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# **Race and becoming: the emergent materialities of race in everyday multiculture**

**Daniel James Swanton**

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**A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for  
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

07 JUN 2007

**Department of Geography  
Durham University  
2007**



## Abstract

This thesis draws on ethnographic fieldwork in Keighley, West Yorkshire, to interrogate the turbulent sociality of everyday multicultures and the temporary, but recursive fixings of race on the ground in interaction. Arguing that the routine framing of race as a social construct in the social sciences has had a ‘deadening effect’ on our academic talk about race, this study takes a line of flight from social constructionist and abolitionist arguments by addressing the underside of intercultural relations in Keighley through questions of experimentation. Repeatedly questioning what race does and how race functions, this research develops a non-determinist, non-essentialist conception of race that continuously takes form through heterogeneous processes of differentiation in moments of intercultural encounter. The thesis develops an ontology of race that grasps how race is simultaneously fluid and fixing, as it momentarily takes form through arrangement bodies, things and spaces. Coupling this conception of race with theorisations of thinking as a layered, practical and distributed activity, I assemble a conception of race thinking as thought-in-action. Here race thinking is an outcome of, and distributed across, an entanglement with the world and opens up the half-second delay as a space of prejudice during which the push of race sorts bodies, things and spaces, and coordinates thinking and action.

Three empirical chapters each take a different materiality as a point of entry into the dynamic socialities of intercultural relations. A chapter on bodies examines the tendencies and distributions of differently raced bodies on the ground in Keighley. This chapter argues that bodies do not have race, but they become raced as the heterogeneous elements that constitute bodies emerge as sites of intensive difference in interaction. A chapter on the car questions how race rides on the car to examine the force of things in race thinking, and track how suspicion and innuendo stick to, and circulate through, particular objects. The final empirical chapter constructs a topographical approach to urban multiculturalism to evoke the life, passion and intensities of living with difference. The momentum accumulated through these perspectives works towards a distinct understanding how race is *done* in Keighley. Through the cumulative force of these chapters I begin to reconstruct understandings of urban multiculturalism from below, emphasising how urban multiculturalism in Keighley is practised, visceral and felt.

### **Declaration**

None of the material included in this thesis has been previously submitted for a degree at Durham University or at any other university.

### **Statement of Copyright**

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# Chapter One

## Introduction

### Multiculture from below

Early evening. The rush hour traffic is dying down as I climb West Lane, walking away from the town centre. Ahead there's a pub. The windows are boarded up, but the sign is unmistakable. **The Reservoir Tavern.** The sign stirs fragmented recollections that haemorrhage into consciousness. Recent histories of BNP racism in Keighley. Stories about grooming, criminality, disrespect, racist attacks on whites, drugs, gangs, no-go areas, neglect. Sensational headlines in the national news portraying Keighley as a racist town. *Keighley Together*, a coalition formed to keep the BNP out of Keighley.<sup>1</sup>

Turning left, I make my way along an overgrown path. After a couple of minutes negotiating brambles and litter I emerge opposite Malsis Road. Crossing Oakworth Road and walking into this neighbourhood of somewhat tired Victorian terraces there is a palpable shift in the mood of the place. Salwar kemeez drying on lines strung across back streets; dormer windows betraying the extension of living space into the loft; the rhythmic thuds of bass beats escape a Honda Civic pulled up by the side of the road; children playing in the street; aromas of toasting spices; park gates; a small shop with posters for a Lollywood film in the window; small groups of Asian men leaning on a wall chatting, greeting passers-by they recognise with 'Salaam' and handshakes... These elements all contribute to the distinct resonances of this space. Lund Park. A no-go area for white people? After a series of attacks on whites raced memories and affects seem to hang heavily over the park. In conversations in and around Keighley I was repeatedly told that the park was a no-go area. The territory of violent Asian gangs. A place to be avoided after nightfall. An intimidating space. But on this summer evening – under intense sunlight – the park hardly corresponded to the terrorising imaginative geographies conjured through urban myth, gossip and newspaper reports. But race still emerged immanently through the arrangements of bodies, things and surroundings in the park. Raced differences surfaced through the relative slowness of Asian bodies clustering by the park gates, hanging out and chatting; through the brisk walk, pale skin and clothing of a lone woman cutting through the park, her gaze fixed in front of her; or through the vigilance of bowling club members, hurriedly finishing games and escaping the park in their cars before dusk falls.

The momentum of raced differences in Keighley was compelling. This brief sketch of the psychogeographical relief of a purposeful drift through two urban contact zones in

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<sup>1</sup> The Reservoir Tavern was the venue of a British National Party meeting that was secretly filmed by an undercover journalist for a BBC documentary. In the footage, Nick Griffin, leader of the BNP, is caught stating that Muslims in Keighley were drugging and raping white girls and that the Qur'an sanctioned such behaviour (*Keighley News*, 20.01.2006). The film has been submitted as evidence in two court cases brought against Griffin for inciting racial hatred.



