirable futures in surprising ways.

Examining the significance of boxing practice for Burnley's racial politics will entail recognising that Butterworth ABC is a localisation of a global sporting culture with contentiously charged roots. Boxing has always been embroiled in popular ideas of masculinity, heterosexuality, class and race; from the establishment, early in the last century, of a 'White World Heavyweight

Championship'; through Nazi Germany's adoption of boxing as its pet ideological sport; to the most recent 'great white hopes' Tommy Morrison and Joe Mesi. Jack Johnson, the early Twentieth Century World Heavyweight Champion, infuriated segregationist white America with his proclivity for fine living and for dating women 'outside his race' (Ward: 2004). Joe Louis' fights with Max Schmeling, taking place as Nazi Germany gained momentum in the 1930's, took on political significance both in the context of the coming war, and in contrast to the esteem Louis' achievements reflected upon Black America (Margolick: 2006). Boxing has been a vehicle through which bodily augmentation has become an ideological prop for fascism. It has also been a cultural medium through which 'common sense' racial stereotypes manufacture popular credence. This should not, however, prompt us to look elsewhere for a positive figuring of white youths. Rather, it makes it all the more pressing to lay a positive stake in a sport so able to encapsulate and shape popular culture.

Previous studies of local boxing culture offer guidance for building positive stories of men learning to box. Accounts of demanding and complex bodily practices often lie at the heart of these studies. Wacquant vividly depicts boxing training as 'the constitution of the individual fighter as competent practitioner who has both the *ability* and the *desire* to fight, endowed with a conforming pugilistic habitus, that is, a *motivated* 'body-mind complex' re-fashioned in accordance with the specific, physical, moral-emotional, and temporal requirements of the craft' (1998, p.2, own emphases). A body able to box emerges through practical repertoires, such as the layering of 'muffled combinations as they are hammered into the heavy bags; the metronome rhythm of jump-ropes slapping off the concrete floor and the jarring rat-tat-tat-tat of the speed bag' (Sugden: 1987, p.193). The ethnography of Butterworth ABC gives similarly evocative accounts of learning how to box, as a means of underscoring the personal abilities and social possibilities involved in living out this complex male body culture. Neat characterisations of the motivations, pedagogies and transformations that add up on the gym-floor are defied by

such a scrutiny. Boxing culture offers opportunities to complicate notions of Burnley's young white men as capable social practitioners.

Butterworth ABC splices a contentious sporting history with fractious local politics. Previous studies of boxing culture pay attention to how bodily ability and masculinity intersect with socially agreed notions of work. Wacquant's ethnographies of boxing culture in Chicago employ a notion of 'bodily capital' (Wacquant: 1994a, p.66). Training 'imparts to the fighter's body a set of abilities and tendencies liable to produce value in the field of professional boxing' (p.67). Elsewhere, Wacquant is not entirely positive; '[t]he tangible proofs of the corporeal ravages and personal misery that the profession entails are everywhere for boxers to see' (2001, p.181).[25] Indeed, the typical location for boxing gyms is materially deprived urban areas, leading to a disproportionate involvement of poor men in a sport where economic return for intense physical hardship is low (Sugden: 1987, also see Sammons: 1988).[26] Sugden's (1987) study neatly captures the ambiguity of a boxing culture revolving 'around two sets of values, which seem to be ethically incompatible, but which have been operationally welded together to form the guiding philosophy of the club: missionary amateurism and commercial professionalism' (p.199). At Butterworth, the author encountered an inspiring, youth oriented ethos, marked by respect for club history, deference toward seniors and intercultural affiliations.

If positive *and* politically useful stories are to be told about this gym, it will be important to avoid writing an uncritical romance of working class, physical culture. Familiar narratives of 'keeping kids off the streets' and 'escaping from the ghetto' are integral to the boxing industry, which consciously perpetuates

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[25] Wacquant sees the matchmaker managing 'particular space of transactions involving bodies, pain, and money' (1998, p.2). The matchmaker at Butterworth ABC is a man called Donald. Even a brief familiarity with Donald reveals that the wellbeing of his young fighters is deeply important to him.
[26] From the world's most famous gyms, such as Kronk Gym and Gleason's Gym in the US, to Butterworth ABC in Burnley.

these mythologies.[27] A sign hangs over the ring in Butterworth ABC, reading 'Confidence: have you got it? Why not!'. An absence of self-esteem is definitive of the social alienation that Cantle opines will require 'confidence building programmes for all young people, to build self-esteem, reduce disaffection and boost achievement' (2001: 5.7.5). Indeed, Wacquant has previously noted the sense of security available in inner city boxing clubs (1992, p.228), and the sense of self worth, liberation and personal ability available to competitive fighters (1994a, p.82).[28] Boxing culture locates and complicates Cantle's narrative of transition from disaffection to self-esteem. Butterworth caters for domestic aspirations in masculine youth cultures by mixing local and wider ideas of male worth (McDowell: 2002).[29] As Woodward (2007) has argued, 'who it is possible to become through identifications with boxing masculinities ha[s] to be traced through the routes that these boxing masculinities have traveled' (p.23). Yet it is necessary to follow how the inspiration available in boxing gets entangled by race, masculinity and class. Otherwise, there is a danger of mutely buying into the propensity for boxing culture to narrate itself.

Whilst boxing cultures offer ripe opportunity for casual caricature, the social possibilities alive where men train and fight together are difficult to tidily account for. Boxing culture requires intricate and transformative engagements with emotive and bodily capacities. As such, the abilities cultivated at Butterworth

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[27] Trade magazines such as The Ring and Boxing News reveal meticulous research into boxers' records and personal histories, giving the sport a very acute sense of what is and is not canonical. This is made more necessary by the habit of many professionals to embellish their own history. Jack Johnson was a notorious teller of tall tales, which numerous authors have sought to reconcile historical evidence with. Whether or not Rocky Marciano lost an early career fight that was scratched from the records by a manager, eager to prolong his unbeaten record, is one of boxing history's most enduring controversies. Today, Bernard Hopkins never misses an opportunity to recount his difficult past as a 'rise from the ghetto'.

[28] Rotella (2002) helpfully interprets ring-craft as 'work', as 'people negotiate tradition and innovation in making culture' (p.4). Chapter 7 examines how cultural tradition and invention interpenetrate one another in Butterworth.

[29] Jefferson (1998) has suggested that 'boxing provides the ultimate arena for the display of hardness...a boxer – if he wants to be respected as a fighter – needs the mental resolve to fight on regardless of pain, discomfort and possible injury' (p.83). Boxing cultures may also be disposed towards subversive appropriations of such well worn scripts. We might think of the increasing health of female boxing, 'point[ing] to significant changes not only in boxing but also in the sexual division of work and play' (Rotella: 2002, p.31).

are well positioned to trouble notions of disaffection, parallel lives and raced ideology. The positive narratives of boxing (teaching discipline and respect, going from rags-to-riches) are rooted in personal transformations and individual achievements. Amidst the elitist and competitive ethos of Butterworth ABC, young men adopt a surly, taciturn but mutually respectful individuality that constitutes the gym's appropriate masculine role. These performances are made possible through, and in turn enable, the physical movements and sensations found on the gym-floor. Cultivation of pugilistic skill enables men to do more than just fight; *the knowledges written into bodies and feelings enable logics of interaction that realise intercultural encounters.*

1.3 Growing bodies

Curzon Gym is a bodybuilding gym in Burnley. Each evening it sees men aggressively pit muscle against metal, provoking muscular hypertrophy in view of a masculine bodily aesthetic. Similarly to Butterworth, Curzon is used by both Asian and white men. Although an arrangement sees Asian men use the gym when it is nominally closed, for a short period each night the gym-floor is shared and interculture becomes a precarious reality. Curzon is an inspiring and enabling physical culture, and so study of its possibilities should begin with 'the active role of the body in a central practice of body modification/maintenance' (Crossley: 2004, p.37). Mauss' (1973) work on techniques of the body considers how 'ways of doing' are ingrained in culture, acting to bind signification and practice together.[30] Following Mauss, Butterworth ABC and Curzon Gym are cultural venues that situate 'practices... within specific institutions where... values are not just reproduced and translated, but, to some extent, filtered' (Sassatelli: 1999, p.227). Late chapters illustrate that in Curzon Gym, racial ideologies are actively managed via the intercultural achievement of inspirational body culture.

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[30] Techniques of body modification may take any number of forms. Perhaps by 'piercing, tattooing, branding, cutting binding and inserting implants...gymnastics, bodybuilding, anorexia and fasting [or] the use of various forms of prostheses and technological systems' (Featherstone: 1999, p.1).

Understanding how that culture works must begin with recognition that Curzon is not merely a fitness gym. The variety of gyms and gym cultures underscores that the homogenisation of gym practice should be avoided (Monaghan: 1999, p.268). Curzon is a bodybuilding gym. Bodybuilding is steeped in a history marked by race, gender and class. The progenitor of modern bodybuilding, Eugen Sandow, was a late Victorian strongman who graduated from vaudeville displays of strength to exhibitions of muscularity. His book, <u>Strength and how to obtain it</u> (1897), along with his patented training systems, tapped into a late Victorian spirit of male self improvement. Bodybuilding mixes the inspiration found by men in self improvement with a reinvention of the dignity of manual work. The champions of bodybuilding's 'golden age' in the 1960's and 1970's were inspired by film stars such as Steve Reeves, whose physique gained him the super-male roles of Hercules and Goliath. Other early champions, such as Cuban exile Sergio Oliva and French-African Serge Nubret, were harder to cast persuasively for audiences in sword and sandal epics or in such familiar roles as Tarzan. Yet canonical subculture texts, including Schwarzenegger's (1998) <u>Encyclopedia of Modern Bodybuilding</u>, include frank discussions about skin colour. Indeed, the aesthetic schema of bodybuilding *explicitly removes pigmentation from evaluations of essential personal worth*; skin is too light if it makes the body appear 'soft' on stage, and too dark if it makes it difficult to discern muscular detail. Yet bodybuilding culture is rooted in bodily sensations just as much as in bodily appearance. In Curzon, it is the sensual qualities of muscular development that *engenders empathetic bonds between men*. We cannot understand how racial ideology works in the gym without also understanding the potentials bound up in this intensely physical body culture.

In pursuit of these understandings, this chapter sets out a dissatisfaction with previous studies of muscular male culture. The gym is a familiar focus for studies of body modification. Gym cultures see people applying techniques upon their bodies so as to manipulate bodily shape, composition, capacity and significance. The various practices of working-out have been interpreted as

'men...actively engaged in constructing and policing appropriate masculine behaviours and identities, [and] regulating normative masculinity' (Gill et al: 2005, also see Heywood: 1997). Authors have presented progressive resistance training (weight training) as a *response to male anxiety.* The development of a muscular body has been interpreted as expressive of a defensive masculinity, where the body becomes a 'fortress' (Fussell: 1991, Klein: 1993) of which the gym is an extension, 'both open and protected, both separated and connected to everyday life' (Sassatelli: 1999, p.229). Such analyses share points of connection with studies of male crises amidst rapid urban social change. Indeed, it is be tempting to frame the culture of Curzon Gym as the recuperation of endangered male roles through leisure pursuits (Nayak: 2003b). Committing to long and exhausting work-outs so as to become and look strong, suggests a pursuit of a self-esteem emerging from local ideas of suitably male graft (Taylor and Jameson: 1997). However, closer attention to embodied experiences of bodybuilding training does much to complicate analyses of anxious masculine motivation and youth disaffection.

The question of 'why men desire muscles' (Wacquant: 1994b) is a familiar one, finding recourse to gender as a means of *explaining motivations* for engaging in bodily augmentation. At its worst, this seems to be about satisfying pop-psychological prejudices as to the insecure desires that 'lie behind' exclusively male practice (see Parsi: 1997). A positive approach to white male youth that complicates recognition of their abilities is hard to imagine where male cultures are seen as primarily expressive of insecurity. Fixation upon the task of explaining cultural performance will restrict appreciation of their political capacities, and potential miss the significance of unpredictable effects arising in complex body cultures. By reducing gym culture to an expression of psycho-social insecurity (see Gill et al: 2005) appreciation of the cultural experiences of a range of variously capable personalities is lost. At Curzon Gym, charismatic men generate an inspiring atmosphere by swapping advice, anecdotes, banter and physical assistance. This requires a management of acceptable behaviour

that enables intercultural affiliation by suppressing, although without resolving, divisive ideologies of race. If the significance of this gym culture for Burnley's racial politics is to be recognised, accounts of how inspiration works through the gym-floor must avoid reprising familiar tales of a reactionary muscular masculinity.

A concept of inspiration as *motivation-in-motion* is developed in this chapter as an analytic tool suited to unpacking the varied abilities of young men in the gym. The training schedules underway in Curzon demand massive emotional and physical intensity (see Schwarzenegger and Dobbins: 1998, Whitmarsh: 2001, Bolin: 1997). A fathomless passion is a prerequisite of developing a bodybuilding physique. Gav, the owner and charismatic figurehead at Curzon, made enormous personal sacrifices to become one of the UK's top competitors. For bodybuilders, that 'more lifting pushes aside the question of why lift in the first place' (Wacquant: 1994b, p.164) does not mark the recession of reasonable enjoyment in the face of irrational obsession. Indeed, any study of the variously inspirational, worrying, compulsive and disaffecting experiences of building muscle must avoid what Gilroy (2000) has called an 'overly purposive' account of the fitness industry. The notion of inspiration developed in this chapter allows that aleatory effects arise in complex body cultures to connect bodies otherwise estranged by racial ideology.

Female bodybuilders are particularly subject to studies of their sport imputing a hidden purpose; impelled by a 'superwoman complex' (Fisher: 1997, p.144), driven to boost a sense of superiority (p.137) or motivated to 'act out and build in their own bodies the American cultural love affair with individualism' (Heywood: 1998, p.9). Training is hastily reduced to 'transgressing the traditionally masculine domain of bodybuilding and [gaining] the attributes usually associated with men: strength, stamina, muscularity and control' (Johnston: 1998, p.255). A sense of inevitability emerges where professions of enjoying the sensations of training and emerging bodily form are viewed

suspiciously. Joy-as-motivation is seen as dissimulating some deeply embedded, vaguely unhealthy appetency. Instead, this study characterises inspiration as a mobile energy, working through the gym-floor to unpredictably animate and connect bodies and personalities.

2. Valuing bodily capacities

2.1 Valuing bodies as sites of political capacity

This section thinks more precisely around the body as a site of political capacity, so as to better define the critical role for a concept of inspiration. As above, an ontological account of the capacities of young white men must avoid fixing race to skin, muscle and bone in a deterministic sense. Promisingly, bodybuilding instigates an aesthetics that references the materiality of race in a non-pejorative manner. Less promising is the reference that boxing culture has historically made to the supposedly innate advantages of black fighters; thick skin, hard bones, and flat noses that are hard to break. A risk of falling back upon raced categories for cultural orientation persists in Burnley's gyms. The ethnographies of these gyms illustrate that whilst race is suppressed as a condition of inspirational culture, racial ideologies remain latent to its achievement and liable to divisive reassertion where the movement of inspiration stalls. Just as thinking about race through bodily capacities and physical events (Saldanha: 2006) must guard against fixing capacity to racial biology, so must we be watchful of construing emotive and embodied capacities as unrestricted by race (Tolia-Kelly: 2006). Given a focus upon young white men, uncritical affirmation of their abilities might suggest these are peculiar to whites, implying a corresponding incapacity of young Asian men.

The human body does not, then, provide a politically uncomplicated conceptual platform. Indeed, its political import is that it does not. A sense of inspired, efficacious corporeality provides a contentious anchor for examining the abilities of young white men. Feminist thinkers have located the political consequence of bodily matter in its interruption of settled regimes of signification. As such, the

body implies a possibility of eluding, if only partly or fleetingly, limitations imposed by race. Butler's perspective on performative gender argues that making a distinction between what is before and during culture forecloses cultural possibility (Butler: 1990, p.100). For Butler, the body and culture coincide, mutually extending into one another a sense of location and of the provisional. To think about flesh as anterior to signification would neglect the 'indissolubility of matter and signification' (Butler: 1993, p.32),[31] which suggests an integration of thought on embodied practice and on thinking and doing race. Bodies are not pre-discursively constituted and *then* capable of perpetuating or interrupting race (see Lim: 2005, Saldanha: 2006). Indeed, the author's experience of Burnley's gyms is that raced separateness can unravel where inspiration engenders contact between white and Asian bodies.