Keighley begins to evoke this momentum, but also the plasticity of race as it temporarily fixes bodies, things and spaces.<sup>2</sup> Through the affective contours twisting through these inner city neighbourhoods we might become attuned, I argue, to the underside of everyday inter-ethnic relations, and how race takes form fleetingly, but continuously, in moments of intercultural encounter. For me, the momentum of raced difference on the ground in Keighley disturbed the routine framing of race as a problem of epistemology across the social sciences. In particular, it seems to me that presenting race as a social construct (Miles and Brown, 1989; Jackson and Penrose, 1993; Kobayashi and Peake, 2000) and recent arguments for the abolition of race (Gilroy, 1998; Ware and Back, 2002) have had a ‘deadening effect’ on our academic talk about race, narrowing our empirical focus to discourses, narratives and representations and constraining analyses to the categorical politics of identity and the extraction of textual meaning (Thrift and Dewsbury, 2000). In this research I locate race in an emergent materialism, developing an assertively non-essentialist and non-determinist concept of race through which I examine the turbulent interactions of urban multicultural. The account of everyday multicultural I construct through these sensibilities is attentive to the immanent ways in which race come to matter in encounters with other bodies, but also how race emerges through the force of things and the resonances that charge some spaces. Tracking the enduring significance of race in everyday lives in Keighley and heterogeneous practices of racialisation on the ground involves an attentiveness then not only to accumulations of bodily encounter – be they happy, distracted, indifferent, respectful, lustful, suspicious, tolerant, fearful, engaged, etc – and the tendencies of some bodies to stick together (while simultaneously repelling other bodies), but also how raced affects and memories seem to congeal around particular things (souped-up cars, veils, pubs signs, calls for prayer, street names, Lollywood posters, graffiti,

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<sup>2</sup> This sketch is an exercise in what Marc Augé (1999) has called ethno-fiction, and is constructed from ethnographical fieldnotes, photoethnography, interview material, informal conversations and newspaper archives.

and so on) and specific arrangements of bodies, things and surroundings. And so my ethnography foregrounds an ontology of encounter and the distinct and heterogeneous ways in which race comes to matter as bodies, things and spaces are encountered in Keighley. It seeks to grasp the affective life of urban multicultures by foregrounding the dynamic sociality of contact zones and the heterogeneous materialities of the actual places people inhabit and pass through. It recognises then that everyday multicultures are fleshy and visceral. They are embodied, practiced and felt. The cumulative effect of these sensibilities is, I suggest, an appreciation of everyday multiculturalism and the immanent taking form of race that exceeds conventional accounts of the multicultural city and the racialised urban. For me, everyday multiculturalism is never just about segregation and 'parallel lives' (Bradford Race Review Team, 2001), building 'cohesive communities' (Community Cohesion Review Team, 2001; Cattle, 2005), dystopian spaces of terror and paranoid, panicked urbanism (Virilio, 2005; Graham, 2004; Flusty, 1997; Sharma and Sharma, 2000), identity politics (Modood, 2005), agonistic publics and counterpublics (Amin, 2002a), urban governance (Sandercock, 2003; Keith, 2005) or inter-ethnic conflict and territorialisations of urban space (Back, 1996; 2005). It is about all of these and more, as my excursions through the turbulent interactions that constitute the underside of inter-ethnic relations in Keighley will hopefully demonstrate.

### **Keighley**

During the spring and summer of 2001 urban disturbances hit a number of Northern mill towns. The disturbances between young British Asian men and the (predominately white) police forces in Oldham, Burnley and Bradford were quickly fused and unhelpfully inserted into a genealogy of urban 'race riots' stretching back at least to Notting Hill riots in 1958

by politicians, media commentators, 'race relations' specialists, and some academics.<sup>3</sup> The disturbances, and the inevitable post-mortems of the events in reports, media commentary and academic writing, reinvigorated and refocused ongoing debates convened around the meanings, uses and limits of multiculturalism in Britain.<sup>4</sup> In particular, the unrest in these former mill towns animated and circulated images of violent and criminal masculine youth cultures among young British Muslims (variously related to drugs and racist attacks on whites); licensed the insidious questioning of national belonging and the cultural allegiances of British Muslims through invocations of segregation, 'parallel lives' and accusations of a 'failure' to integrate (that were soon further aggravated by the terror atrocities of September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001); and provided a fertile terrain for attacks on state-led policies of multiculturalism. Claire Alexander (2004) has written that narratives of 'irreconcilable cultural difference' have been a common thread woven through many 'explanations' of the urban disturbances, and discussions of events have regularly centred on the divided and divisive geographies – a patchwork of ghettos, no-go areas, and white suburbs – that only serve to reinforce perceptions of unbridgeable cultural differences and incompatibility.

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<sup>3</sup> Inserting these urban disturbances into genealogies of urban unrest in post-war Britain erases the specific histories and geographies of the violence in Oldham, Burnley and Bradford. Moreover, in the rush to 'explain' these events many commentators focussed on self-segregation, generational conflict, youth violence and failures to integrate (Commission for Community Cohesion, 2001) eliding the multiple material deprivations, high unemployment, multiple racisms, rage and sense of hopelessness that sustained what Kundnani (2001) has called 'violence of the violated'. Some accounts, have however, gone against the grain emphasising, for example, the multiple violations that fuelled the unrest (Kundnani, 2001), deconstructing the emergent moral panics produced around sensationalist renderings of British Asian masculinities (Alexander, 2004) and attempts to imagine multicultural futures through the agonistic politics of 'prosaic sites of cultural exchange and transformation' rather than the policy prescriptions of 'building cohesive communities' (Amin, 2002a, p.959).

<sup>4</sup> In the years before the 2001 disturbances debates around 'multiculturalism' had been agitated most notably by Sir William Macpherson's excoriating exposure of institutional racisms in the Metropolitan Police in his report (1999) into the murder of Stephen Lawrence and the publication of the Runnymede Trust's report into 'The Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain' in 2000. While Macpherson's report set a new benchmark for combating racisms in Britain enshrined in the Race Relations (Amendment) Act in 2000 (Bourne, 2001; Back *et al.*, 2002), the Runnymede Report provoked hostile reactions from both the political left and right. Indeed, Back *et al.* (2002) have noted: "It was telling that in the aftermath of the publication of the report into *The Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain*, the then Home Secretary Jack Straw countered the suggestion that Britishness was intertwined with visions of whiteness and racism by invoking opportunistically George Orwell's defence of patriotism and Englishness in much the same way that Conservative Prime Minister John Major had done in the early nineties. Anxieties around the meaning of British/Englishness produce both manic and euphoric outbursts of defensive nationalistic zeal under New Labour."

Notwithstanding the problematic nature of the kinds of accounts that Alexander (2004) is talking about – and in particular their failure to situate unrest within the contexts of entrenched economic deprivation; labour market discriminations; and popular, police and institutional racism (Kundnani, 2001; Amin, 2002a & b) – the repeated emphasis on the causes of disturbances in the mill towns made uncomfortable reading in Keighley. There was no unrest in Keighley during 2001 – although a number of young Asian men from the town were arrested and later sentenced for involvement in the disturbances in Bradford, and their ‘mug shots’ were circulated widely in the local press – but the town was marked by local cultures of exclusion and exclusivity, entrenched inter-ethnic suspicions, jealousies and resentments, and was witnessing the increased criminalisation of young British Pakistani men (Webster, 1995; 1997).

Located just eight miles north of Bradford along the Aire Valley, Keighley was first drawn into colonial circuits of textile capitalism with the extension of the Leeds to Liverpool canal in 1773.<sup>5</sup> Forty years after the mills began to decline in Keighley the town continues to be dominated by the ghosts of the textile industries that are etched into urban fabric through the grandiose architecture of tired civic buildings, imposing mills lying in varying states of dereliction, back-to-back terraces, but also through the churches, cultural centres and mosques that are testimony to the mundane, everyday cosmopolitanism of the place. Everyday multiculturalism in Keighley is inescapably tangled with the importance of textile capitalism to the town. From the mid-nineteenth century onwards the mills attracted migrants from Ireland, and then later from Italy. The next significant arrivals came from Poland, Lithuania and Ukraine in the immediate aftermath of Second World War as a result

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<sup>5</sup> From the beginning of the industrial revolution the histories of the northern mill towns was profoundly entangled with British colonialism and imperialism. Kundnani (2001, p.106) explains: ‘Cotton-spinning – on which the towns’ early success was based – was a technology, borrowed from India, which became central to the emergence of northern England as the ‘factory of the world’. Cotton grown in the plantations of the Caribbean, the US deep South, or the fields of Bengal was brought to Lancashire and Yorkshire to be spun into cloth and sold back at a profit to the empire. This was a global trade before globalisation.’

of mass population displacements in Central and Eastern Europe and labour shortages in Keighley. From the 1950s onwards demands for cheap labour to maintain international competitiveness in the textiles industries were met by migration from the Mirpur district of the newly formed Pakistan.<sup>6</sup> However, from the mid-1960s onwards the textile industries in Britain became unsustainable in the face of international competition, and the labour market in Keighley collapsed. Arun Kundnani (2001, p.106) communicates the impact of this collapse of local employment bases in northern mill towns, stating:

As the mills decline, entire towns were left on the scrap-heap. White and black workers were united in their unemployment. The only future now for the Asian communities lay in the local service economy. A few brothers would pool their savings and set up shop, a restaurant or take-away. Otherwise there was minicabbing, with long hours and the risk of violence, often racially motivated. With the end of the textile industry, the largest employers were now the public services but discrimination kept most of these jobs for whites.

(Kundnani, 2001, p.106)

With the decline of the mills, Keighley experienced mass unemployment, severe socioeconomic deprivation, and economic insecurity (Kalra, 2000; Kundnani, 2001; Amin, 2002a). Furthermore, Amin (2002a, p.962) has argued more generally of northern mill towns that '[e]conomic collapse removed the workplace as a central site of integration and common fate'.<sup>7</sup> While we might contest the degree to which mills provided sites for prosaic intercultural exchange – if only due to the routine segregation of day and night shifts – it is undeniable that the material hardships and intense competition for often 'precarious' jobs in the service sector followed the mill closures and intensified inter-ethnic resentments and conflict (Kalra, 2000). And economic marginality and resentments were only amplified, as Amin (2002a, p.962) notes, with the circulation of stories that white

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<sup>6</sup> Migration from the Mirpur District of the disputed Azad Kashmir of Pakistan has transformed the everyday cosmopolitanism of the town. In terms of numbers, the 2001 census records a total population of 44,927 in the three Keighley wards of which 36,237 (80.7%) self-reported as white, 6,642 (14.8%) as Pakistani or British Pakistani, and 983 (2.2%) as Bangladeshi or British Bangladeshi.

<sup>7</sup> Here Amin echoes an argument made by Arun Kundnani (2001, p.106), who suggests: 'The textile industry was the common thread binding the white and Asian working class into a single social fabric. But with its collapse, each community was forced to turn inwards on to itself.'

people were getting the best jobs or benefiting most from public housing provision, and Asian families were receiving more welfare support (see also Kalra, 2000).