A potential for capable bodies to interrupt power relations also marks Donna Haraway's critique of the discursive reproduction of materiality. Haraway sees the 'implosion of the technical, organic, political, economic, oneiric and textual' (Haraway: 1997, p.12) through *material-semiotic* practices, which may be enabling of the 'projects of crafting reliable knowledge about the 'natural' world' that she recommends elsewhere (1991, p.184).[32] Burnley's gyms see bodily knowledges crafted through creative practice; weighted exercises, sparring, dropsets, exchanges of advice, bantering, showing respect, etc. These constitute technical interventions by which young white men cultivate organic capacity *and may thereby enter into durable affiliations with Asian contemporaries*. However, the gyms also see robust cultural arrangements that exclude, suppress and discriminate against difference. As such, a political

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[31] Additionally, any notion of congenital bodily capacity would repeat the gesture of seeing practice as pre-cultural, anaemic and white, as is the criticism made by this thesis of previous studies of young white men living out racially mixed urban cultures.

[32] For both Butler and Haraway, the body is both a site and an experience of inscription, through and against which subjecthood emerges (Thrift and Dewsbury: 2000, p.412). Salih (2002) considers that, for Butler, '[i]nterpellations do not just 'call us' into sex, sexuality and gender, but they are also 'racialising' imperatives that institute racial difference as a condition of subjecthood' (p.93), although she also expresses reservations as to how convincing this similar treatment of gender and race is.

valuation rooted in the possibility of *interruption* will likely frustrate ambitions to connect the bodily capacities and knowledges of these men to oneiric visions of Burnley. It is necessary to look more closely at how somatic-semiotic practices, affiliation and raced categories of meaning interact.

The technical interventions ingrained in boxing and bodybuilding culture involve *repetitive* practices. The sense of instability inherent to Butler's notion of performance (Gregson and Rose: 2000, p.433) works in contrast to a stability contingent upon *iterative* inscription of gender norms. So whilst the endless driving of fists into a bag writes male meaning into a body that becomes capable of boxing, that inscription is only possible because the body is susceptible to augmentation through cultural practice. Indeed, Callard (1998) has argued the need to critically reflect upon the theoretical imperative of fluidity often read into the instability of binary differences that thinking with the body affords. Where a meaningful though relative stability is cultivated from a mutable and workable corporeality, technologies may come into play that 'permit individuals to effect by their own means or with the help of others a certain number of operations on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, conduct, and way of being, so as to transform themselves in order to attain a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection, or immortality' (Foucault: 1988a). *It is important to keep sight of the stabilities that enable experiences of inspiration* in Burnley's gyms. Indeed, the mobility of inspiration therein requires careful maintenance of an infrastructure connecting bodies, personalities, affects, materials and significances.

Following the movement of inspiration through a cultural infrastructure will help to avoid fixing motivation to minds, bodies and practices in predictable ways. Foucault's work on power-as-dressage frames exercise as 'that technique by which one imposes on the body tasks that are both repetitive and different, but always graduated' (Foucault: 1979, p.161). For example, boxers move through a series of exercises, using punch bags and pads, which demand progressively

finer anticipatory skills. In reference to Foucault's later work on the cultural technologies by which selfhood comes about, Connolly (1993) characterises a Foucauldian 'political spirituality' (p.368) as involving the cultivation of *capacities* and *sensibility*. What Tobias (2005) calls a 'capabilities approach' encourages consideration of a *capability to achieve* economic, physiological and psychological well-being (p.71). Yet the bodies of these men 'take shape through tending toward objects that are reachable, which are available within the bodily horizon' (Ahmed: 2006, p.543). If these capable men are to feature in aspirations for Burnley's future, those aspirations must incorporate something of what is reachable within the bodily horizons they augment. Cantle's vision of confident celebrations of diversity fails in that respect, because these gyms see inspiration function through a contentious and irresolvable *suppression* of raced difference.

Burnley's gyms offer little grist to hopes that raced cultural difference will be celebrated, or indeed to that raced ideologies will be challenged by an emerging sense of common humanity. Rather, in order to appreciate the particular forms of interculture being worked over, bodies-in-performance must be recognised as charged with an *ethical efficacy* that holds a more ambiguous stance to the interruption of inscriptive difference. We must recognise more complicated ways of doing 'intercultural good'. If the young men using Burnley's gyms are to be recognised as capable *individuals,* a positive account of their abilities must be possible *where raced difference is absent, excluded or discriminated against.* This is precisely the task of this chapter. For although the body may figure as a medium for imagining and exercising power (Ballantyne and Burton: 2005), it is not merely a passive canvas. As such, the messy tendencies of human corporeality have been thought of as connoting a 'political imperative' to challenge hegemonic meanings (Longhurst: 2001, p.23). It is this sense of imperative that Callard (1998) calls for reflection upon and that this thesis examines.

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Accordingly, this chapter speculates upon a sense of ethical capacity emerging from a corporeality 'populated with traces of imperative' (Lingis: 1994, p.171). This sense will shape a view of the white men in Burnley's gyms as either positive contributors to, or passive and regrettable passengers in, the town's racial politics. Weiss (1999) argues that having a body entails 'an embodied ethics grounded in the dynamic, bodily imperatives that emerge out of our intercorporeal exchanges...which in turn transform our own body images, investing them and reinvesting them with moral significance' (p.158). Presumably, political and moral evaluations should then be informed by a 'commitment to a historical, or genealogical, approach to understanding the specificity of social political and ethical relations as they are embodied in this or that community or culture' (Gatens: 1996, p.105). This thesis considers how this may proceed where a bodily imperative is animated within an inspirational culture indefeasibly constituted by robust inscriptions of sanctioned meaning.

The ethnographies of Burnley's gyms depict cultures to which characterisation of a counter-hegemonic imperative seems remote. Curzon and Butterworth operate gendered exclusions, systemic discriminations against bodily incapacity and social arrangements marked by unambiguous authority. At Butterworth, buying into a surly and taciturn masculinity is very much the condition of getting on at the gym. Bodies unable to box are marginalised to prevent their incapacities from interfering with the achievement of a serious training atmosphere. At Curzon, informal raced segregation sees young Asian and white men mostly use the gym at different times, respectively. A conceptual narrative is need that may articulate *a sense of ethical capacity that is able to positively value abilities, the inspiration of which depends upon exclusionary, discriminatory and anti-egalitarian social arrangements*. It must cultivate scepticism as to whether the counter-hegemonic imperative often read into accounts of embodied ethics exhausts means of evaluating political conduct.

Foucault (1988a) considers that techniques of personal cultivation offer 'more secrets, more possible freedoms and more inventions in our future than we can imagine in humanism' (p.15). For Butler (1993), these freedoms and inventions will emerge by 'refigur[ing] the necessary 'outside' as a future horizon where *violence of exclusion* is perpetually in process of being *overcome'* (p.53, own emphasis); for within that horizon, 'there may not be a materiality of sex that is not already burdened by the sex of materiality' (p.54). This frames the problematic of valuing the ethical capacities of white male bodies cultivated in indefeasibly exclusive and discriminatory cultures; in Butterworth ABC and Curzon Gym, are there bodily capacities ethically unburdened (which is different to unmarked) by the exclusions that enable their inspiration? This returns the discussion to the question, above, of how to identify and evaluate intercultural progress where raced ideologies persist.

2.2 Bodily technique and virtual potential

A response must set the unfolding abilities of men training in Burnley's gyms within a precise conceptual framework. Thought on the application of technique upon oneself and others, as a means of effecting personal transformation, has a long pedigree in philosophical and social sciences. Whilst it is neither possible nor necessary to comprehensively review this here,[33] significantly, the theme is present in geographical work on non-representational approaches.[34] Non-representational approaches provide distinctive resources for examining the relation between capable bodies and raced ideology, criticising 'the classical

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[33] The possibility of holding a technical relation with the self, and so to be able to effect changes upon one's dispositions and capacities, is present in an Aristotelian definition of temperance. A notion of techniques of personal transformation is also significantly prevalent in sociological studies of dispositions such as those offered by Mauss and Dewey (Burkitt: 2002, p. 220), and also features prominently in Foucault's later works on the historical constitution of subjectivity and associated technologies of caring for the self (Foucault: 1988a, 1988b). Chapter 3 sets out the rationale for the conceptual path taken by this thesis.

[34] Hayden Lorimer's (2005) complaint of the hindrance caused by the 'teleology' of the prefix 'non' in non-representational approaches is noted but not accepted here. The prefix 'non' does indeed unhelpfully imply a strict division between representations and their 'other'. But the alternative prefix that Lorimer offers ('more than') is not helpful to the position of this thesis, which contends that non-representational dimensions of experience have too often been cast as 'more than' in the sense of making a claim upon progressive politics.

cognitive model of representation in which passive representation of the world is followed by inference [in favour of] notions of the direct perceptions of the unfolding of action-in-context' (Thrift and Dewsbury: 2000, p.415). This remit is suited to apprehending embodied capacities in cultures significantly marked neither by the exercise of humanist logic, nor by explicit treatments of racial difference.[35]

This thesis thinks alongside 'the affective capacities of [bodies being] transformed through various techniques and practices' (McCormack: 2007, p.370). It seeks to better appreciate the diversity and instability of culture as elements of an affectual life implicated in what young white men are capable of doing and becoming. Generic diagnoses of disaffection and collective feeling are confronted with accounts of bodies sensing, moving, affecting and being affected. Authors working within this conceptual vein explore a 'wider range of techniques to thinking, judging and ethics than cultural studies or psychoanalysis often allow' (Connolly: 2002, p.7). If, as Bennett suggests, 'ethical potential [may]... arise from aesthetically educated senses and staged circumstances' (Bennett: 2001, p.169), then *the education of sense and the staging of circumstance are already ongoing in any number of places in contemporary Burnley*. An empirically attuned, historically informed purview upon 'possibilities for transformation inherent in human experience' (Varela, Thompson and Rosch: 1993, p.XV) will enable study of possibilities alive where young men train and literally grow (closer) together.

Recognising these possibilities requires displacing what Jane Bennett (2001) has called the purposiveness of accounts of personal transformation (p.11). A restrictive sense of purpose is manifest where personal capacities are recognised as significant because they fit into preconceived, goal determined notions of pedagogy. For example, the classical anti-racist technique of critical

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[35] Chapter 3 considers in more detail the usefulness to this study of the diverse philosophical heritage of non-representational approaches.

questioning (Frankenberg: 1993, Tyler: 2004), accords exclusive attention to interpretive capacities because they are seen as allowing unspoken claims upon whiteness to be reflected upon. Yet this approach could only be applied to Burnley's gyms in spite of the emotive, embodied abilities and pedagogies that characterise those cultures. As such, the ambitions of the thesis are better complemented by the Foucauldian supposition that 'there are more secrets, more possible freedoms, and more inventions in our future than we can imagine in humanism' (op.cit.). Challenging notions of social progress will hone into view where political capacities are conceived as an 'ability to make a difference without knowing exactly what you are doing' (Bennett: 2001, p.163). The mapping of roles for young white men in a better Burnley will be hamstrung where 'inventions in their futures' are limited to prescriptive techniques and proscriptively progressive agendas.

Personal transformations might well involve a goal-determined intention, project or ambition; to become 'harder', more popular or fitter. Yet an attention to purpose imbued techniques must be qualified by an expansive palette for unruly twists of somatic ability. The abilities and dispositions of men using Burnley's gyms emerge from effervescent interpenetrations of purposive and non-purposive trajectories of effect; a mixture of what is and is not planned for. Bodybuilders meticulously plan and track their progress so as they may adapt their regimes, precisely because the techniques they employ instigate transformations that are 'complex, layered and active, with each layer contributing something to an ensemble of dissonant relays and feedback loops (Connolly: 2002, p.10). Any prospective planning of passages of personal transformation must be able to tolerate the messy edges smudged by aleatory effects. The irruptive tendencies of personal transformation are facilitative of an experimental relation to latent potentials that, whilst lying outside purpose, may nonetheless augment it by rendering people capable of further actions, thoughts and feelings (see Rajchman: 2001, p.13). Indeed, Burnley's gyms see the striking up of intercultural friendships, which often take flight where volatile

experiences of somatic inspiration interrupt the cagey, taciturn masculinities in play.

Non-representational perspectives articulate a logic of *virtuality* that is useful for linking non-purposive corporeality to intercultural practice. Massumi (2002) defines the 'virtual' as a 'word for the "real but abstract" incorporeality of the body' (p.21); 'The body is as immediately abstract as it is concrete; its activity and expressivity extend, as on their underside, into an incorporeal, yet perfectly real, dimension of pressing potential' (p.31). Virtuality constitutes an immanent rather than a particular or transcendent dimension of events (Deleuze: 2001); the virtual is never quite finished, is perpetually almost 'actual' and so is apprehended only vicariously, in the propensity of events to *confound prediction, description and explanation*. This thesis argues that by apprehending virtual potentials latent to the bodies of young white men, we are afforded glimpses of possibilities for interculture amidst Burnley's gym cultures. Our analyses will be better placed to recognise a propensity for personal transformation to defy hasty judgments as to what constitutes political progress. Just as learning to train and socialise in the gym exceeds the acquisition of reason, so must the colloquial inspirations these men find modulate the judgmental practices by which we form visions of social progress (see Massumi: 2002, p.255).

Whilst virtuality is open-endedly social, it is not pre-social; becoming has a history (Massumi: 2002, p.9), and it will not be possible to recognise culturally located conditions of possibility without tracing inspiration through local histories of masculinity, race and self-improvement. Where a young white man learning to box becomes capable of sharing rapport with an Asian contemporary, this affiliation is predicated upon the complicated and ongoing salience of those legacies. Events do not emerge on the faux-liberating premise that 'anything can happen'. Yet nor does their emergence detract from a supposed field of pure potential, proceeding by narrowing a range of coherent possibilities.

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Rather, '[t]he virtual is a lived paradox, where what are normally opposites coexist, coalesce and connect; where what cannot be experienced cannot but be felt' (Massumi: 2002, p.30). Virtual conditions of emergence are immanent to potential, which is itself necessarily impure (Lim: 2005), although not in a diminished sense. As Jason Lim has it, *new events are immanently contoured by raced histories of meaning*, muddying the water between race as ontology and discourse. *Culturally located conditions of emergence situate, without determining, experiences of inspiration and possibilities for political persuasion.* Virtuality does not, however, promise the unproblematic association of colloquial inspiration with notions of political progress.

2.3 Embodying claims on the progressive

Authors have previously thought with logics of virtuality in order to locate social possibility in transformations of disposition or sentiment. This section argues that where this is the case, particular claims upon progressive politics have been subtly referenced. The assumptions built into such claims must be examined if a concept of virtuality is to remain sharp enough to dissect generic notions of disaffection and convivial diversity. The complaint of this thesis is that these notions conspire to consign young white men engaged in aggressive, predominantly white and intensely physical body cultures to the margins of thought on political progress. Yet it must be considered whether this also stands to be true where notions of political progress are associated with particular states of affective embodiment.

William Connolly (2002) associates becoming-progressive with the adoption of an 'expansive ethos of pluralism' (p.20), whereby one mixes a 'protean care for the world' with 'conceptions of self interest' (2005a, p.95). The pragmatic application of such an ethos might be thought of as a form of attunement to the unpredictable, unavoidably messy edge of cultural practice indicated above. Indeed, such an attunement is crucial to the practices by which men learn to box, build muscle and socialise, and thereby form affiliations across Burnley's

colour-culture line. However, that attunement also rings with a political judgment regarding a disposition that is open to plurality. Dewsbury's (2003) emphasis upon learning how to 'bear witness', which builds upon his earlier work on virtuality and *difference* (2000), underscores this by valorising attunement to the *opening* of events onto 'the potential for *alternative* [better?] worlds' (p.1930, own emphasis). Ben Anderson also alludes to a sense of political imperative written into the 'not-yet-become' (2005), suggesting becoming hopeful as an ethical response to suffering, where '[b]y learning to be affected by hope we are also therefore obliged to learn how to affect utopic processes' (2006a, p.701).

The second half of this chapter worries that where an attunement to the 'might-be-otherwise' is valorised, a political preference for expressive difference surfaces. As indicated at the beginning of this chapter, this will obscure possibilities of interaction in Burnley's gyms. Significantly, each of these authors cite an *imperative* that is not without a sense of injunction; *against* becoming otherwise-than-ungenerous, or otherwise-than-unhopeful. Whilst these authors' efforts share more complicated relations than may be demonstrated here, each moves from common philosophical materials, through virtual logics, to stake initial claims upon the progressive. Indeed, a rationale for applying affective-somatic technique that does not locate a judgmental index is hard to imagine. Yet it is crucially important to examine how such an index articulates with colloquial inspirations in Burnley's gyms, and so renders resulting evaluations of political progress more or less persuasive from within these cultures. How will an expansive ethos of pluralism play out in Burnley's gyms? Will adopting such a perspective enable or obfuscate roles for young white men in local social progress?

Proscriptive views as to what progress will look like in Burnley, post-2001, risk missing the abilities and possibilities that add up in inspirational youth culture. Judgments of particular forms of personal transformation as progressive inevitably reference conceptual positions upon how better ways of living

emerge. The claims made by authors using concepts of virtuality, regarding what constitutes a progressive disposition, associate attunement to the *aleatory* with attunement to *differentiation*. This gesture is present in the unruly pluralism Connolly (2002) sees as germane to the material world, and in the notion that better, alternative worlds may be glimpsed in the flash of an event (Dewsbury: 2003). A politics rooted in appreciation of the unpredictable edge of personal transformation will be short on guarantees; a 'radical politics is an inherently risky undertaking because it cannot predict the outcome of its actions with certainty' (Massumi: 2002, p.243). Yet to associate unpredictability with plurality is premature. Personal transformation may be thought of in different ways than as becoming-otherwise. Whilst Connolly (2005) recommends a tolerance of political ambiguity in response to a pluralism elemental to culture (p.4), the limits of tolerance must be tested if subcultures, sentiments and people are not to end up 'beyond' politics. This demands scrutiny of how notions of technique and transformation flow into proscriptive notions of social progress.

A critical, progressive politics must neither simply malign nor uncomplicatedly celebrate Burnley's contemporary youth cultures. Striking an appropriately critical medium will involve tolerance of cultural sentiments and practices that contradict preconceived beliefs as to what constitutes social progress. Connolly (2004) recognises that 'cautious engagements with other faiths can encourage exercises to fold a layer of relational modesty into the faith that inspires you' (p.511). This is the challenge facing an ambition to build political aspirations for Burnley around, rather than in spite of, cultures in which young white men find inspiration. However, problems arise for such a tolerance where authors *source political authority in concepts whose manner of abstraction is empirically unaccountable.* Connolly makes 'the radical contention that not only human culture but the non-human world contains an unruly element of pluralism within it' (2002, p.6). His preference for a 'cultivation of agonistic respect between parties' (p.200) is apparently a progressive response to 'a protean diversity of being' (p.197). Yet he indicates that political *inspiration* must not exceed a

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respect for 'multidimensional diversity' (p.9). Connolly effectively naturalises the ethical reference point of his social recommendations by ensconcing a political predilection for diversity amidst the mechanics of eventhood. It must be asked whether sentiments, abilities or practices that do not respect diversity are 'properly' (i.e. progressively) political.

This thesis adopts a logic of virtuality because the energising reserve to events that it posits enables an expansive approach to the political significance of somatic and emotive abilities. Yet that expansive remit is spiked where a proclivity for diversity and plurality is assumed by being removed from the debate. Any political tolerance of sentiment, ability and creative practice is therefore founded upon a profound intolerance where these are not considered to be open to plurality. This will problematise a search for progressive political possibilities in Burnley's gyms, where intercultural affiliations emerge via a rough treatment of difference. The second half of this chapter responds by working through an approach that substitutes for the figuring of plurality, diversity and difference in thought on virtuality and the progressive. *Assuming* that plurality or convivial diversity are *progressive*, as the instigating condition of a *risky* politics, is perverse. To be a truly risky undertaking, politics must commit to opening aspirations for Burnley's future to the inspirational cultures upon which they seek critical purchase.

Withdrawing claims upon the progressive from the possibility of being shaped by colloquial inspirations, risks further excluding young white men from thought on Burnley's future. Talk of instigating a politics of generosity or conviviality establishes a qualifying baseline for progressive politics; *a minimum affective consensus for participation in political dialogue.* Conforming to this consensus becomes a minimum requirement for involvement in progressive politics. Rather than the classically liberal 'if you knew what I knew we would agree', a minimum affective consensus suggests that 'if you felt how I felt, we might not agree, but in the tone of our disagreement we would have the basis of a *better* society'.

Locating possibilities for interculture amidst aggressive, masculine and predominantly white gym cultures demands that tacit assumptions at every level are tested; stereotypes of yobs, chavs and hooligans; the necessity of encounters with reason and difference; hopes for celebrations of diversity and pluralist culture. The safety catch of preordained notions of progress must be loosened, and an expansive palette for what may count as progressive behaviours must be cultivated.

A reticence to allow moral judgment to hastily territorialise the possibilities opened by personal capacities will also be useful. The inevitable closure of judgments regarding the political significance of these gyms will be subject to the negotiation of progressive convictions with the character of their inspirational cultures. Yet it must be recognised that this closure marks bounds of 'proper' politics, *within which progressive aspirations bear a potential of persuading the individuals subject to moral recommendations of their worth.* Response to the 2001 disturbances has politically immobilised Burnley's young white men by placing them in ambiguous relation to this margin, vaguely between disaffection and confident celebration of diversity. Yet there is also a risk that, in response, construction of a politically recuperable affective disposition will privilege too *particular* a notion of personal transformation. To do so would be to preclude valuing politically ambiguous or unpalatable behaviours as anything other than regressive. The following section responds by developing a conceptual posture from which young white men using Burnley's gyms might feature, positively, in thought on the town's future.

3. Spinoza and a temperate interculture

3.1 How may bodily capacities be judged other than by difference?

This section builds an analytic framework within which sense may be made of how interculture operates through affectual contact between racially marked

bodies. Thinking about an *ethically potent corporeality* is a promising conceptual pressure point in this respect. Following Caputo (2003), and echoing Foucault's (op. cit.) hope for 'more possibilities and inventions' than we can imagine in humanism, this thesis engages with corporeality as an opening onto 'more ways to be good than we can imagine' (p.177). Specifically, *the bodies of Burnley's young white men open onto more means for political progress than may be imagined in relation to concepts of difference.* Recognising this will entail drawing a distinction between generating an analytic framework and offering a normative vision of a better corporeality, person or society. Whilst this thesis necessarily nurtures an entwining of these tasks, the purpose of this chapter is to shore up a rigorous conceptual basis for understanding how affectual connectedness and raced separateness articulate.

Indeed, Callard (1998) recommends paying more attention to this distinction between analytic and normative means of valuing conceptual endeavour. Callard encourages scrutiny as to how thought on the body as an unstable political substrate has segued into holding its capacity for fluidity to be an imperative. This section argues that thought on lively corporeality in geography similarly finds purchase in an ethical commitment to a concept of difference. As Doel (1994) notes, 'much of the theoretically inclined literature within human geography has turned to the *motifs of difference and otherness* as a possible basis for fostering a coming together and rapprochement of previously incommensurate theoretical-practices' (p.1041, original emphasis). This section contends the usefulness of a notion of *inspired individuality*, rather than of *difference*, as a conceptual referent for judging the moral and political significance of Burnley's gym cultures. The purpose is not to offer an alternative, normative political perspective, so as to trouble a perceived disciplinary hegemony. Rather, experiences of inspired individuality have been neglected where ideologies of difference are at stake. As such, these ideas represent a necessary adjunct to the recent 'bodily turn' in race studies.

There is a need to critically reflect upon how difference is bound up in the making of value. Cantle's generic hope for a confident celebration of *diversity* is badly dislocated from the cultures of Burnley's gyms, where difference is very far from being celebrated. Similarly, placing commitment to *pluralism* at the heart of thought on virtuality threatens to politically exclude unsuitable dispositions. Indeed, Deleuze conceives of virtuality as a *heterogeneity* (Deleuze: 1991, p.37); a *pluralising* and intensive dynamic (Massumi: 2002, p.7). Yet the perception of an incessant force of differentiation, hardwired into the ontological emergence of possibility, has readily segued into valorising experiences that are expressly productive of multiplicity. References to the 'abundance' of the world (Dewsbury et al: 2002), the immanence of 'hope' (Anderson: 2006b) or 'care' for the 'protean diversity of being' (Connolly: 2002, p.197) stray into the celebratory, albeit not uncomplicatedly. Connolly (2002, p.196) recommends pluralism as a 'deep regulative ideal' that provides 'positive inspiration and 'initial guidance' (p.196) to personal cultivation. This ideal declines to separate the dual meaning of virtue-ality, as both *efficacious* and as harbouring ethical *worth*. A conceptual necessity is made of moral virtue. What room may be found, then, for valuing affectively capable, young, white male bodies as ethical, other than via the opportunities for expressive plurality that they open?

In critical response, this thesis cannot make a virtue of inspired individualism without establishing its conceptual consistency and necessity. An analytic counterpoint is needed to explore the possibilities of judging the political value of gym cultures that mix bodies, inspiration and abilities by strongly scripting difference. If the abilities of young men using these gyms are not to be marginalised as regressive, and so compound the palpably false notion of their generic disaffection, a surer division between 'the ethical' and the ethical-as-good must be pried open. Todd May's (1997) <u>Reconsidering Difference</u> makes a distinction between constitutive and normative concepts of ethics that is useful to this end. May argues that '[a]lthough the protection and perhaps even a

valorisation of alternative practices and ways of being may be an essential part of any decent philosophical outlook, there is no need for that protection or valorisation to proceed by way of privileging difference as a constitutive part of some aspects of our experience...it is on the basis of the constitutive privileging of difference that the valorisation of difference occurs' (p.2).

The choice of the word 'decent' conjures an important ambiguity. It connotes qualities of being sound, or proper, in a *moral* and/or *logical* sense. Indeed, his book is very much about the distinction between, and mutual corruption of, the constitutive and the normative; between using difference as a conceptual ingredient and positively valuing its integrity or expression. The distinction between a proposition being morally or logically sound is one between making sense in two different, although typically interrelated ways. Furthermore, May draws a distinction between the failure of 'unconvincing' and 'self refuting' arguments on the bases of normative and constitutive thought, respectively. In so doing, he alludes to what it is that makes an account *persuasive* rather than logically coherent. The distinction to be made between virtual potentialities and pluralising differentiation is not, then, a nugatory one; it is at the heart of working out how to value the abilities of men learning how to box, build muscle and socialise, as ingredients for political futures that they will find persuasive.

A play between constitutive and normative treatments of difference carries through non-representational approaches to geography. Non-representational approaches are valuable for having 'extend[ed] the field of the ethical in which geographers may move' (McCormack: 2003, p.488). Yet motifs of difference, multiplication and plurality conspicuously pervade this body of thought. Cultural geographers are paying increasing attention to the work of Giles Deleuze, Felix Guattari, Henri Bergson and others, with an ambition of 'giving back to our studies of life the *multiplicity* of the present and the *alterity* of the future' (Dewsbury: 2000, p.476). The implications of these approaches for thought on ethics are highlighted by Deleuze's theory and technique of 'transcendental

empiricism' (Deleuze: 1994); 'the experimental relation we have to that element in sensation that precedes self/we' (Rajchman: 2001, p.11). Indeed, the ethnographies of Burnley's gyms depict inspiration as a lively energy arising amidst an infrastructure comprising personalities, affects, materials and representations, to enable young men to test the limits of what their bodies are capable of.

However, this need not necessarily position these young white bodies as emerging from 'a swarm of virtual multiplicities, teeming singularities and experimental complications and inventions' (Doel: 1995, p.232, also see Doel: 1996). Given the rough treatment of difference seen in Curzon and Butterworth, it is a stretch to argue that, through participating in gym culture, the young men therein become 'accepting and... attentive to encounters that open us up to an *alterity* which nevertheless remains absolutely immanent (Dewsbury: 2003, p.1923). Furthermore, Deleuze and Guattari (1988) are critical of 'quintessentially conservative' instincts 'which [do their] utmost to seal all possible lines of flight' (p.230). Where 'lines of flight' (or, bodily capacities opened by inspiration) are enabled by manifold violences, discriminations and exclusions, forming ethical-political valuations of those capacities becomes an immensely complex issue. The examination of the possibility of an inspired, temperate individualism by this chapter has analytic value for unpacking this complexity.

Non-representational approaches have attuned to a sense of becoming as becoming-*otherwise*, by returning to motifs of difference, plurality and multiplicity.[36] As such, there is a danger of losing a sense of the performative

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[36] Geographers have, on occasion, lost focus upon this minoritarian sense of becoming-otherwise (woman, animal, child etc.) (Deleuze and Guattari: 1988) in the rush of interest in becoming as a more lively, or 'happening' sense of being (Crouch: 2003, Swanton: 2007). Deleuze and Guattari stress that all becoming is 'molecular' rather than 'molar'. For instance, '[t]here is no becoming-man because man is the molar entity par excellence, whereas becomings are molecular' (Deleuze and Guattari: 1988, p.292). To neglect this is to specifically neglect the radical character of Deleuze's ethics and politics, and further dissimulate the furious appetency of change-as-difference that he sees in the virtual.

wherein stability is as much a part of ethically or politically valuable events and arrangements as flux, and of neglecting that repetition in culture inescapably involves both stability and instability; a playful balancing of radicalism and conservatism. Indeed, the following ethnographies underscore a sense of tradition alive in Butterworth ABC and Curzon Gym. The pictures, stories and signatures of absent friends and cherished events are crucial to *stabilising* the gym as an inspiring place. Furthermore, Curzon sees careful maintenance of an inspirational atmosphere as white men leave the gym and Asian men arrive; the achievement of atmosphere is typically handed over *without it breaking down*. The precarious interculture that fills the gym during this period relies upon the collision of raced separateness and affectual connectedness. Understanding these articulations of divisive ideology and somatic stickiness requires an analysis of how social order arises between racially marked bodies.

3.2 Spinoza's affectual temperance

Burnley's gym cultures closely script, channel and close down expressions of difference. As such, where difference retains a strong normative hold on analysis, the wrong tools will be available for examining how the mechanics of interculture work through and around raced meanings and epithets. Thinking alongside non-representational approaches affords analysis a sense of the ethical potency of the bodies in Burnley's gyms. Yet examining this potency will require critical distance from normative commitments to difference, multiplicity and pluralism. In response, the following discussion considers an *alternative ethical referent*. Importantly, the intention in this section is not to establish a preferred normative vision of (inter)culture. Before this may happen, an alternative conceptual fulcrum for the making of value must be established which is better suited to understanding how experiences of being white or Asian unfold into intercultural affiliations.

Inspired individuality offers an alternative to *difference* as a referent for examining interculture, and in turn for the making of political and ethical value

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(although this is not the business of this chapter). Giving this referent a usable shape requires moving in the opposite direction to significant critiques of non-representational approaches. Scholars have worried for the place of difference in non-representational thought. Nash (2000) expresses concern for a continuing 'model of effective political strategy [and] a useful cultural politics... [as] more abstract discussions of dance or performativity lose the sense of the ways in which different material bodies are expected to do gender, class, race or ethnicity differently' (p.657). More recently, Tolia-Kelly (2006) has argued that 'what is occluded in the writing on affect is sensitivity to 'power geometries', and acknowledgment that these are vital to any individuals' capacity to affect or be affective [sic]' (p.213). Thien (2005) has interpreted a focus upon affect as a 'move to get after, or beyond humanity in all our diversity' (p.453). These authors robustly defend the figuring of difference in analysis on both constitutive and normative grounds.

Moreover, each contends that non-representational dimensions of experience cannot implement the 'aesthetics of weightless escape' that McCormack (2002, p.469) has warned against. Yet returning to a robust account of difference is not the only method by which this may be achieved. Furthermore, the method of returning to difference is poorly suited to examining abilities emerging from the cultural arrangements realised in Burnley's gyms. Close attention must be accorded to the analytic effects of any 'deep regulative ideal' of the sort that Connolly (2002, p.196) suggests for initial guidance to 'inspir[ing] generous possibilities of thought, judgment and connection' (p.195). Connolly's ideal is rooted in recognition of an unruly element of pluralism that is germane to the non-human world. Instead, this section outlines inspired individuality as a strategic universalism; a 'naïve realism' placed somewhat *deeper* than Connolly's 'naïve subjectivism'. Conceptual space might then open for realising a *plurality of ethos, rather than an ethos of plurality.*

A concept of inspired individuality is sketched, below, through an engagement with Benedict de Spinoza's Ethics. The analytical value of Spinoza's ethical philosophy is twofold; his concept of affect allows variegation of a generic notion of disaffection; and his monism may be productively read against the figuring of pluralism in non-representational work. Spinoza's Ethics has been as controversial as it is complicated and challenging.[37] Spinoza is, at least on his own terms, a rationalist, logician and realist.[38] He nonetheless works up a powerfully holistic analysis of experience that provides reflection upon its sensual and emotive traits. Each of the five parts of Ethics is divided into propositions, for which axioms, definitions, proofs and notes are provided. The recommendations of his work are more intuitive than the routes taken from rather obscure philosophical premises.[39] So, whilst appreciating those recommendations will require a route through conceptual abstraction, examining how *the affective capacities of bodies* feature in his thought will facilitate ideas prompted by ethnographies of Burnley's gyms. Spinoza aids reflection upon how these interculture works in these gym cultures and upon how the men using them may feature, capably, in a better Burnley.