From the late 1970s the collapse of the local labour market, coupled with the growth of the Mirpuri community in the town and the coming of age of British-born Pakistanis, transformed the texture of everyday multiculturalism in the town. Today what is remarkable about multiculturalism in Keighley is the prosaic syncretism that emerges through the fusion of disparate influences, and includes street vernaculars that incorporate English, Urdu, but also slang from Hip Hop; prosaic, and often fraught, negotiations of cultural practices around *izzat* (family honour) and marriage; curry becoming a staple in the local diet; youth cultures of conspicuous consumption and the body beautiful that variously envelops working out, designer clothes, expensive fragrances, flash cars and the latest mobile phone; and a growing assertiveness about distinct modes of national belonging, where being British also 'includes Islam, halal meat, family honour and cultural resources located in diaspora networks' (Amin, 2002a, p.965; Alam, 2006). However, years of prosaic cultural negotiation and exchange do not appear to have generated a confident and agonistic cosmopolitanism in Keighley. Instead moments of intercultural encounter and hybrid practices appear to sit alongside, and even aggravate, inter-ethnic suspicions and resentments in the town, entrenching local cultures of exclusion and exclusivity.

In recent years as discussions undermining multiculturalism, widespread Islamophobia, worries about unruly strangers and home-grown suicide bombers, and demands for greater 'community cohesion' have become a daily feature of the political landscape, Keighley seems to have come under scrutiny as (yet another) northern mill town where multiculturalism was going badly wrong. This is not to say that Keighley is any better or worse than many other northern mill towns. But in Keighley the unhappy underside of

inter-ethnic relations and frictions of everyday multicultural have been amplified through a number of events that have publicised local cultures of exclusion and exclusivity. Here, I focus on talk of segregation, mantras of cultural difference, moral panics and the far right to briefly expose the dark-side of multicultural from below in Keighley. These four lines of inquiry track how local cultures of exclusion and exclusivity are nurtured by white flight to surrounding villages, unneighbourly intimidation, fierce competition for scarce local government resources, and house moves determined by school catchment areas, and how ingrained prejudices and intense suspicions and resentments have been variously fuelled by economic deprivation, high unemployment and circulating gossip, rumour and newspaper stories about drugs, Asian gangs, British National Party activism, welfare cheats, paedophile rings, and racist attacks.

### *Segregation*

Local cultures of exclusion and exclusivity in Keighley surface graphically through talk of segregation, and popular geographical imaginations that divide urban space into a patchwork White and Asian neighbourhoods, familiar and strange areas, go and no-go areas, zones of safety and danger. In Keighley – as with other northern mill towns – much has been made recently of a ‘very worrying drift to self-segregation’ (Community Cohesion Review Team, 2001) among British Muslims. These pernicious arguments about the social, cultural and spatial avoidances of British Muslims trade in essentialist constructions of religious, family and cultural life, fail to engage with how the supposedly isolated Muslim spaces are entangled with the daily rhythms, routines and geographies of all residents in places like Keighley in numerous prosaic sites of everyday inter-ethnic contact (Phillips, 2006), and ignore the cultural insularity and practices avoidances performed by white people (Kundnani, 2001; Simpson 2004). These accounts tend to ignore the complex dynamics of housing markets variously involving ‘white flight’ backed by the local state’



(Kundnani, 2001, p.107) to the suburbs and council estates on the edge of the town, leaving Asians to congregate in the poor, run-down inner city areas, where house prices were deflated as white people rushed to escape, and there was relative safety from racist harassment and violence (Kundnani, 2001; Amin, 2002a). Instead segregation is routinely framed as a symptom of desires for cultural insularity as Asians retreat to, and 'take over', inner city areas like Lawkholme Lane and Highfields, to 'preserve diaspora traditions and Muslim values' (Amin, 2002a, p.963). Segregation is a staple of newspaper stories, rumour and gossip in Keighley, overplaying and sensationalising perceptions of insular attitudes of some British Muslims, and a multitude of intimidating practices designed to force remaining white residents out of 'Asian areas', defend turf through vigilante attacks and establish no-go areas for whites.<sup>8</sup> At the same time too little seems to be said about the racist practices of local housing authorities and estate agents, or white flight to the suburbs and surrounding villages like Haworth to escape ethnic contamination and sustain white supremacist fantasies of a culturally pure white Englishness (Amin, 2002a; Hage, 1998). The dynamics of segregation in housing also results in segregation in the school system, as schools tend to become either predominately Asian or predominantly white, and the potential for prosaic intercultural exchange and transgression are lost (Fortier, 2003; Amin, 2002b). And so while I am troubled by the recent resuscitation of the correlation between social and geographical distance in provocative talk of 'parallel lives' (Bradford Race Review Team, 2001), or in 'explanations' of urban disturbances (Community Cohesion Review Team, 2001; Cattle, 2005; cf. Simpson, 2005; Phillips, 2006) or home-grown suicide bombers, the material and imaginative geographies of segregation in Keighley betray local practices of exclusion and exclusivity within both white and Asian

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<sup>8</sup> Recent headlines in the local newspaper, the *Keighley News*, have included, 'Man attacked by racist gang' (04.10.2002), 'Park bowlers intimidated' (12.04.2002), or 'Councillor is too frightened to walk streets' (02.11.2001). The momentum of these kinds stories in Keighley is striking, and has been amplified further as the British National Party has sought to exploit the local cultures of exclusion and exclusivity and the prejudices, jealousies and suspicions that inevitably nurture.

communities, and providing social contexts in which mutual suspicion and myths can and have flourished.<sup>9</sup> This research intervenes in debates around segregation, troubling a current policy obsession with mixed neighbourhoods and intercultural engagement (Community Cohesion Review Team; Cattle, 2005; Barrow Cadbury Trust and The Young Foundation, 2006) by exposing the multiple geographies of white avoidance in the town, and by subtly tracing the modalities and intensities through which differently raced bodies already come together in many prosaic sites of intercultural contact in Keighley.