Damasio (2003) has, however, noted that everyone has their own version of Spinoza. Whilst there is not sufficient space for an exacting positioning of Spinoza's thoughts, it is recognised that the individual-centred reading of Spinoza offered here is a particular one developed for specific use as regards this thesis. Notwithstanding the usefulness of a Spinozist approach outlined above, feminist engagements with Spinoza (Gatens: 1996, Lloyd and Gatens: 1999) have emphasised an aspect of his philosophy that speaks of a distributed

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[37] As illustrated by Spinoza's difficult relations with the 17th Century Dutch Jewish community, and his reticence to publish work, the Ethics only surfacing posthumously.

[38] His geometric method composes an exacting logic that champions the intellect; 'The intellect, by its native strength, makes for itself intellectual instruments, whereby it acquires strength for performing other intellectual operations, and from these operations gets again fresh instruments, or the power of pushing its investigations further, and thus gradually proceeds till it reaches the summit of wisdom.' (On the Improvement of Understanding, p.12).

[39] These may be found in the axioms, definitions and propositions of Part I of the Ethics; one eternal substance, distinguished as various finite modes through the two 'parallel' attributes of mind and body by which (as explained in later sections) 'intuition' of eternity may be reached.

body. This may in some part reflect trends in feminist and postcolonial thought towards conceiving of a multiple, fragmented selfhood. Yet following this path would result in people disappearing from analysis, even as they emerge from behind the totemic notion of Burnley's young white men. Firstly, this is undesirable analytically. Later chapters express that the intensely personalising quality of inspired experience enables interculture in Burnley's gyms. Secondly, it contradicts the political ambition of this project to place capable *people* in Burnley's intercultural future; not capable arrays, machines or assemblages. By working with the ambiguous kernel of individualism expressed by Spinoza's concept of the *Conatus* (discussed below), these dangers may be avoided.

The *coincidence of perception and reality* is theme running throughout Spinoza's thought. Furthermore, he argues that physical, mental, emotional and social wellbeing improve as our understanding of this develops.[40] *Inspiration is the experience of the ascendancy of that understanding.* Curzon Gym sees men accumulating intensity in their muscles, their limbs animated by dance music, the clattering of metal, the smell of sweat and shouts of encouragement. Where muscles agonisingly reach the limits of what they are capable of, powers of thought are drawn into the sensations mapped through body tissue. Over time, bodybuilders develop 'tissue awareness', a bodily apprehension of the functional composition of a physique from a variety of tissues, each with distinctive capacities for movement and sensation.

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[40] Spinoza distinguishes between two temporalities; one that is *eternal* (unchanging), anterior and immanent; another that is *extended*, and which we experience as successively future, present and past (Williams: 1998, p.380). The distinction between these orders of temporality lies entirely within human perception, which may be better or worse, or more or less 'adequate'. It is the manner in which the degree of this 'adequacy' is defined that marks, on Spinoza's terms, the natural manifestation of value in his mathematical analysis. Spinoza's 'parallelism' holds the mind and body to be two parallel attributes by which the one eternal substance may be known by perception, where true (perfect) perception *intuits* the essence of that single substance; 'An attribute is that which the intellect perceives of substance, as constituting its essence and, therefore, must be conceived through itself' (Ethics, Part I, Proposition X, Proof), so '[i]t is thus evident that, though two attributes [body and mind] are, in fact, conceived of as distinct –that is, one without the help of the other- yet *we cannot, therefore, conclude that they constitute two entities, or two different substances*' (Part I, Proposition X, Note, own emphasis).

The inspiration these men find build muscling and socialising amidst Burnley's urban hinterlands, cultivates *an increasing sense of what their bodies can do.* The following ethnographies suggest that this cultivation engenders a sense of empathy between men that, at times, traverses Burnley's colour-culture line. This underlines that *intercultural affiliation cannot be understood separately from the bodily experiences that enable it.* As Asian and white men spar in Butterworth ABC, the intensity of competition takes hold. Heavy blows are exchanged, cuts open and the mind is drawn into fine anticipations of the movements and aggression of an opponent. An endogenous logic of interaction connects bodies otherwise estranged by Burnley's raced divisions, as these men gain strength, enjoyment and confidence. The gap between what a body is capable of, and what one knows a body is capable of, closes.

A fuller understanding requires a closer look at Spinoza's <u>Ethics</u>. Spinoza's concept of the Conatus is useful for understanding how the inspiration of ability through practices such as sparring and lifting weights, keeps young white men returning to gyms that they share with Asian contemporaries night after night. For Spinoza, a Conatus belongs to each *mode* of being within the *single substance* that is at the foundation of his philosophy; whether that mode is a thing, person or idea; whether it is a gym, dumbbell, Donald at Butterworth ABC or an idea of personal identity. Part III of <u>Ethics</u> explores the notion of Conatus, offering the following:

> 'Things are naturally contrary, that is, cannot exist in the same object,
> in so far as one is capable of destroying the other.'
> (Part III, Proposition V)

> 'The endeavour, wherewith everything endeavours to persist in its own
> being, is nothing else but the actual essence of the thing in question.'
> (Part III, Proposition VII)

Spinoza defines the Conatus as *striving*; as endeavouring to persist in existence
(Lloyd: 1996, p.8). This striving is properly distinguished from the sense of a will
to do *something*, as in the transitive case. A person's Conatus is not an
irrepressible will to survive or to become powerful. Rather, a 'thing's endeavour
to persist in being becomes its very essence' (Lloyd: 1996, p.9). As Deleuze
has it, '[t]he conatus defines the right of the existing mode. All that I am
determined to do to continue existing... by means of given affections... under
determinate affects... all this is my natural right... This right is strictly identical
with my power and is independent of any order of ends, of any consideration of
duties, since the conatus is the first foundation, the *primum movens*, the
efficient and not the final cause.' (1988, p.102, original emphasis).

Deleuze also sees a *productive heterology* in Spinoza's monism; 'the cause is
essentially *immanent*; that is, remains in itself in order to *produce* (as *against
the transitive* case)' (Deleuze: 1988, p.54, own emphases). For Deleuze's
Spinoza, difference is both immanent and productive, a force of *differentiation*
that is expressive of *heterology*. However, Spinoza's commitment to a singular
substance may be interpreted otherwise than as an engine of *intransitive* lines
of differentiation (Deleuze: 1991, see above). Indeed, the associations
participated in by every Conatus may be thought of, pace Deleuze, as entailing
a sense of *transitivity*; 'the nature of each thing is only competent to do that
which follows *necessarily* from its given cause' (Correspondence XXV). The
essence of a conatus is *explained* within a chain of *necessary* logical
consequence that leads back to recognition, through 'intuition', of Spinoza's
ultimate *cause*; God. The language of cause and necessity that Spinoza uses in
relation to the Conatus is not a temporal fatalism, but rather is *sub specie
aeternitatis* (under the aspect of eternity); self-creating but *not processural*
(Scruton: 1996, p.52).

By dissociating an immanent corporeality from intensive differentiation, a
distinction between becoming and becoming-otherwise is enabled. Just as 'the

essence of the mode [the Conatus] in turn is a degree of power' (Deleuze: 1988, p.98), any such mode (including an individual) is evident in their *portion of power* and their *expression of affective capacities* (Scruton: 1996, p.56). The portion of power latent to any individual has two dimensions; a power of existing that is proper to the conatus; and a power of thinking that is proper to the mind. The first sense is one of intensive power, to which 'formal access' is gained through the second sense as 'adequate ideas' are created, *whereby one cultivates an understanding of how to enter into positive affective relations with other people and other things*. The accrual of power by an individual, via the proliferation of positive affective relations, is central to how this thesis analyses the operation of interculture.

The relationship between these two senses of power defines *capacities* to affect (*Potestas*) and to be affected (*Aptus*). Developing adequate ideas of what oneself and other things are (Deleuze: 1988, p.74) supports the conatus as 'a tendency to maintain and maximise the ability to be affected' (p.99). The more adequate one's ideas are to the reality or nature of oneself and other things, the more one accesses one's power of existence (Lloyd: 1996, p.33).[41] Each individual thereby expresses; *a capacity to affect, to be affected, and to form ideas that enable augmentation of these capacities.*[42] A bodybuilder growing new flesh may be said to be accessing multiplicities latent to the hypertrophic tendency of muscle tissue. That bodybuilder may also be interpreted as cultivating a capacity to relate to things and other people in an enjoyable and

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[41] '*Reality* and *Perfection* I use as synonymous terms' (Ethics, Part II, Definition IV, original emphasis), followed by 'Every idea, which in us is absolute or adequate or perfect, is true' (Part II, Proposition XXXIV).

[42] In this case, we might imagine a bodybuilder progressively learning how to augment his musculature through precise techniques for handling heavy weights. As the bodybuilder gains adequate ideas of a relatively simple object, such as a dumbbell, its handling provides sought after sensations of muscular stress and fatigue, enabling a pedagogy that cannot be reduced to intellectual rationalism. An augmentation of these capacities is expressive of an 'individual thus composed preserv[ing] its nature...so long as each part retains its motion, and preserves its communication with other parts as before' (Ethics, Part II, Lemma VII). Access to one's power is gained as a 'reasoned' understanding of the relations of motion and rest that coalesce our bodies is cultivated. Spinoza's rationalism is of a markedly different form than that often articulated by anti-racism.

strengthening manner, without reference to plurality, multiplication or differentiation. Where positive affects buzz between Asian and white bodybuilders, a mutually strengthening and enabling relation is established in spite of raced ideology, rather than via a negotiation of it. We must be able to make political value in relation to such instances, especially where a constitutive or normative commitment to difference would lead us in other analytical directions.

Spinoza's account of affect gains further clarity beside his treatment of *emotion*. Affects differentiate along a bipolar scale, emerging from either more joyful or sad 'passions'. A passion is an affect to which one has a limited degree of 'formal access'. We might imagine a feeling toward a situation, or toward other people, to which we seem subject and unable to make sense of or shake ourselves from. Joyful affects may, however, be cultivated through reasoned and adequate ideas (Deleuze: 1988, p.50), where *one's emotional experiences are refined*. Individuals are capable of affecting, being affected, *and tempering their affection*. People get on with any number of emotional temperances as a matter of course in daily life. Pedagogies ingrained in boxing culture require that fighters refine somatic-affective reactions. When hit hard in the face, they conceal pain so as not to let their opponent know that they are in trouble. Rituals of post-match pleasantry dictate that a fighter should not celebrate unreservedly, nor demonstrably wallow in self pity. It is not simply that Cantle's notion of disaffection does not appreciate a variety of emotions. Rather, *a temperance of affectual variety and instability* is crucial to boxers enjoying learning how to fight, socialise and develop self-esteem. Speculation upon a generic passage between disaffection and confidence is patently inadequate to the realities of interculture in Burnley's gyms.

The emergence of positive experience through *affectual temperance* marks the entrance of systematic value judgment into Spinoza's geometric method.[43] Spinoza recommends reasoned management of emotively imbued relationships; with our own conscience, other people, institutions, ideas and things. The second half of <u>Ethics</u> is littered with advice on emotional refinement.[44] Spinoza's rendering of emotions has a distinctive character of *utility*, which, in relation to his notion of power, clarifies how judgments of virtue figure in his mathematical schema. 'Power' is its own justification. Power is its own ends, to which the reasoned management of emotions is simply an effective means.

> 'No virtue can be conceived as prior to this endeavour to preserve one's own being.'
> (Part IV, Proposition XXII)

> 'By virtue and power I mean the same thing; that is, virtue, in so far as it is referred to man, is a man's nature or essence, in so far as it has the power of effecting what can only be understood by the laws of that nature.'
> (Part IV, Definition VIII)

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[43] Whether this 'entrance' of value is more of a belated confession is open for a debate for which there is not room here. Spinoza might argue that the only value he ascribes is demanded by logic. Yet it might be argued that his collapsing of moral value onto ethical logic is a partial and not a necessary one, and as such, exhaustive only in that it may dissimulate this fact more completely.

[44] For instance, there is virtue in the cultivation of pleasure; 'Pleasure in itself is not bad but good; contrariwise, pain in itself is bad.' (Part IV, proposition XLI). There is no less virtue in avoiding those relations that cause us sadness. 'We endeavour to bring about whatsoever we conceive to conduce pleasure; but we endeavour to remove or destroy whatsoever we conceive to be truly repugnant thereto, or to conduce pain.' (Part III, proposition XXVIII). We might try to manage our emotions after a bereavement so as to avoid a crippling preoccupation with grief that stands to limit the range and intensity of affects we might otherwise experience. 'The force of any passion or emotion can overcome the rest of a man's activities or power, so that emotion becomes obstinately fixed to him.' (Part IV, proposition VI).

For Spinoza, virtue is rooted in the utility of positive emotions, rather than in plurality, multiplicity or differentiation. The virtue to be found where an individual expresses their portion of latent intensive power is not indexed by anything other than the augmentation of that power, which is experienced through positive affects. Deleuze (1988) puts it thus; 'All that I am determined to do in order to continue existing (destroy what doesn't agree with me, what harms me, preserve what is useful to me or suits me) by means of given affections (ideas of objects), under determinate effects (joy and sadness, love and hate...) - all this is my *natural right*' (p.102). By sourcing value judgment in a notion of affectivity that is both sensualist and intellectualist, Spinoza intends to eschew, as far as logical progression allows, a normative component to a constitutive ethical theory. On his terms, there is no such distinction to be made, as the former is the fullest expression of understanding the latter. Spinoza explicitly seeks to guard against 'other' normative ethics by prosecuting a fundamentalist's fidelity to logical consequence. This is valuable for the task of studying the mechanics of interculture amidst the indefinite persistence of Burnley's local, binary racial ideology.

One does not have to follow, nor indeed accept, Spinoza's every arcane manoeuvre to be nudged towards reflection upon how *belief* conducts *logic*. If 'the inaugural gesture of science is the suspension of lived belief' (Massumi: 2002, p.232), then Spinoza recommends that thought on ethics become less moral and more scientific. Following Deleuze, Massumi (2002) champions a political ecology of 'any number of ethics as process lines... none of which have the *right* to ameliorate one another' (p.255, own emphasis). Yet the reading of Spinoza offered here bears no reason as to why an opposition to amelioration would outstrip the natural right of individual power. As such, valorising capacities that are enabled by inspiration, where that inspiration emerges from a cultural context that closes down a great many 'process lines', need not be so problematic. We may begin to evaluate the mechanics of interculture in Burnley's gyms, free of a distracting regret regarding the persistence of raced

cultural difference. The following section broadens consideration of how inspiration, as *the ascendency of a power for existing that is achieved and expressed through a temperance of positive affects*, is useful for studying the abilities of young men in Burnley's gyms.

3.3 Achieving interculture through temperate inspiration

Spinoza's insights into how value is made allows for positive valuations of cultures that inscribe, close down and exclude difference as a condition of intercultural affiliation. Such a judgment should not be precluded by lingering unease at the persistence of racial ideology or at the rough treatment of expressive difference. Spinoza's interest in affectual variety, mobility and utility complicates a generic concept of disaffection. It supports a concept of inspiration as the emerging personal power to temperately draw other people, things and ideas into positive, strengthening relationships. Yet, as indicated above, there is a danger that between a potent corporeality and the pre-personal movement of inspiration, the individuals using Burnley's gyms will dissolve before they may really appear. Spinoza casts the relation between body and individuality as follows;

> 'If from a body or individual, compounded of several bodies, certain bodies be separated, and if, at the same time, an equal number of other bodies of the same nature take their place, the individual will preserve its nature as before, without any change in its actuality.'
> (Part II, Lemma IV)

This description points towards practices of bodybuilding and boxing. Bodybuilders gain an increasing sense of the capacities for movement and sensation of each separate body part, muscle group, and in turn muscle. Boxers learn specific movements that form particular punches and build into combinations, adding up to a suitable boxing comportment. In each gym, sensations are mapped into the body through inspirational infrastructures that

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draw its parts into relation with configurations of metal, leather, images, sounds, etc. These relations deterritorialise body matter into portions, pulled this way and that (Deleuze and Guattari: 1988, p.346); occasionally so strongly that tendons snap under strain, or inculcated movements cannot be seamlessly strung together into a fluid fighting technique (the author is particularly robotic in the ring). Moving to an intracorporeal scale, men training in Curzon cultivate a molecular logic of sense (McCormack: 2007) that emerges between bodily sensations and 'bodybuilding lore'; a mixture of science, its presentation by supplement companies and advice presented as fact that composes received knowledges of proteins, hormones, steroids, muscle cells, carbohydrates, and how to balance these elements to 'maintain an anabolic environment'.