### *Cultural difference*

The unhappy dark side of everyday inter-ethnic relations in Keighley has also been foregrounded in various accounts of life in the northern mill town that reproduce perceptions of unbridgeable cultural differences between whites and Asians by evoking family traditions, faith, language, the oppression of women, youth violence, abstention from alcohol, veils, halal meat (Amin, 2002a; Fortier, 2003; Phillips, 2006). Here, I focus on two particular ways in which mantras of cultural difference have been located in Keighley, beginning with the realist film *Yasmin* (2004) written by Simon Beaufoy, before moving on to look at a series of statements made by the town's MP. *Yasmin* (2004) constructs a portrait of a British Muslim woman coming to terms with her identities in a generic northern mill town after September 11<sup>th</sup> 2001. While the film is set in an unnamed location, *Yasmin* was shot in and around Keighley, and its author grew up in a village just

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<sup>9</sup> In the thesis in a discussion of the topographies of multicultural touch, I develop a critique of how violent events such as the urban disturbances in 2001 and the July 7<sup>th</sup> 2005 terror attacks in London have often breathed new life into discussions of race and residential segregation. I argue that invocations of 'parallel lives' (Bradford Race Review Team, 2001) or demands to 'build cohesive communities' (Community Cohesion Review Team, 2001) overlook the multiple modalities and intensities through which inter-ethnic contact already takes place in urban multicultures, and all too often display worrying underlying assumptions of cultural fixity and homogeneity between white and Asian (Amin, 2002a) as they suggest that civil unrest or terror attacks might be explained by segregation and cultural insularity and might be remedied through *more* interaction and 'community cohesion'. Through topographies of multicultural touch I produce an account of urban multiculturalism that steps beyond the imaginative geographies of the segregated city by tracking more precisely some of the 'billions of happy and unhappy encounters' (Thrift, 1999, p.302) in varied urban settings, and the affective contours, that constitute everyday multicultures.

outside the town. *Yasmin* is in many ways a compelling film that begins to engage with daily lives contorted by racism and Islamophobia, forced marriages and family honour, Islamic fundamentalism, terrorism, drugs and intercultural contact. The film provides some touching moments of multicultural getting along,<sup>10</sup> but it slides too easily in the prescriptive dilemma of a young woman trapped between two apparently fixed and incompatible cultures. *Yasmin* is the contrived story of a wilful young Muslim woman caught in a loveless forced marriage, coping with her father's demands that family honour to be upheld at all costs, who drives a Golf GTI, changes out of salwar kameez on the way to work and disguises the fact that she does not drink alcohol when out with work colleagues. But September 11<sup>th</sup> 2001 turns Yasmin's life upside down. She is forced to come to terms with her Muslimness in the face of rising Islamophobia and racism that include harassment at work and a police raid on her home (her husband is arrested on suspicion of being a terrorist), a flirtatious friendship with a white colleague falls apart, and Yasmin decides to wear the hijab. At the same time we witness Yasmin's teenage brother undergoing a parallel journey, morphing from a bad boy smoking cannabis and seducing white girls to a young jihadi brainwashed by a group of Islamicist fundamentalists. Through the tissue of experiences and relationships *Yasmin* self-consciously addresses the turbulent socialities of everyday multiculturalism in a political atmosphere charged by fear and suspicion. However, in the end hints of the multiple racisms infecting everyday lives, moments of uneasy intercultural exchange and banal transgressions, give way too easily to a series of clichés, reinforcing perceptions of inescapable cultural difference in places like Keighley.

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<sup>10</sup> For example, in an unscripted scene that nevertheless made the directors cut, they were filming Yasmin chasing off a group of white boys harassing another Muslim woman in a Keighley shopping centre when spontaneously a white woman comes up to the strangers and apologises for the boys' behaviour.

The unhappy underside of inter-ethnic relations in Keighley, and mantras of cultural difference, also surface regularly in comments and statements made by Keighley's outspoken MP, Ann Cryer. Cryer's interventions include her forthright criticisms of the oppression of Asian women through the patriarchal organisation of Keighley's Mirpuri communities and practices of forced marriage. After the 2001 urban disturbances, she joined calls for British Muslims to integrate and become less 'self-segregated', forging a direct connection between arranged marriages with spouses from Pakistan and difficulties in learning English, poverty and the riots (*Guardian*, 12.07.2001). She has also publicly worried about the emergence of 'no-go areas' in Keighley (*Keighley News*, 11.10.2002). More recently still in October 2006 Cryer sided with Jack Straw after he had ignited a controversial debate around veils by revealing that he asked Muslim women to remove veils during constituency surgeries and that he saw veils making 'community relations more difficult' (*Guardian*, 02.11.2006). Cryer declared that she too viewed veils as an assertion of cultural separateness. Although undoubtedly well-meaning, I think these interventions betray the weakness of multiculturalism and a new assimilationism in Britain today (Back *et al.*, 2002) and Ann Cryer's willingness to take up the position of 'white multiculturalist', imagining herself as a gate-keeper to national belonging, where the nation is imaged to be structured around white culture (Hage, 1998, p.18). Ann Cryer's interventions can be broadly framed in terms of demands that her Muslim constituents integrate (socially, culturally, spatially) into the norms of white culture, reproducing and ingraining perceptions of irreconcilable cultural differences in ways that have often aggravated inter-ethnic relations in the town. Reconstructing urban multiculturalism from below, this research begins to destabilise the repetitive expressions of cultural difference by tracking everyday prosaic negotiations of race, membership and belonging in urban contact zones, and identifying the emergence of local syncretic cultures.

## *Moral panic*

In recent times, 'Asian gangs' have emerged as the latest folk devil in the latest spasm of moral panics about racialised masculinities in Britain (Alexander, 2000; 2004; Hall *et al.*, 1978). Tendencies to criminalise young British Asian men through the excesses of bad boy masculinities tied to gangs have not passed Keighley by (Webster, 1997). The involvement of Asians in Keighley's active drugs culture regularly features in the *Keighley News*, but it was a series of four violent murders between September 2001 and February 2002 that fomented moral panic encouraged by a host of lurid headlines and coverage in the local and national press.<sup>11</sup> The killing of four young Asian men was reported as a violent 'turf war' between rival drug dealers, which was repeatedly taken as evidence that 'gangland warfare' had arrived on the streets of Keighley. Without diminishing these violent and horrifying attacks, I want to suggest that in their repeated storying on the pages of newspaper, on local news bulletins, and through gossip, rumour and hearsay, wrenched the events from their singularity, and served to amplify the threat and suspicion, criminalising all young Asian men in the town.<sup>12</sup> Moral panics about 'Asian gangs' in the town has not been restricted to drug related activities. Anxieties have also been exercised around perceptions of growing levels of vigilantism as young men have sort to defend their turf and exact revenge for racist attacks, around apparent increases in unprovoked racist attacks on white people in some areas of Keighley, and the involvement of Asian men in the grooming of under-age white girls for sex with alcohol and drugs. Without deviating into a deconstruction of this latest incarnation of the folk devil, my research focuses on the

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<sup>11</sup> For example in July 2002 the *Observer* (14.07.2002) ran a special investigation sensationally entitled 'Deadly Asian heroin gangs carve up lucrative trade', which examined drugs cultures among young British Asians and focussed largely on recent events in Keighley.

<sup>12</sup> Moreover, coverage has tended to over-emphasise the role of young British Asian men as dealers and their extravagant lifestyles, while at the same time neglecting pressing, and largely invisible, issues of drug use and abuse by Asians in Keighley. For example, when a research project jointly sponsored by Project 6, a Keighley service provider for addicts, and the University of Central Lancashire was published the local press ignored the primary focus of the report which was the extent of drug abuse among young Asians in Keighley, when they ran a front page article on the lifestyles of Asian dealers in the town that had appeared as a brief aside in the report (*Keighley News*, 16.06.2005).

performative repertoires of moral panics and how the multiple tellings of Asian criminality in and around Keighley – through lurid headlines, infectious rumour and gossip, court lists and so on – scatter affective energies (fear, suspicion, resentment, envy...) that anticipate and mediate encounters. And so this research works towards understandings of what moral panics do in interaction as they stick to some bodies and not others.

In addition, through the intensification and circulation fear, suspicion and rage after the July 7<sup>th</sup> bombings and the sobering realisation that three of the four suicide bombers who had carried out the terror attacks in London had been born and brought up in Leeds and Dewsbury, we can begin to trace the anatomy of a new moral panic. Superficial similarities between the lives of these bombers in terms of their experiences of education, material deprivation, racisms, religion, family traditions and transnational ties with Pakistan with many young British-born Pakistanis in Keighley amplified fears and suspicions in the days and weeks after the bombings. Indeed, the heightened fears and suspicions that saturated the state of emergency following the London terror attacks even led to an extraordinary ‘terror alert’ in Haworth, when four ‘Asian looking’ tourists were mistaken as potential suicide bombers.

### *The far right*

The intensity of inter-ethnic suspicion and resentment in Keighley appeared to be confirmed in May 2004, when two British National Party candidates were elected onto the local council. In the run up to the election Keighley was thrust under the gaze of the national media as Nick Griffin attempted to hijack the Channel 4 documentary *Edge of the City*, claiming that the programme, which included an investigation into the grooming of under-age white girls for sex by a ‘gang’ of Asian men in their twenties and thirties in Keighley, was a party political broadcast for the BNP. The programme was due to be aired

on the eve of the local elections, but was pulled from the schedule and shown later that summer. In the tumultuous media coverage that followed Keighley gained a reputation for uneasy inter-ethnic relations and the story became unmoored from the issues on the ground, particularly as accounts routinely failed to emphasise that paedophiles involved in grooming were both white and Asian, and that the problem was (belatedly) being tackled. Soon after the local elections, the BBC screened secret filming of an undercover investigation of the activities of the British National Party in and around Keighley. *The Secret Agent* footage shattered attempts by the British National Party to cultivate a mainstream image under the stewardship of leader Nick Griffin, exposing the virulent racism endemic within the party.<sup>13</sup> The film also caught a BNP activist bragging over a pint about his fantasy of firing a rocket propelled grenade into crowds of worshippers making their way to Friday prayers from one of the moors overlooking Keighley. When, in January 2005, Nick Griffin announced that he would contest the seat for Keighley in the General Election, it appeared that inter-ethnic tensions in the town were set to achieve unprecedented levels, with widespread anxieties that an aggressive and provocative campaign by the BNP risked inflaming mutual distrust and suspicion, and could incite a violent response from young British Muslims that might end in urban unrest. The BNP fought their campaign in Keighley on two fronts, exploiting white anxieties about Asian criminality, raising the spectre of moral panics around racist attacks on whites and grooming, and nurturing white resentments about the allocation of council investments (particularly in leisure facilities and housing improvement). In the end the BNP were far less effective than feared, in large part due to force of a broad based coalition, Keighley Together, that formed to repel the BNP.<sup>14</sup> However, the very presence of the BNP

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<sup>13</sup> The film was later used as evidence as Nick Griffin and Mack Collett, another BNP activist, were charged, and twice tried unsuccessfully with incitement of racial hatred.