Despite the usefulness of these understandings, through the notion of the Conatus Spinoza retains a very particular sense of a doer behind the doing; a region of experience where the will of the Conatus to persist touches capacities for the cultivation of reason and temperance of emotion; '[l]ife activates thought, and thought in turn activates life' (Deleuze: 2001, p.66). This region might be euphemistically termed *personality*, as capacities for rational augmentation of the self are a uniquely human entrance point into the world for joyful affects.[45] We might think of boxing managers with infectious charisma or bodybuilders with a confidence that motivates their training partners. This is not to imply a normative preference for muscular, charismatic individuality that would demand social progress be predicated upon congenital capacity, '[tying] our fidelity to an irresponsible and unconsidered will to power' (Harrison: 2007, p.593). Spinoza does, however, suggest that inspiration be framed as a *right*. 'The conatus

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[45] Spinoza famously provides an example of a thrown stone to illustrate the 'illusion', as he sees it, of human 'free will'; 'Further conceive, I beg, that a stone, while continuing in motion, should be capable of thinking and knowing, that it is endeavouring, as far as it can, to continue to move. Such a stone, being merely conscious of its endeavour and not at all indifferent, would believe itself to be completely free, and would think that it continued in motion solely because of its own wish' (Letter to G H Shaller, October 1674). It should be pointed out, so as Spinoza may not be mistaken for implying that human affectual experience has no distinctive intellectual and so affectual qualities, the self evident point that stones neither think nor can they temper their affections, although they can indeed be thrown.

defines the right of the existing mode. All that I am determined to do to continue existing... by means of given affections... under determinate affects... all this is my natural right' (Deleuze: 1988, p.102). The concept of *ius naturae* suggests the natural right of any *individual* to temper strengthening and joyful affects.

> 'In so far as a thing is in harmony with our nature, it is necessarily good'
> (Part IV, Proposition XXXI)

> 'The more every man endeavours and is able to seek what is most useful to him, in other words to preserve his own being, the more is he endowed with virtue; on the contrary, in proportion as a man neglects to seek what is useful to him, that is, to preserve his own being, he is wanting in power'
> (Part IV, Proposition XX)

This chapter has recommended cautious appraisal of claims to ethical authority made by naturalising a conceptual manoeuvre.[46] Uncritically combining an acceptance of the natural right of an individual with examples of individual power, would risk reinventing the fascist doctrine of 'Strength through Joy' as 'Joy through Strength'. Physical augmentation has, as noted above, been appropriated by fascists and particularly in the guise of boxing. A pressing difficulty in this respect is the language of destruction that runs through Ethics.

> 'There is no individual thing in nature, than which there is not another more powerful and strong. Whatsoever thing be given, there is something stronger whereby it can be destroyed.'
> (Part IV, Axiom I)

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[46] Of course, for Spinoza, his manoeuvres are not particular but rather the expression of mathematical certainty. For Spinoza, virtue is merely a matter of logic, to be found by following his formula to their inevitable conclusions.

To interpret this passage as a *license* to destroy things that do not provoke joyful affects would be to neglect Spinoza's terms and seek guidance as to moral license and injunction. Spinoza is more interested in how to manage a society that will inevitably see abutting expressions of personal power. Rather than 'rely[ing] on an indefensible doctrine of 'harmony through similarity' to reconcile egoism with collaborative morality' (Lloyd: 1996, p.77), '[t]he whole effort of the Ethics is aimed at breaking the traditional link between freedom and will' (Deleuze: 1988, p.69).

> 'The man, who is guided by reason, is more free in a State, where he lives under a general system of law, than in solitude, where he is independent'
> (Part IV, Proposition LXXIII)

> 'Nothing can be in more harmony with the nature of any given thing than other individuals of the same species; therefore for man in the preservation of his being and the enjoyment of the rational life there is nothing more useful than his fellow-man who is lead by reason. Further, as we know not anything among individual things which is more excellent than a man led by reason, no man can better display the power of his skill and disposition, than in so training men, that they come at last to live under the dominion of their own reason.'
> (Part IV, Appendix IX)

The freedom Spinoza evokes is not individual autonomy, understood as a series of sovereign rights. Nor does it connote the unfettered reign of individual strength. Rather, freedom results from access to one's latent ethical capacities *from within* one's social relations. Freedom both requires and provides a basis for common social endeavour whereby society accommodates competing passions and capacities whilst persisting in itself (Scruton: 1986, p.106). Spinoza arrives at this possibility by refusing to conflate libertarianism with

licentiousness, and by subordinating a concern for others to one for the fulfillment of individual ability. In this way, Spinoza's corporate individualism offers a novel take on the achievement of interculture, focusing upon the limits an affectual life imposes upon the divisive qualities of raced ideology.

Butterworth ABC and Curzon Gym see *variously capable* people engaged in passionate interaction and *cooperating* to achieve an inspiring place in which to train. The boxer who flies into a rage when sparring will be withdrawn from that session. Sparring is used to work on technique, and ill feeling between club mates will interrupt its achievement as such. The bodybuilder caught up in the intensity of discomfort and the excitement of adrenalin might neglect technique and tear a muscle, suddenly flipping his inspiration into fury or sickening disappointment. Contributing to the ongoing achievement of inspirational culture requires temperate experience, firstly of inspiration and in turn of the varied and unstable affects its movement entails. Spinoza follows Aristotle in rejecting an uncomplicated pursuit of immediate gratification, and in denying the need for a Spartan attitude towards indulgence. His interest in emotions is in the 'practice and zeal... needed to control and moderate them' (Ethics, Part V, Preface).

> 'We may, under the guidance of reason, seek a greater good in the
> future in preference to a lesser good in the present, and we may seek
> a lesser evil in the present in preference to a greater evil in the future.'
> (Part IV, Proposition LXVI)

> 'So long as we are not assailed by emotions contrary to our nature, we
> have the power of arranging and associating the modifications of our
> body according to the intellectual order'
> (Part V, Proposition X)

Burnley's gyms see capable young men, Asian and white, sharing in the achievement of inspirational social order. Intercultural interactions take place

within aggressively physical cultures that, nonetheless, require emotional temperance on the part of these men. Unfettered pursuit of individual ability is not possible within the social arrangements that emerge in support of an inspiring atmosphere in which to box, train and socialise. Curzon Gym's closely followed gym etiquette does not allow for it. Nor does the appropriately respectful attitude required at Butterworth ABC. The insight of Spinoza's ontology is not one about as to the 'ontology of race', as has been the overarching theme of the bodily turn in critical race studies. Rather, his insight is that an ontology of temperate, inspired individuality bears resources to connect bodies otherwise marked and estranged by racial ideology. An analysis rooted in this 'non-humanist individualism' need not, in any sense, resolve the epistemological/ontological character of race in order to unpack the operation of interculture amidst its persistence.

Thinking with Spinoza in intercultural contexts, it is tempting to presumptively frame an analysis of Burnley's gyms as places well suited to confounding racial prejudice. Spinoza sees emotions as tools for gaining greater access to positive and strengthening experiences. 'Inadequate' ideas of ourselves and the things and people that we relate to are 'fictitious' and prevent those experiences. Spinoza points in the direction of the pervasive fiction of race as one such inadequate idea with a capacity to persist in dull opinion.[47]

> '[T]he less men know of nature, the more easily can they coin fictitious
> ideas... [f]or, after it has formed a fictitious idea, and has given its
> assent thereto, it cannot think or feign it in any other manner, but is

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[47] Opinions are, for Spinoza, the lowest form of understanding, a inadequate mess of unrefined passion and fictive ideas. Opinion occupies the opposite, lower end of the scale of rational-emotional capacity to that occupied by intuition. 'Opinion is the only source of falsity, reason and intuition are necessarily true' (Ethics, Part II, Proposition XLI). Also see the 'four modes of perception' in On the improvement of understanding, p.8, the lowest being 'Perception arising from hearsay or from some sign which everyone may name as he pleases', which is only marginally improved upon by perceptions arising from direct experience or as inferred via the 'essence' of another thing.

constrained by the first fictitious idea to keep all its other thoughts in harmony therewith'

(The Improvement of Understanding, p.22).

'If a man has been affected pleasurably or painfully by anyone of a class or nation different from his own, and if the pleasure or pain has been accompanied by the idea of the said stranger as cause, under the general category of the class or nation: the man will feel love or hatred not only to the individual stranger, but also to the whole class or nation, whereto he belongs.'

(Part III, Proposition XLVI)

Attachments to notions of race are not bad in that they are necessarily wicked, or because they cause harm to people and restrict the affective abilities of those marked as different. Instead, Spinoza abhors raced thought because the *ideational* fixation it entails is umbilically linked to an *emotional* one that precludes affirmative experiences of people, places, things and ideas marked by race. This is no good for an individual, nor for the society in which they live.

'The force of any passion or emotion can overcome the rest of a man's activities or power, so that emotion becomes obstinately fixed to him.'

(Part IV, Proposition VI)

Where the ability of white people to engage in interculture is seen to require jarring encounters with difference or anti-racist logic, it will remain difficult to give a positive account of Burnley and its inhabitants. As such, it must be set out how the effect of Spinoza's rationalism would be different. The following ethnographies of Butterworth ABC and Curzon Gym illustrate that each realises arrangements that suppress race as a condition of achieving inspirational culture. In neither gym is difference tolerated, negotiated or celebrated; it remains stifled, although contentiously latent to the achievement of the

inspirational social order that Spinoza points towards. The value of these gyms is not that racial stereotypes are dispelled by white men finding out what Asian individuals 'are really like'. Rather, later chapters argue that Burnley's gyms function by realising endogenous logics marked by immediate and positively experienced affective bonds. These bonds are enabled, through the suppression of negotiations of raced cultural *difference*, to contradict assumptions of raced *incompatibility*. Spinoza contribution to critical race studies is to distil normative valuation of difference from a constitutive philosophical positioning of the mutual distinctiveness of bodies and the ideas that become attached to them.

Analyses that suggest Asians and whites live mutually and generically disaffected parallel lives are thereby brought into question. Burnley's gyms bear significance for the town's racial politics because they bring young Asian and white bodies together to imperfectly and contentiously share in a uniquely enabling culture. Following the analysis of this chapter, the possibility of giving a positive account of the ethical abilities of young white men using these gyms, would not be lessened in the least if no Asian man had ever set foot in them. The significance of these gyms for Burnley's racial politics would, of course, be very different in such a case. Importantly, rather than making an argument for a positive account of young white bodies, this chapter develops an approach that separates the *possibility* of such an account from the *necessity* of encounters with raced difference. Analysis of the political significance of these gyms may then avoid construing the men using them as ethically passive and morally regrettable obstacles to convivial diversity.

Chapter 4
Ethnographic method

1. Choosing ethnography

1.1 Ethnographic flexibility and tolerance of ambiguity

This chapter frames a research practice suited to unpacking the varied abilities of men training in Butterworth ABC and Curzon Gym. Foregoing chapters have established a rationale for examining the inspiration of the embodied capacities of those individuals, and for valuing their abilities in relation to Burnley's racial politics. Burnley's gyms are predominantly used by young white men, although a smaller number of young Asian men also attend. Chapter 5 and 6 illustrate that these gyms enable intercultural affiliations not seen elsewhere in Burnley. As such, the focus of these ethnographies is upon *examining the emergence and capable use of endogenous logics of interaction* on each gym-floor.

Assuming this focus will involve elaborating upon the minimal, though particular, framing of affective capacity set out in Chapter 3. Chapters 5 and 6 illustrate volatile, ambiguous and complex male body cultures. As such, overly hasty judgments as to how abilities and possibilities portent desirable futures should be avoided. In order to avoid compounding the political immobilisation effected by Cantle's generic diagnosis of disaffection, judgments of the progressive value of what these men are capable of will be temporarily bracketed. Engendering positive accounts of able young men using Burnley's gyms will require the combination of a high resolution of empirical scrutiny with a postponement of judgments of political significance. This discussion reviews contemporary ethnographic debates so as to meet these ambitions.

Ethnography allows close scrutiny of cultural life, building 'rich description of how groups and individuals respond to change within their immediate everyday contexts' (Nayak: 2003b, p.11). Previous ethnographies of young white men in transitional urban cultures demonstrate the insights into group life that close

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study over an extended period of time affords. Ethnography groups a family of research perspective and practice, rather than a coherent, rigid approach. Although variously practised across a number of disciplines, ethnographic studies retain a distinctive sub-disciplinary momentum,[48] and might be thought of as affording a remit to forge creative and methodologically flexible empirical engagements. It is in this spirit that ethnography is considered in this chapter and employed in this thesis.

Wittgenstein's suggestion that '[t]here is no need for you to climb a ladder to get a view nobody else has' (Laurier: 2003, p.146) recommends ethnographic practice to the task outlined above. This research seeks to place a close scrutiny of what people *are already* getting on with at the heart of judgments as to what they *should* be getting on with. The ethnographies outlined in this chapter attend to the varied abilities of young white men living out complex male body cultures. It thereby provides a degree of scrutiny upon experiences of living out youth culture that is obviated by generic diagnoses of disaffection. It may, therefore, seem contrary that Chapter 3 has set out a highly particular, abstract conceptual position. Abstract concepts have previously provoked well rehearsed fears amongst ethnographers of a paralysis arising from 'epistemological insecurity' (Manning: 2002, p.492). However, this chapter suggests the benefits of continually refreshing the question of how ethnography 'provides unreplicable insight into the processes and meanings that sustain and motivate social groups' (Herbert: 2000, p.550).

A series of critiques within ethnographic debates have questioned an erstwhile hegemony of realist and naturalistic approaches (especially see Denzin: 1997). In turn, a plethora of abutting approaches have negotiated the seemingly inescapable necessity of perspective as an imperfect tool for uncovering ethnographic truth (Lofland and Lofland: 1995, p.68). Despite the deep divisions

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[48] See recently inaugurated journals *Ethnography* and *The Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*.

these debates have generated, the range of ethnographic styles on offer is also the result of a degree of methodological opportunism (Cloke, Crang and Goodwin: 2001, p.169), with a limited range of tools for gathering data recombined (Fine: 1999, p.535) in the spirit of 'the bricoleur' (Lincoln: 2001). A 'pragmatic flexibility' (Hammersley: 1999, p.576) is useful to an expansive, explorative approach to inspired somatic ability. Yet despite the affordance of such flexibility, ethnography has been characterised as an 'underused methodology' (Herbert: 2000, p.550) in contrast to 'an apparent concentration in geography on interview-based methods' (Crang: 2002, p.650). However, dialogic methods are less equipped to study the capable use of logics of interaction. Ethnography is adopted here for its problematic, but potentially workable, means of apprehending *how inspiration moves* through personalities, affects, representations and things.

A flexible approach to tracking the movement of inspiration through culture is aided by a diversification in cultural geography of what qualifies as ethnography. A growing interest in 'post-humanist' ethnographic research alights upon a 'cross between ontological constructivism and epistemological realism' (Crang: 2001b, p.211); a simultaneous movement away from the assumed stability and transparency of the material world and towards rethinking the reliability of empirical data. Crang's comment neatly frames our examination of *the invention of intercultural affiliations through creative bodily praxes*. Preceding chapters have criticised rationalist approaches and preferred to think alongside the agency of non-human materiality. The possibility of thinking with the organisational agencies of things has increasingly interested geographers working from a variety of perspectives (Laurier: 2001, Laurier and Philo: 2003a, also Hetherington: 2004 and Gregson and Beale: 2004). Burnley's gyms see inspiration move through an infrastructure that includes configurations of feeling, leather, personality, dumbbells, radios, etc. Generating understandings of the lived immediacy of these body cultures may require testing what is expected of the ethnographic writ to 'understand parts of the world as they are

experienced and understood in the everyday lives of people' (Cook and Crang: 1995, p.4).

An interest in the organisational and inspirational qualities of things is allied to a hesitancy to lock them into rigid explanations. It is important to avoid liberating a variety of capacities from a maladroit notion of disaffection, only to smother them anew with preconceived assumptions. As such, it will be necessary to beg the patience of expectations for transparent and unequivocal ethnographic knowledge. Prior prejudices as to what these men get up to and are capable of, threaten to smuggle constitutive expectations into research and so narrow appreciation of these gym cultures. Yet foregoing chapters have underscored the necessity of recovering some of the lived immediacy of culture that caricatures of youth disaffection, material deprivation and male physicality dissimulate. A little more of the immediacy of somatic experience is just what is required to unsettle what we think we know about white working class male culture.