<sup>14</sup> In the event Nick Griffin and the British National Party polled 4,240 or 9.2% of the electorate in Keighley in the 2005 General Election.

ensured that journalists and broadsheet columnists were drawn to the town – often for a matter of hours to snatch a few sound-bites and form perspectives on what they already *knew* was a troubled town – and stark headlines, articles, and feature reports seemed to confirm everyone’s suspicion that Keighley was the place where multiculturalism was going wrong.<sup>15</sup>

The activities of the British National Party certainly exposed a nasty side of everyday multiculturalism in Keighley, peddling nightmare visions of a town overrun by violent young Asian men drugging and raping white girls and exploiting inter-ethnic jealousies and resentments about allocation of local regeneration budgets. In similar ways to the unfolding of race politics in the Isle of Dogs in the early 1990s (Keith, 1995), recent British National Party campaigns, and reactions from mainstream political parties, have helped construct Keighley as a worrying aberration in geographies of British electoral politics. Keighley was portrayed a racist town. But the racism apparently endemic in the town was quarantined from the rest of society as it was routinely ‘explained’ that Keighley was a peculiarly remote, isolated and inward looking place, strikingly replicating Michael Keith’s (1995, p.557) observations around the portrayal of race politics in the Isle of Dogs as the national press fabricated images of a ‘primitive back water in the very heart of London’ and a ‘remote and organic isolated community’ to make sense of the force of race in local elections. Although the presence of the British National Party in Keighley inevitably situates this research, I work to get away from a focus on ‘spectacular’ racisms associated with Far Right organisations like the BNP by paying greater attention to the ‘push’ of race in the daily operations of race in Keighley, and how these relate to ‘silenced geographies of actual racism’ (Pred, 1998).

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<sup>15</sup> Commentaries included ‘Blame it on the Asians’ Madeleine Bunting (*Guardian*, 14.02.2005), ‘Griffin’s gang pops Labour’s balloons’ by David Aaronovitch (*Guardian*, 27.04.2005), and ‘Parties play race politics in Brontë country’ by Ian Herbert (*Independent*, 13.04.2005)



These narrations of recent events cannot help but evoke a sense of the uneasy and demanding realities of urban multiculturalism in Keighley. The happy and unhappy underside of inter-ethnic relations in the town open out into a tangle of emotive questions around race and multiculturalism in Britain, ranging from a ‘networked jumpiness’ (Massumi, 2005, p.32) about home-grown suicide bombers to the virulent racisms of the British National Party, from veils to the ‘bad’ masculinities of ‘Asian gangs’. These events situated my ethnographic fieldwork in Keighley during the spring and summer of 2005, and I return to them and the issues they throw up throughout the thesis. More explicitly, the research interrogates the turbulent intercultural interactions and micro-socialities of urban multiculturalism by foregrounding an ontology of encounter that imagines urban multiculturalities as particularly intense accumulations of intercultural encounter and exchange. In doing so, the research contributes to recent research working towards understanding everyday experiences of race and ethnicity, and multiculturalism from below (Back, 1996; Back and Nayak, 1999; Alexander, 2000; Nayak, 2003a), while developing innovative perspectives, arguments and understandings that are often at odds with contemporary political and conceptual thinking around issues of race, multiculturalism, segregation and terrorism in Britain.

### **The argument**

My engagement with the happy and unhappy underside of inter-ethnic relations in Keighley and commitment to examine the turbulent socialities of the contact zones that constitute everyday multiculturalities are informed by my failure to be entirely compelled by the very of best conceptual and political judgment that we have around issues of race, ethnicity and multiculturalism in Britain. Conceptually, I struggled – alongside many others (Goldberg, 1993; Gilroy, 1998; 2000) – to reconcile the routine insistence across the social sciences that ‘race’ is a social construct with the apparent momentum of raced differences

on the ground in Keighley. I have been inspired and persuaded by the impassioned politics of social constructionist (Jackson, 1987; Miles and Brown, 1989) and, more recently, abolitionist (Gilroy, 1998; 2000; Ware and Back, 2002) arguments that have sought to expose – and latterly transcend – the illusory, morally bankrupt and divisive nature of race. But the tendencies of these arguments to disavow the materialities through which race operates as they confine race to questions of epistemology and interpretation (How do we know race?) in ways that neglect questions of experimentation (How does race function? What does race do?) trouble me. In this research I work towards a non-determinist, non-essentialist, emergent conception of race located in a relational field that seeks to move on our academic talk about race and negotiate what Paul Gilroy (1998) has called the ‘pious ritual’ in which academics at first insist on the constructedness of race, before then deferring to its embeddedness as a social reality. My line of flight from conventions of presenting race as just a social construct, open up the possibilities for thinking about the force of race – always conceived in Deleuzian terms of a becoming – in practices of thinking as it comes to matter immanently, ephemerally, but also repeatedly in moments of encounter. I am absolutely not talking about a return to the deterministic regimes of differentiation and classification. Rather my conception of race encourages us to confront the fleeting emergence of race through the affective materialities of everyday multicultural – materialities that variously include skin, cars, rucksacks, street signs, newspapers, calls for prayer, and so on – as heterogeneous processes of racial differentiation unfold on the ground in interaction, and race mediates infuses and coordinates dispositions, judgments and actions. I am ontologising race within a relational field to track how some bodies and not others are feared as potential suicide bombers; are suspected as drug dealers; are seduced by the fantasies of the BNP; are routinely stopped by the police; are granted differential access to housing, education, health care and jobs; and so on.