In order that those false and occlusive familiarities may be unpacked, a tolerance for the 'grammar of uncertainty' (Laurier and Philo: 2003b, p.7) arising from irreducibly complex and messy social contexts will be useful. Indeed, Wolcott's (2001) similar recommendation of a tolerance for *ethnographic* ambiguity (p.92) is redolent of the tolerance for ambiguity that William Connolly (2002) sees as crucial to a *politics* elaborated upon a logic of virtuality (see Chapter 3, Section 3.3). A reticence to judge the political significance of Burnley's complex male body cultures will facilitate patient attention to their various constitutive facets. In turn, this will enable a reluctance to hastily judge what is and is not politically progressive. By practicing this dual tolerance, boxing and bodybuilding cultures may be valued as not *only* violent, discriminatory, exclusive and hence regressive.

Practise of this tolerance is subject to how the philosophical and empirical aspects of enquiry will knit together (Katz and Csordas: 2003, p.275). An intention to flesh out the conceptual guidance developed in Chapter 3 must meet a commitment to the abilities of Burnley's young men and their culturally ingrained ways of learning. This will entail embodying an abstract notion of inspiration through cultures already underway in Butterworth ABC and Curzon Gym. In so doing, truth is less at issue than the possibility of complicating the ways in which young men are appreciated as politically capable.

Fears that a movement away from realist ethnography is detrimental to valid knowledge are by now familiar (Hammersley: 1999, Gans: 1999, Flaherty: 2002, Snow: 2002). Yet a temptation to reject realist ethnography as dry, compared to Deleuze's seductive fireworks and Spinoza's arcane logics, would miss a broader demand for an accountable empiricism. Following Holloway and Todres (2003), '[w]hilst we may not like the terms 'validity' or 'reliability', we believe that we are accountable to be explicit about the epistemological status of our outcomes, and what we are claiming for these outcomes' (p.355). Chapter 3 framed *persuasion* as a form of political accountability that is reflected in the knowledge claims of this thesis. Cantle's diagnosis of disaffection is not merely a generalisation to be debunked by accurate cultural knowledge. Rather, the political immobilisation of disaffected youth is rooted in the obstacle that this designation presents to formulating political aspirations they are likely to find persuasive. The knowledges generated by this thesis are accountable to the task of complicating appreciation of the abilities of young white men. Furthermore, the research underscores that political aspirations must be accountable to the possibilities of persuasion those abilities afford.[49]

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[49] Whilst any form of ethnographic and political accountability will be contestable, if that contestation is directed by an interest in the question 'is this account persuasive', it will have a different potential political utility than the question 'is this account accurate'.

1.2 Documenting ambiguous cultures

The method of movement from description to interpretation informs the nature of claims that may be made upon ethnographic knowledge. Causal explanation has been a fairly normative path by which 'luminous description' (Katz: 2001, 2002) has moved beyond the 'specific coordinates of [one's] field (Weber: 2001, p.478). However, Chapter 2 signaled dissatisfaction with work that tethers explanations of how young white men behave too closely to the social transitions they are caught up in. In turn, Chapter 3 criticised explanations of male gym culture that make nebulous reference to psychology. So whilst this thesis seeks 'systematic and generic understandings and propositions about social processes' (Snow et al: 2003, p.181), these must cautiously build upon engagements with the capacities of men using Burnley's gyms. Following recent geographical engagements (McCormack: 2002, 2005, Bissell: 2008), this is achieved by according bodily experience a more active role in the production of ethnographic knowledge.

A tolerance of ethnographic ambiguity entails conceding that tidy explanation is untenable in view of the non-purposive effects arising in complex culture. An irreducible element of chance is built into boxing and bodybuilding practice, resisting hasty narratives of cause, purpose and motivation. As such, the method employed in Burnley's gyms contributes to debates on ethnography by explicitly placing the capricious experience of having a body at the centre of the ethnographic story; as both the impossibility and the condition of knowledge claims made. Chapter 7 emphasises the inspiration that bodybuilders find in intense muscular discomfort. Those sensations motivate them to return to the gym, albeit in a manner hard to understand as rational purpose or psychological dependency. Tracing inspiration as it circulates through culture will begin with a familiar accumulation of detailed ethnographic observation. Yet the reticence to commit explanatory closure that will enable this accumulation, is rooted in the author's uncertain somatic experiences of inspiration. This may be thought of as

precisely neither ethnographic realism nor first person narrative, but rather as an unsettling somatic perspectivism that combines elements of both.

To extol suspicion, tolerance and patience as ethnographic virtues might seem to point toward methodological timidity. It is, nonetheless, important to avoid responding to Cantle's cursory attention to Burnley's young white men by confidently associating their abilities with narratives of explanation or political design. This would result in only certain kinds of ability being valued only in certain ways, and *specific* closures of explanation and political aspiration may be as politically exclusive and immobilising as a *generic* diagnosis of disaffection. Accordingly, these ethnographies seek to remain open to unexpected happenings, efficacious things and tiny details that may interrupt tidy political and explanatory narratives.

A focus upon practical detail suggests that a strategy of rich description will provide suitable basic ingredients. Attention to seemingly insignificant minutiae will provide access to matters of interest not initially identified from larger topics (Laurier: 2003, p.145). Foreclosing observation via an anticipated explanation or political aspiration might sideline minutiae with a relevance emerging only within a broader context. Indeed, this thesis emphasises the subtle operation of race in contrast to eye catching performances of masculinity. Only patient observation allows the nature of its latency to become apparent. Of course, conceiving of description as strictly preparatory for interpretation is hard to defend. No attempt to do so is made here. Rather, and more modestly, the 'variety and distinctiveness... between philosophy and empirical enquiry' (Katz and Csordas: 2003, p.275) problematises the interstice between data collection and the construction of ethnographic text as a tidy site for interpretation (see Snow et al: 2003, p.184).[50] A cautious oscillation between detail and

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[50] Furthermore, the abilities and personality of the researcher penetrate the formulation of methods of observation (see Wolfinger: 2002) and are expressed in the means of relating description to broader concepts (Herbert: 2000, p.561). Indeed, the idea of taking Spinoza boxing in Burnley reflects interests in the professional and personal life of the researcher.

supposition, marked by the tolerances outlined above, is needed to assess ethnographic relevance and so examine the political value of Burnley's gyms.

In-situ, ad hoc settlements between description, conviction and concepts will define the political and moral character of the research. An ambition to balance progressive politics with possibilities of persuasion shares points both of contact and disjuncture with Denzin's aim to 'refuse... abstractions and high theory' (1999: p.510) in pursuit of 'the promise of qualitative research as radical democratic practice' (Denzin: 2001, p.23). This research contributes to ethnographic debate by bringing abstract concepts and empirical material together in novel ways, although without seeking to enfranchise or inform the men who are its subjects. Its hesitancy to produce explanation and conviction enables experimentation at the interface between research theory and experience. This approach connotes a scepticism of settled moral clarity by bracketing political commitment, but is intended to sharpen its critical edge and augment its political application.[51]

An explicit concern for the moral dimension of ethnography has previously been contentious. Authors have celebrated a propensity for critical moral criteria to 'erase distinctions between epistemology, aesthetics and ethics' (Denzin: 2002, p.484). Others have considered this equivalent to 'look[ing] for truths that serve us well enough, often enough' (Fine: 1999, p.536), or 'redefining knowledge to mean illuminating fictions or partisan perspectives' (Hammersley: 1999, p.581). Yet a fear of saying nothing of analytical or moral certainty should not provoke hurried judgment of the political significances alive in Burnley's gym cultures. Instead of holding that 'critical enquiry must be focused around a *clear* set of moral and political goals' (Denzin: 2002, p.488, own emphasis), a cautious

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[51] As suggested by Wolcott's (2001) discussion of the 'dark arts' of ethnography, doing or observing things that one is uncomfortable with has long been a concern of ethnographers. More specifically, the difficulty of these ethnographies is that of unpacking the political potential of Burnley's gyms without coming to specific conclusions upon how that potential may play out. Chapter 7 sets the political disposition of this thesis as a commitment to place aspirations for progressive politics under constant review from the embodied perspectives enabled in particular cultures.

humility in making claims upon ethnographic truth *and* moral clarity may be required to connect the varied abilities of Burnley's young men to desirable futures in surprising ways. This thesis does not aim to confidently generate political formulae. It rather more modestly argues that these must emerge from understandings of what people are capable of doing and find inspiring.

This thesis casts somatic performance as a resource for understanding how intercultural affiliation works. Its contribution to critical race research is in casting the body as a vehicle of interculture, rather than as a site the chief political value of which is in contradicting the biological essences inscribed by raced presentiments. It is doubtlessly significant that there is more genetic variation within the supposed races than between them. It is just as significant that human experiences of somatic stimulation, fatigue, hormones, pheromones etc. are critical where bodies marked as racially different work in proximity to one another. Furthermore, the thesis argues that exploring the body as an intercultural substrate should proceed by the researcher's bodily engagement with performances of physical interculture. As such, an evocative and first hand illustration of the inspiration young men find in Burnley's gyms will be well placed to spell out the political value of Burnley's male body cultures.

This research seeks to adopt 'a means of *valuing* and *working with* everyday practical *activities* as they occur' (Thrift: 2000a, p.216, original emphases). The author is positioned as an observant participant (Thrift: 2000b), a slant on the more established ethnographic role of participant observer (Jorgensen: 1989, Kindon, Pain and Kesby: 2007). Emotionally and sensually involved accounts of the movement of inspiration through culture are presented; the embarrassment and enjoyment of gym banter; the physical exhaustion of lifting weights; the alienation and inspiration of an intense training atmosphere. Accounts of the researcher learning how to box, build muscle and socialise underscore his position as an 'active agent in making knowledge' (Crang: 2003, p.499); not just intellectually, but physically, emotionally and spiritually. Crang characterises 'the

creation of effects' as 'precisely the business of writing' (Crang: 2005, p.226). The business of these ethnographies is creating accounts of physical ability through rich description, evocative vignettes and touching characterisation.

This section has outlined the basic ingredients of an ethnographic practice combining; detailed description of practical minutiae; a reticence to hastily judge the political significance of personal abilities and social possibilities; an interest in the organisational role of non-human things, materials and affects; and evocative accounts of personal experiences of inspirational cultures. A 'pragmatic level of representational analysis' (Flaherty: 2002, p.514, also see Snow et al: 2003) is used to evoke impressions of the abilities and possibilities that add up on each gym-floor. These ethnographies ask not 'is it true', but 'is it probable, workable, fruitful, does it allow us to see things differently, and to think differently?' (Denzin, 2001, p.31). Their contribution to debates on how ethnography may be used by cultural geographers, is in emphasising that the researcher's body is a site for experimenting with the interface between conceptual abstraction and empirical effort. The Spinozist account set out in Chapter 3 frames, but will also be affected by, the author's experiences of training and socialising in Burnley's gyms.

The ethnographies of Curzon and Butterworth offer sketches of imperfect but workable intercultural arrangements, which will develop thought upon how progressive politics may meet the experiences of young white men in Burnley. Well established warnings of the 'representational excesses' of an ethnographic practice that makes use of vignettes and characterisations (Gubrium and Holstein: 1999, p.567) see a danger in convincing oneself that '[k]nowing what one *believes* is...a more efficient strategy than learning what a community believes' (Fine: 1999, p.534, own emphasis). However, the persuasive dynamic proposed by this thesis has a critical purpose of closing the gap between the formulation of extant progressive convictions and *how* 'the community believes';

between progressive aspirations *for* Burnley and the inspirations young men find *in* Burnley.

The following section develops the interest of this thesis in non-representational approaches. The style of thinking they promise enables appreciation of creative bodily praxes and recognition of the more-than-rational pedagogies ingrained in physical culture. Butterworth ABC and Curzon Gym are predominantly used by white men. As such, representations of raced diversity present across much of Burnley are not abundant on either gym-floor. Moreover, each gym realises specific arrangements that prevent raced difference from disrupting the achievement of inspired social order. Yet a focus upon valuing affective abilities, *outside* of their relation to difference, will enable us to look behind how difference figures amidst eye-catching cultural performance. Accordingly, the following discussion frames the utility of placing non-representational thought alongside an empirical approach that augments its interest in the subtleties of practice; ethnomethodology.

2. Ethnomethodology and the non-representational

2.1 Combining disparate critiques of empiricism

This section draws together two disparate critiques of doing social science; ethnomethodology and non-representational approaches. Each of these critiques arrive, from very different points of departure, at a spirit useful to the purpose of connecting the varied abilities of Burnley's young white men to desirable futures in surprising ways; *they each take an interest in what people are capable of without rushing to confident explanations or judgments of value.* The contribution of ethnomethodology is to frame 'practical activities as contingent ongoing accomplishments of organised artful practices of everyday life' (Garfinkel: 1967, p.11). The ethnomethodological passion for detail enables close study of the practices by which young men learn how to box, build muscle and socialise. Indeed, it is necessary to learn how to contribute to the achievement of social order if one is to engage in the logics of interaction that

connect, or else mutually estrange, white and Asian men in Burnley's gyms. Those logics may be traced by following the practical minutiae by which these compact and physically complicated spaces are used. Ethnomethodology is rather too interested in the practical quirks by which order comes about to allow explicit attention to the operation of race through culture. However, as such, ethnomethodology is well suited to examining *how social arrangements stop race becoming reportable as the condition of maintaining inspirational social order.*

Ethnomethodology and non-representational approaches bear distinctive histories of disruptive intervention in social science. Only brief justice may be done to these here. Furthermore, their points of common interest are rendered all the more striking by their mutual distance in many other respects. Yet although their coming together is unlikely, this perception is exaggerated by popular caricatures of their respective positions. Firstly, that ethnomethodology is 'anti-theory', a prejudice that leaves it prone to misunderstanding when it makes strong claims and indifference when it makes modest ones (see Dennis: 2003). Secondly, that non-representational approaches posit empirical nihilism and encourage methodological timidity (see Latham: 2003, p.1994). These positions may be productively revised, so as to pick up on the variety of ways in which Burnley's disaffected young white men live out complex inspirational cultures.

Importantly, the meeting of ethnomethodology and non-representational approaches is not unpresaged (Laurier and Philo: 2004, 2006, Laurier and Brown: 2004). As Laurier and Philo (2006) suggest, where non-representational authors 'retain a preoccupation with the representational aporia as that which cannot be by-passed because every route about, around, to one side, over or under it is doomed to failure, our [ethnomethodological] preoccupation is with the muddy paths, carpeted corridors, spaces between the tables and thrumbing motorways that are found' (p.359). The ethnographies of Burnley's gyms

develop a workable compromise between these preoccupations, so as to augment the ethnographic remit sketched above. The common ground between these approaches enables novel links between concepts and observations.

Ethnomethodology purports to offer a critique of social scientific theory as it has typically been done. Its application is varyingly strict (or, belligerent) regarding the extent to which the merging of social scientific and common sense rationalities is tolerated (the collapse of the distinction between these ways of perceiving social interaction marks the advent of the ethnomethodological critique, see Hama: 1999, p.184). However, geographical interest in ethnomethodology has manifested a less bullish approach than elsewhere.[52] Authors have used ethnomethodological precepts to report phenomena that are only obliquely reportable (for Laurier and Philo: 2004 on 'ambience') so as to move analysis beyond attention to the immediate haecceity of observed social interaction (Laurier: 2001, p.486). The following ethnographies do so by casting the body as an interface between empirical specifics and conceptual arrays, allocating somatic experience a novel and central role in this experimentation.

The methodology approaches the ineffable qualities of experience as an opening of the ethnomethodological writ onto thought on the non-representational. This frames a possibility of *reporting the movement of inspiration through physical culture*. Geography's engagement with the non-representational has not, to this point, produced a distinctive methodological arsenal (see Latham: 2003). Debate over whether it should seek to do so has seen two broad approaches. On one hand, there have been attempts to develop a more 'affectually sensitive' temper to the application of established methods (see Latham: 2003, p.199, Anderson: 2005, Swanton: 2007). On the other, authors have devised means of gaining empirical 'access' to aesthetic schemes of valuation (Abel: 2001) through observing or participating in

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[52] Notably pushed by Eric Laurier, also with Chris Philo, through the 'Communities and Cafes' project (Laurier and Philo: 2006, also Laurier: 2003).

practices that challenge representation-centric regimes of judgment (McCormack: 2002, 2005, Saldanha: 2006). This method borrows aspects of both these approaches; study of the movement of inspiration through Butterworth ABC saw the author use ethnomethodological precepts to detail interactions, whilst also learning to skip, spar and get-on with contemporaries.

Both ethnomethodological and non-representational approaches are interested in *how* people become *disposed* towards certain actions. Furthermore, both are suspicious of claims to knowledge as to *why* people behave as they apparently do. In these respects, they reflect a suspicion of tidy, rational and psychologically inclined explanations. Indeed, ethnomethodologically inclined geographers Laurier and Brown (2004) note that '[w]here we would find ourselves in accord with Non-representational theory... is in returning to embodied senses, since with the turn to geographical imagination we have consigned 'seeing' to the domain of mental psychology' (p.15). In Curzon Gym, white and Asian men training alongside one another become mutually disposed in such a way that helps them to train more intensely. Ethnomethodology allows us to examine how such experiences are achieved by asking the 'practical question par excellence... what to do next?' (Garfinkel: 1967, p.12).

Indeed, the iconoclastic attitude of ethnomethodology towards what it calls 'professional social science' consists of a persistent referral to empirical specifics in response to questions about its theoretical perspective (Button: 1991, p.5). In turn, non-representational approaches seek to problematise a necessary recourse to 'normative' modes of social scientific explanation (see Harrison: 2002) by similarly asking 'what is happening here, how is it happening?'.[53] The discussion set out below explores the empirical and analytical directions thrown up where these approaches get entangled.

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[53] The synergy between these questions has its limits, as is discussed below. Whilst ethnomethodology is interested in how rules and meanings of interaction become 'reportable' for social practitioners (Zimmerman and Wieder: 1970, p.295), non-representational

2.2 The ethnomethodological critique of social science

Ethnomethodology studies how meaning becomes 'visible' and so available for use. In its own inimitable language, ethnomethodology focuses upon how meaning becomes 'rational-and-reportable-for-all-practical-purposes' (Coulon: 1995, p.23). Accounts of social settings, whether scientific analyses or as used by people going about their business, must fulfil visibility criteria (Baccus: 1986, p.9). The visibility of meaning is not given or inevitable. It is *achieved* through the skilled use of *ethnomethods*; gestures, intonations, pauses, hanging sentences, nods ('yes... I am listening'), etc. As such, the mechanisms by which meaning becomes available for use are as much a feature of an account as is the substance of that meaning. Those mechanisms are neither extant nor transposable but are located, occasioned and *constitute* the account (Baccus: 1986, p.4).

As such, ethnomethodology studies how what qualifies as meaningful is, at a fundamental level, up for grabs. In this way, it is suited to studying how race works in the complicated spaces of Butterworth ABC and Curzon Gym. This will not entail tracing how bodies come to be meaningfully understood as white or Asian, as the constitution of race as an interpretation of identity or worth lies beyond the remit of ethnomethodological visibility. Instead, Chapters 5 and 6 use ethnomethodological tenets to illustrate the *achievement of a social order that enables inspired experience*. Although each gym sees intercultural affiliations, race goes almost entirely unspoken. Indeed, both cultures realise social arrangements that *prevent race from becoming reportable* and disrupting the cooperative achievement of inspired social order.

Ethnomethodological precepts are useful for understanding the practices involved in achieving inspired social order. Yet the meticulous scrutiny that ethnomethodology brings to bear upon how interaction works, entails a refusal

approaches consider the inadequacy of articulable meaning, reflective thought and cultural representation to the energetic transience of events.

to move from description to analyse substantive features of discourse. A resulting blind spot regarding the historical legacies that social intercourse is bound up in has been criticised as politically irresponsible (Coulon: 1995, p.65). Whilst Burnley remains divided by raced culture and by memories of the summer of 2001, this will remain a relevant concern for any research engagement with the town. A study that occluded the legacies of race, gender and class that shape Burnley and its male sporting cultures would unhappily combine with an affirmative account of the power of the young white men therein. A celebratory individualism, denuded of reference to race, might come to resemble a white-coded will-to-power.

Indeed, ethnomethodology has been accused of construing a subject motivated by 'whatever actions are deemed necessary to justify his own conduct' (Denzin: 1970, p.297). More favourably, however, ethnomethodology has been seen as an opportunity to 'localise what otherwise become grand periodisations' of the history of normativity (Laurier and Philo: 2004, p.424). These ethnographies note the reprise of white, working class masculinities present in local industrial history, through the unpredictable quirks of lively body cultures. Yet analysis of the salience of race in these cultures is fairly oblique. The author examines the mechanical achievement of interculture *where race goes unspoken*. A temptation to actively read the hidden machinations of race into such affiliations neatly characterises the analytical instincts that ethnomethodology reacts against. Tacit assumptions of the secret persistence of irrational prejudice must be resisted if recognition of the abilities of these men is to complicate politically immobilising reference to their disaffection. Ethnomethodology usefully resists interpreting the operation of race 'behind people's backs', where significance may lie more with the suppression of its reportability.

Ethnomethodology refuses to 'confess' its theoretical sources and methodological principles (Lynch: 1999, p.211), a stubbornness close to the heart of its contrary nature. In restricting attention to the function of meaning,

ethnomethodology is critique distilled to either its most pure or empty form. Its belligerence towards 'conventional' sociology's interpretive conceits well suits it to tolerating the ambiguities, and postponing evaluation, of the possibilities of Burnley's gyms. Ethnomethodology contends that social scientific accounts are not fundamentally different to everyday 'practical technolog[ies] of constructive analysis' (Garfinkel and Sacks: 1986, p.161). Social scientific practice consists only of a way of looking, with a 'special motive' of making strange what is taken for granted in the accomplishment of 'common sense' (Garfinkel: 1967, p.37). This is more an upgrading of common sense than a making mundane of the professional. Framing common sense in this way implies a possibility of giving account of what people are capable of, even if what is said or done seems noisome.[54] Notwithstanding the difficulties of political quietism outlined above, in this way abilities not immediately recognisable as progressive might come to be seen as politically significant (although such a judgment would mark departure from ethnomethodological critique).

Criticisms of ethnomethodology's political quietude alight upon this infamous 'indifference' to the use abilities are put. It is troubling to consider how the wickedness of racial prejudice may be seen clearly where such judgments are refrained from. Worse, a stringently deictic and purportedly pre-racial focus on personal ability might become a story about what white people can do, in white gyms, in a white town. However, ethnomethodological indifference does not connote an unproblematic empiricism, nor indeed a familiar version of objectivism (Lynch: 1999, p.221). A refusal to adopt politically partial petition does not equate to an egregious irrelevance. Ethnomethodology studies the 'possibility of common understanding consist[ing] entirely in the *enforceable character of actions* in compliance with the *expectancies of everyday life as a morality'* (Garfinkel: 1967, p.53, own emphases). Reference to 'the expectancies of everyday life as a morality' is not merely incidental to the ethnomethodological critique. Ethnomethodological indifference invites morally

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[54] See footnote 86.

interested critique by tracing the *grammatical* usefulness of systemic value. This effect is reminiscent of the effect of Spinoza's *geometric* method. A 'value free' register of enquiry is (not unproblematically) constructed, prompting scrutiny as to how value judgments feature in analysis.[55] Ethnomethodology on its 'own terms' may be 'apolitical'. However, as first and last a critique of conventional sociology, ethnomethodology on its own terms has never existed and never will.

Ethnomethodology focuses upon the practical constitution of normativity; it is interested in *how* conversations strike up in Butterworth ABC rather than in how race works through discourse. The 'rational properties' of action are also norms of '*proper* conduct' (Garfinkel: 1967, p.279). A notion of the rational function of agreed belief ('objectivity') resides in Jayyusi's discussion of *trust* as 'moral inferential logic' (1991, p.240). Trust between social practitioners is the condition and the achievement of 'stable actions' (Garfinkel: 1990, p.23). It is the 'assumption by a member that all others in encounters will share expectations and definitions of a situation' (Zimmerman and Wieder: 1970, p.271). Studying the production of phenomena through intelligible acts (Laurier: 2004) requires adoption of the special motive noted above, so as to bring the 'constitutive accent of trust... under review' (Garfinkel: 1990, p.31). In deploying the concept of trust as a pinion of social stability, a bridge extends from 'strict' ethnomethodology to hybrid studies of the functional limits of raced normativity; Chapters 5 and 6 illustrate *relations of trust that engender endogenous intercultural logics* in Burnley's gyms.

Ethnomethodology's focus upon *what people are capable of* supports an aim to unpack the *abilities* of Burnley's young white men. Ethnomethod-ology is the study of ethnomethods, the 'mechanical' skills people use to allow meaning to show up; 'ad hoc' mechanisms of interaction like 'letting something pass' (Zimmerman and Wieder: 1970, p.291) and the 'et cetera clause' (Garfinkel:

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[55] This similarity between the grammatical and the geometric should not be overstated. Spinoza claims that positive value is indissociably both the ends and means of formal logic, whilst ethnomethodology ignores the question of value in favour of 'empirical specifics'.

1967, p.73). Rather than indulging in interpretations of motive, purpose and meaning, ethnomethodology focuses upon the 'ordinary methods that people use to realise their ordinary actions' (Coulon: 1995, p.2). *Ethnomethodology seeks to 'take people seriously'* (ibid.). It studies capable engagement in meaningful interactions without 'judgments of adequacy, value, importance, necessity, practicality, success or consequentiality (Coulon: 1995, p.42). 'It is not that speakers do not know what they are talking about; they know in a certain way' (Garfinkel and Sacks: 1986: p.164).

Yet the question moving from ethnomethodological indifference to comment on intercultural politics remains complicated. It is at stake where ethnomethodology comes into conversation with non-representational approaches. The critical worth of studying ethnomethods is a belligerent interest in what people can do, prosecuted via minute description and interpretive modesty. Combining indifference as to *why* people should act in a certain way with an interest in *how* they do, echoes the interest of non-representational approaches in the 'when' and 'how' of events rather than the 'why' (May: 2003). Indeed, one complaint of this thesis against a hope that disaffected young white men will come to confidently celebrate diversity, is that this places the political value of their abilities ahead of what those abilities are and how they work.

In response, Chapter 3 argued for a constitutive study of affective capacities that forestalls their evaluation as politically propitious. The interest of non-representational approaches in 'how different modalities of the more-than-rational are bound up with the making of value' (Anderson: 2005, p.645) should also consider *how the making of value affects thought on the more-than-rational*. Just as Spinoza challenges a Deleuzian taste for difference and plurality, so may ethnomethodology function in relation to non-representational approaches. In concert, they enable a research practice that makes use of the conceptual achievements of non-representational approaches, whilst distancing that use from the causes of difference or pluralism. This will allow ethnographic

study of the social possibilities alive in youth cultures that, whilst marked by violence, discrimination and exclusion, see interactions between young Asian and white men in an otherwise divided town.

2.3 ...and the non-representational critique of social science

The caricature of ethnomethodology is of an obtuse, confrontational and tautologous critique, accusations familiar to proponents of non-representational approaches. Debates on the subject have been characterised as 'variously confrontational, tribal, dogmatic, peevish and full bodied' (Lorimer: 2005, p.83).[56] Whilst ethnomethodology and non-representational approaches share a capacity to irritate, this is not all that they share. Whereas ethnomethodology refrains from 'doing-theorising' (Laurier: 2001, p.485), writers adopting non-representational approaches respond to a perceived exhaustion with 'doing theory' (see Dewsbury et al: 2002). Similarly to ethnomethodology, non-representational approaches seek to 'provide more space for all the everyday skills that get us by' (Thrift: 2004c, p.83) and to 'provide a body of work that values creative praxis' (Thrift: 2000a, p.213). The reticence of non-representational approaches to replicate 'certain presuppositions and idealisations over the nature of understanding and meaning... built into our social scientific modes and methods of explanation' (Harrison: 2002, p.487) complements ethnomethodological tenets by abetting a reluctance to follow familiar paths to hasty explanation. Aspects of non-representational approaches communicate with much of what is admired about ethnomethodology above.

Non-representational approaches are interested in the more ineffable fringes of experience. As such, thinking with the non-representational may extend an ethnomethodological attention to the practical achievement of the gym-floor. Authors working through non-representational approaches have sought to 'allow...in much more of the excessive and transient aspects of living' (Lorimer:

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[56] See exchange between Lees (2002) and Latham and McCormack (2004), also Castree and Macmillan (2004), Smith (2005) and in the session *Grumpy old geographers* at the RGS-IBG conference 2006.

2005, p.83), with the body in practice emphasised as being a 'positive force with its own resources' (Thrift: 1997, p.141). Chapter 3 characterised inspiration as the bodily experience of motivation-in-motion. Indeed, the bodily resources that Thrift refers to are irreducible to final accounts of their provenance and effects; whether social, physiological or psychological. The following ethnographies note the 'buzz' young men get from going to the gym. Visceral, although hard to articulate, it is an embodied compulsion rather than a *reason* for going back to train night after night.

Critics have worried that 'esoteric' accounts of such experiences purport to offer an 'escape from power' (Nash: 2000, p.656), perhaps through 'rhythms' (McCormack: 2002, 2005) that are taken up in a seemingly unproblematic and unvaried manner. Ethnomethodological indifference has similarly been subject to critiques of political quietism. Indeed, both ethnomethodological and non-representational approaches have been censured for reducing a capacity to say anything interesting about anything at all. The ethnographies of Burnley's gyms recognise that a facility for directly following how race marks and distributed bodies is somewhat vicarious. However, the operation of race in each gym is also somewhat vicarious; it is suggested that race remains suppressed and unresolved at the margins of inspired social order. As such, these ethnographies consider the definitely practical manufacture of often ineffable inspiration.

By apprehending more excessive and transient aspects of living, non-representational approaches hold a default suspicion of final knowledge claims about a settled world. This complements ethnomethodology's interest in 'how to mediate systems of representation without trusting them' (Rose: 2002, p.462). Laurier and Philo (2006) suggest that '[r]epresentation, the grand concept, can be investigated as representing, really quite practical work that we meet in a myriad of wordly activities, bound up with defensible and contestable uses of referents, persons standing for things, things standing for persons, things

standing for other things, and so on' (p.355). This perspective is helpful for illustrating how representations of race may become sidelined in pursuit of inspirational social order.

By restricting study of personal abilities to the appropriation of raced culture, we fail to appreciate the range of abilities present in predominantly white peer groups. Non-representational approaches hold promise in this respect by looking beneath the representational threshold to engage with a variety of affective capacities. Authors have sought 'escape from the established academic habit of striving to uncover meanings and values that apparently await our discovery, interpretation, judgement and ultimate representation' (Lorimer: 2005, p.84). By arguing that the world 'does not add up...does not resolve or come to rest' (Dewsbury et al: 2002, p.437), non-representational approaches have sought to widen social science's palate for 'apprehending' phenomena (McCormack: 2002) as a way of 'knowing' that is closer to the immediate valuation of experience (Abel: 2001). These ambitions are consonant with that of allowing the inspiration alive in youth cultures to penetrate our analytic habits and political designs.

This attunement of non-representational approaches to affect moves from the logics of abstraction employed, and specifically from concepts of virtuality and immanence. It is upon the manner of abstraction that criticism of the political utility of these approaches has alighted. One complaint is that it has not been convincingly argued that a possibility of 'transcendence without transcending' (Anderson: 2006a) responsibly negotiates compromised legacies of foundationalism and essentialism (see Tolia-Kelly: 2006). Critics are correct to reflect upon the critical effects of particular forms of abstraction. In this case, in order to avoid an exclusive affirmation of what white men are doing in Burnley. These ethnographies of Burnley's gyms will complicate ideas about the abilities of young white men and how these enable interculture. This is not to imply a relative incapacity of the Asian men in these gyms, nor that white men are

uniquely capable. It is one more possibility among others for studying interculture, one that is afforded by removing difference from the heart of conceptual abstraction.

A difficulty for the suggested approach is that ethnomethodology avoids the 'high theoretical' abstractions it associates with professional social science. Yet whilst non-representational approaches use an abstract theoretical posture, authors have framed empiricism in a manner reminiscent of the ethnomethodological aversion to doing-theorising. They have sought to 'show practice as that which incessantly, irretrievably, excessively, happens - as that which is taking place' (Harrison: 2002, p.490) so as to imagine an empiricism adequate to a world 'more excessive than we can theorise' (Dewsbury et al: 2002, p.437). Rather than negating the possibility of empiricism, non-representational approaches reframe what we may expect from it. As expressed similarly by ethnomethodology, empiricism is not just the business of social research. It is something that everyone does, every day.

This casting of empiricism dovetails with our ethnographic focus on somatic experimentation. Deleuze's notion of 'transcendental empiricism', upon which non-representational approaches draw (see Dewsbury: 2000), moves away from a coherent subject who *then* experiences[57] to posit a flow of experience from which subjects are abstracted (Colebrook: 2002, p.87). Empiricism ceases to be an abstract attitude practised by researchers, recalling the 'democratisation' of social science by the elision of lay and professional enquiry in ethnomethodology. A sense of the *experimental* is also at stake; '[t]ranscendental philosophy flips over into a radical immanentism, and empiricism into ethical experimentation' (Massumi: 2002, p.33), *linking empiricism to an ability to cultivate affective capacity*. Men learning how to box, build muscle and socialise are engaged in empirical experiments that demand

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[57] Empiricism relates to life 'in its doing' (Dewsbury: 2000, p.473), and posits the possibility of becoming-otherwise, of taking flight from limitation and sameness (Doel: 1995, p.231, also see Doel: 1996).

cultivated expertise, no less so than the researcher equipped with notebook, concepts and special motive. As such, the researcher's task must also be to learn what it takes to cultivate that expertise.

2.4 Ethnographic visibility

The practice of ethnographies at Butterworth and Curzon may be made clearer through a notion of ethnographic visibility. The term is borrowed from ethnomethodology, but may be usefully adapted by thought on the non-representational. A scope of ethnographic visibility discloses a range of phenomena available to the ethnographer. Visibility corresponds to *what* phenomena are seen, heard, felt or apprehended and *how* they become available for report. Ethnomethodology provides the attention to detail, and non-representational approaches the apprehension of ineffable experience, which are required to examine inspiration of the variety of affective capacities hidden by Cantle's lament for disaffected young white men.

The ethnomethodological insistence upon separating the practical *function* and representational *content* of meaning, suggests that the mechanical grammar of interaction is somehow anterior to substantive content. We might think of how the volume and intonation of barked encouragement in a gym qualifies as motivational, even before a verbal content is understood. Yet contrastingly, non-representational approaches refute a rigid separation of these two 'moments' of communicative expression; the meaning, volume and intonation of what is shouted are intertwined aspects of an unrepeatable event. Non-representational approaches have preferred narrative techniques with performative or poetic pretensions (Wylie: 2002, Clough: 2007) in pursuit of a critical research practice, and latterly a vocabulary (Anderson: 2006a) attuned to this perspective.

Resultantly, it might appear from an ethnomethodological perspective that non-representational projects bypass detailed descriptive leg work. In turn, from a

non-representational approach, ethnomethodology might appear unable to work with anything but the most narrow sense of description, policed by a contrived notion of what constitutes visible practice. The constitutive limits of ethnomethodology and non-representational approaches are therefore somewhat misaligned at the phenomena they converge upon. They pass one another in a perpendicular manner. Yet in so doing, they frame a distinctive debate over how to balance radical social scientific doubt with an empirical investment in the 'rough ground of social life' (Harrison: 2002, p.487). As such, rapprochement of these perspectives will offer non-representational approaches a relatively formalised empirical purchase upon the achievement of inspirational culture.

The ethnographic approach outlined in this chapter makes a distinctive contribution to debates on method by imperfectly, although usefully, connecting a formal method with a hitherto estranged theoretical attitude. The methodological implications and tools of non-representational approaches have previously been criticised as conservative (Pratt: 2000, p.639, cited in Latham: 2003, p.1994). Yet non-representational approaches *have* sought a greater degree of methodological flexibility and experimentalism (Latham: 2003, p.1993, McCormack: 2002, 2005, Lim: 2005, Saldanha: 2006). Our disciplinary ambitions to 'expand field practice and what counts as valid knowledge' (Crang: 2003, p.499), or perhaps to 'expand the potential of sense... and disclose new worlds' (Harrison: 2000, p.513), do not require that we rush for a new methods textbook in fear of ghosts of representation or conservatism. An ethnomethodological penchant for rich description provides thought on the non-representational with empirical purchase upon how abilities emerge in inspirational culture. It does so without shirking the wariness of claims upon interpretation, explanation and motive required by this thesis.

In turn, ethnomethodological practice acquires a theoretical attitude that complements its defining critical spirit of suspicion of interpretation and

hesitation to take representation at face value; a critical spirit to which non-representational thought is sympathetic. Furthermore, and despite inevitable protestations from its purists, ethnomethodology *is* sensitive to more elusive dimensions of experience. Garfinkel's breaching experiments provoke intense and varied feelings of anger, embarrassment and amusement. Indeed, ethnomethodology is already interested in a whole host of phenomena that are *vaguely tangible and obliquely reportable*. A number of such phenomena are noted in the studies of Butterworth ABC and Curzon Gym; apprehensions of atmosphere, personal chemistry, empathy and ethos irreducible to reportable rules of interaction. The hard and fast separation of the reportable and the non-reportable employed by ethnomethodology is an empirically useful caricature of the hyphen amidst the non-representational. *Degrees* of interpenetration of the non/reportable are inevitable amidst the lived immediacy of complex culture. How this interpenetration features in the achievement of inspired social order can only be appreciated where ethnomethodological tenets are sufficiently flexible to adopt a non-representational theoretical attitude, and vice versa.

This construction of ethnographic visibility retains the reluctance of its contributory perspectives to follow well trodden analytical paths 'up' from bodily scale practices to lay claims on ethnographic knowledge. Yet there are two dangers here. Firstly, it would be wrong to assume that a greater 'fidelity to the event' (McCormack: 2003, p.488) is bolstered by getting 'closer' to practice, and will necessarily result in 'better' research. Indeed, for non-representational approaches to continue to broaden their impact within geography, it is necessary to go beyond demonstrating, conceptually or empirically, that cultural practice is unruly and excessive. Secondly, ethnomethodological scrutiny of practice risks reducing affectual experience to the achievement of social order.

There is no tidy resolution to these dilemmas. Responding to them will require guarding against a fascination with the momentary and the reduction of feeling to the achievement of social order. As familiarity with the gyms is gained, this

should proceed by cultivating apprehension of the unpredictable quirks of these lively cultures. Events may exceed and yet also be recuperated into the actualisation of inspired social order. In Curzon, men often interrupt their own routine to assist contemporaries reaching the exhausting end of a set of movements; as their ability to lift a weight agonisingly fails at the limits of what their body is capable of, the minute application of force by another man accelerates the cooperative achievement of an inspiring place to work-out. Where that cooperation is between young Asian and white men, we may begin to talk about logics of interaction and possibilities for interculture.

3. Practising ethnography in Butterworth ABC and Curzon Gym
3.1 Choosing research sites

Butterworth ABC and Curzon Gym were chosen as research sites after a series of visits to Burnley by the author, beginning with a week-long stay in June 2004. A personal contact in Burnley facilitated these visits and helped the author to identify suitable sites for study. During this week-long preliminary research period, non-participant observation was conducted in a number of public spaces as part of a broader experimentation with method.[58] An interest in unpacking preconceptions of disaffected young white men, through scrutiny of place-bound cultures, took more explicit shape as the author worked at a five-a-side football tournament, collecting money and stray balls in return for the chance to mingle with participants.

This event mixed bodies from across Burnley's colour-culture line, as players typically banded together in respectively Asian and white teams. Matches assumed a distinctive edge where these teams competed across raced difference. These viscerally tangible tensions went unsaid; conspicuously less good-natured banter flowed between and within teams and faces set, stony-like,

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[58] Areas in which this observation took place included the bandstand on Manchester Road, the square in the centre of Charter Walk Shopping Centre, the square between the library and the Thompson Sports Centre and Burnley indoor markets.

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as the intensity amplified. The thought emerged that this sporting culture, and other similar ones, might effectively complicate Cantle's diagnosis of disaffected youth and confound popular stereotypes of young working class white men, as previously examined by Linda McDowell, Phil Cohen and Anoop Nayak. If layers of complexity and possibility may be found in such situations, then these problematic assumptions will be dealt a serious blow.

Furthermore, a curiosity gathered as to whether a latent potential for intercultural affiliation might become apparent through prolonged study. Amin (2002) notes that sporting associations are able to draw young Asians and whites into distinctive and passionate logics of interaction. The passions alive on the pitch were of ambiguous significance for Burnley's racial politics, as indeed is the movement of inspiration through Burnley's boxing and bodybuilding gyms. Nonetheless, if these places and the men using them are not to be marginalised by thought on Burnley's future, patient study is needed of the possibilities and problematics for living with race that these gym cultures engender.

Butterworth ABC and Curzon Gym emerged as prospective research sites through conversations with the author's contacts in Burnley. They were chosen for their potential usefulness in unpacking Cantle's generic notion of white disaffection and interrupting his hopes for convivial diversity. Butterworth and Curzon each have a local reputation as being 'rough', and are thought of as exclusively white gyms. It was anticipated that the aggressively contorted faces and energetic young bodies therein would be redolent of images of those violent nights in the summer of 2001. Yet just as there were young, strong men expressing a vigorous physicality on Burnley's streets in 2001, so will there still be physically vigorous men in Burnley's future. If progressive politics may articulate around the abilities and possibilities alive in cultures where male physicality is more legitimately -although still contestably- expressed, then

young white men will be less readily pushed to the margins of political aspiration.

The author's foreknowledge and enjoyment of boxing and bodybuilding subcultures, indicated that Burnley's gyms would see practically complicated and affectually dynamic cultures being capably navigated by young men. When visiting the gyms for the first time in September 2005, it was clear that their local reputation is misleading. Although predominantly used by white men, neither gym is racially exclusive. Rather, each mixes Asian and white bodies in complicated ways. After only a short time in each gym, it becomes apparent that these cultures see intuitive negotiations of subtle and complex micro-geographies. The distribution and cooperation of young Asian and white bodies amidst pulsating physical cultures, suggests that these gyms are patently not the urban white fortresses of local repute.

Butterworth ABC is a pseudonym for an amateur boxing club near Burnley town centre. Butterworth is run by a committee of trainers led by the gym manager, Donald,[59] the club's charismatic figurehead who fixes and promotes matches for his young charges across North West England. The gym is attended by boxers of a range of ages, from the youngest at eight years old to men in their fifties. Every week-day evening, the gym is alive with men engaged in complicated and affectively charged practices; punching bags, skipping ropes, shadow boxing, sparring, working pads, twisting sit ups, press ups and many more besides. All of the gym members are male, the only female presence being mothers, sisters or girlfriends who turn up to watch training.

Butterworth conspicuously draws together young people from across the town's divided constituency. However, of the elite group of fifteen or so competitive fighters, only two are Asian. Furthermore, of the much greater number of men who are there to train, rather than to compete, most are apparently members of

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[59] All characters in the following ethnographies are also referred to by pseudonyms.

Burnley's white majority. Of an evening, the gym might be used by thirty or more men, of whom typically five or fewer are Asian. The gym-floor sees a differential play between the subtle operation of race and eye-catching performances of masculinity, as an inspiring social order is cooperatively achieved by young white and Asian men.

Curzon Gym is a pseudonym for a bodybuilding gym in Burnley. Curzon is owned by Gav, a former professional bodybuilder. A small group of close friends act as Gav's training partners and help him run the gym. They work together to tidy metal plates and bars away, collect money and do the endless ad hoc maintenance needed to keep the ageing building and equipment together and in running order. Curzon Gym is nominally open from 4pm until 8pm every week night. Men come in to train throughout the evening, stopping usually for one or two hours, during which time they socialise and engage in demanding physical exercises; calf raises, bench flies, French presses, hack squats, forced reps and drop-sets, amongst many other techniques.

Until around 7.30pm, the gym-floor is attended fairly exclusively by white bodybuilders. However, the following half hour typically sees Asian men come in to train, often in relatively large groups, perhaps of five or more. The gym-floor suddenly fills with new people, sometimes speaking a different language, whilst the radio is retuned to a local Asian station. The gym's atmosphere assumes a fragility as a variety of personalities carefully undertake the passing over of the achievement of inspired social order. Gav leaves a set of the gym keys with the newcomers, whom he trusts to pay and lock up when they have finished training. Just as is the case in Butterworth ABC, during the nightly transition period race goes unspoken and intercultural interactions are achieved. Yet similarly as in Butterworth, a subtly raced micro-geography operates in the interstices of a conspicuously male inspirational culture, conditioning the political ambiguity of the intercultural affiliations seen therein.

3.2 Research practice

Participation in training at Butterworth ABC and Curzon Gym took place over a six month period, from the beginning of January through to the end of June 2006. Having spoken to the owners of the respective gyms on previous visits to Burnley, the author was able to quickly establish a routine whereby one or both of these gyms were attended every weekday evening.[60] An initially 'low key' presence was established in each gym (see Laurier: 2003, p.138). The author focused upon participating in, and becoming familiar with, the training techniques and social arrangements underway. Ethnomethodology recommends the instructive value of a sense of being 'out of place' and of making breaches in established social conventions. However, these cultural venues are complex, and one must participate in them for some time before an appropriate skill of ethnographic looking may be cultivated. The author gradually learnt to apprehend the movement of inspiration through these gyms, and began to appreciate the personalities, abilities and social possibilities alive therein. Chapters 5 and 6 aim to illustrate sufficient familiarity with these complex cultures to seriously trouble generic notions of the disaffection and uncomplicated ethnic isolation of Burnley's young white men.

Gaining a familiarity with these gyms required that, for the most part, the author did not appear strange during participation (Lofland and Lofland: 1995, p.72). Boxing and bodybuilding cultures emerge from legacies that engender proscriptive rules regarding behaviour and appearance. Taking written notes whilst boxing in Butterworth would have seemed very strange indeed. Accordingly, observations were memorised during evenings spent at the gym. Mental maps were built, connecting mnemonic narratives and triggers that were quickly copied out after returning home to Burnley Wood. In Curzon, it is more common for bodybuilders to keep records of their workouts, and so some shorthand notes could be taken in the margins of the author's training diary. The

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[60] During the day, time was spent reflecting upon the previous evening, as well as engaging in archive research in Burnley Public Library.

author observed and learnt to participate in the maintenance of social order. Encounters with a failure to do so were found 'genuinely', and indeed frequently. Pre-meditated breaching experiments are likely to be contrived from assumptions as to what counts as the most salient features of social order for participants. The preconceptions likely to be brought to boxing and bodybuilding cultures might corroborate notions of aggressive male youths, or else a romantic reverie on working class self reliance and heroic individuality, the latter being a particular danger regarding the critique set out in this thesis.

Over this six month period, description of practical and conversational minutiae gave way to briefer, more insightful notes. Rather than deciding to move to a 'higher' stage of note taking (Wolcott: 2001, p.99), more penetrative insights were allowed to emerge from a growing familiarity with the personalities and cultures at play. This strategy reflects a broader commitment to approach these venues as one might do without the purposes of social science in mind. This is no ambition to get closer to genuine experience or to access a truer knowledge. A tolerance of ethnographic and political ambiguity is not a naive empiricism; the experiences of the men using these gyms are not expected to shine with an authenticity that will chase away the myth of disaffected young whites. Rather, the possibility of persuading young men of their stake in Burnley's future is proffered as a version of empirical accountability. Where visions for Burnley's future strike young white men as plausible *and* desirable, those visions will be better equipped to bear traction upon their sentiments. Furthermore, those futures will be more likely to come to pass with these men as contributors to, rather than unwilling or unwitting passengers in, a better Burnley.

Gaining an intimacy with the men using these gyms became a means of debunking the aloofness of a generic notion of disaffection. The author developed friendships with men in Butterworth and Curzon. An affection grew for these places, where so many evenings were spent. Yet neither these ties, nor the intellectual commitment to a persuasive political dynamic, should be

mistaken for an ambition to share 'ownership' of research so as to avoid construing these men as passive subjects (Pain: 2004, p.652). The author's observant participation in these gyms is not an attempt to dissolve boundaries between identities of academic, activist and person (Fuller: 1999). The thesis adds a voice to debate over what has been diagnosed as an 'apparent neglect of material practices and relevance' (Pain: 2003, p.649) in post cultural-turn geography. Yet this need not prompt return to familiar 'participatory' conventions, nor to ambitions for subjects to validate research outputs (see Bradshaw: 2001). An ambition to recognise young white men as politically capable does not require articulable confirmation on their part that the research process and output have been rationally understood.

Accordingly, the author's participation was not planned as that of an outsider, nor as that of an insider (Jorgensen: 1989, p.93, Lofland and Lofland: 1995, Hoggart et al: 2002), nor as explicitly either covert or overt (see Wolcott: 2001). The purposes of research were not made explicit to participants. Although aspects of it arose in conversation, the topic was typically met with disinterest. At times, guilt vaguely clung to a feeling of not having been exhaustively honest with men the author spent a lot of time with and grew close to. But the bonds of affection shared with them were real, and lasting, in a way that a ground-clearing exercise in explaining purpose would have precluded. A fixation upon explaining the research would have compromised experiences to which access is better gained as a prospective fighter and bodybuilder. Contemplating an approach that relied on an 'up front', would-be thorough setting out of purpose, felt like an embryonic practice in enlightenment; as though the research was not morally valid until an intellectual accommodation had been reached between the author and the other men. If reasoning proportionate to the specific issue at hand gives ethnographic research its moral meaning (Angrosio and Mays de Perez: 2000, p.692), then a discreet approach to this research should not be seen as duplicitous, or as not only or unjustifiably duplicitous.