These conceptual arguments around race and heterogeneous processes of racial differentiation have important implications for how we think about race and the multicultural city. In particular, they direct our analytical gaze to the affectivity and turbulence of everyday inter-ethnic interactions, pushing us to assemble perspectives on multiculturalism from below. Through this research I work towards a notion of urban multiculturalities as accumulations of ‘billions of happy and unhappy encounters’ (Thrift, 1999, p.302) that are constantly taking form and passing by in the prosaic ‘contact zones’ of places like Keighley. Multiculturalism from below looks quite different from conventional accounts of the multicultural city that have tended to dwell less on the realities of how urban multiculturalities are lived out (although for notable exceptions see Back, 1996; Back and Nayak, 1999; Alexander, 2000; Amin 2002a) and more on questions of how state sponsored policies of multiculturalism have played out in and through urban spaces, focusing, for example on residential segregation (Bradford Race Review Team, 2001; Simpson, 2005; Peach, 2006), ‘building cohesive communities’ (Community Cohesion Review Team, 2001; cf. Amin, 2002a), identity and community politics (Modood, 2005), dystopian spaces of terror and anxious urbanisms (Virilio, 2005; Flusty, 1997), and urban governance (Gale and Naylor, 2002; Sandercock, 2003; Keith, 2005). I am not arguing that we should overlook these accounts of the multicultural city, but I think they often fail to fully appreciate the messy, challenging underside of inter-ethnic relations and conflict, and as such are less well placed to generate innovative perspectives to disrupt the contemporary force of race in an emotive, and muddled political discourse that routinely couples segregation with urban unrest and unruly strangers, and integration with terrorism. In contrast, foregrounding multiculturalism from below through moments of encounter allows me to assemble distinct perspectives on heterogeneous processes of racial differentiation in the multicultural city, and to unpack the tangled compositions, for example, of terror alerts, moral panics about ‘Asian gangs’, drugs and paedophilia, or subvert the assumptions that

sustain the imaginative geographies of the segregated city and simplistically contend that more interaction and ‘community cohesion’ will necessarily reduce the risk of terror attacks and urban unrest.

Through these arguments this research tracks the temporary, but recursive fixings of race through heterogeneous processes of differentiation on the ground in Keighley. Specifically, it takes bodies, cars and topographies as three points of departure from which it carves distinct pathways through everyday multiculturalism in Keighley. The momentum accumulated through these routes into the underside of interethnic relations in the town works towards a distinct understanding how race is *done* in Keighley. Repeatedly asking what race does and how race functions, interrogates the force of race in many moments of encounter with bodies, objects and spaces.

For me, whiteness – alongside the materialist philosophy of Deleuze, and recent conceptualisations of thinking emerging from conversations between neuroscience, cultural theory and phenomenology – provides an entry into this study of everyday multiculturalism in Keighley. As social constructionist critiques were established as the dominant paradigm in social scientific talk about race, an emergent field of research committed to the deconstruction of whiteness was opened up (Dyer, 1988; 1997; Roediger, 1991; Ware, 1992; Frankenberg, 1993; Bonnett, 1996a; b; 1997; Jackson, 1997; Back and Ware, 2002).<sup>16</sup> A primary concern of this field has been to challenge the invisibility of whiteness as a racial formation (Dyer, 1997; Frankenberg, 1993), and encourage the slow recognition that race is

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<sup>16</sup> The emergence of whiteness as a field of research in the social sciences can be traced back to a series of events, which include a ‘reflexive moment’ within the social sciences through which dominant categories (whiteness, masculinity, heterosexuality...) came under increased scrutiny and redefinition (Jackson, 1998, p.100; Haraway, 1991); the force of postcolonial critique (Spivak, 1988), and in particular a crisis in Western feminism provoked by excoriating accusations from Third World feminists that the feminist movement in the West was at best failing to challenge racism and at worse aiding and abetting it (Frankenberg, 1993; Ware, 1992); and recent writing on labour history, particularly in the US (Roediger, 1991; Ignatiev, 1995).

never just a question of racialised Others (Bonnett, 1997; Hesse, 1997; Jackson, 1998). As he suggests that '[w]hites are not of a certain race, they're just the human race', Richard Dyer (1997, p.5) captures the peculiarity of whiteness as simultaneously invisible and transcendent. White people do not think of themselves as raced or coloured. Whiteness is disembodied, unlocated; it is something empty, perhaps even absent. It is through this invisibility of whiteness, this sense of whiteness as something that is disguised, perhaps even ungraspable and unseen, that whiteness maintains its power (Dyer, 1997; Saldanha, forthcoming). And so Dyer isolates the twinned concerns that seem to have motivated recent attention to whiteness, namely a desire to expose the invisibility of whiteness, so that systems of racial differentiation and privilege might be brought into view (Frankenberg, 1993; Bonnett and Nayak, 2003), and a will to confront the normativity of whiteness, and how it translates into forms of social organisation (education, healthcare, housing, employment) and infuses social practices (Frankenberg, 1993; Hesse, 1997).

Here, however, I am interested in a specific conception of whiteness as a becoming that necessarily takes form – always fleetingly and temporarily – in the contact zones of urban multicultural. This relational concept of whiteness recognises that whiteness is always already tangled with the production and rearrangement of raced differences, whether through the exotic excursions of cosmopolitan consumption, the simmering suspicions nurtured by moral panics that infect judgments, or the brutality of racist violence.<sup>17</sup> And so, whiteness in Keighley cannot, I argue, be researched in isolation, away from the urban contact zones through which it takes form. Beginning from this relational concept of whiteness enables me to move into an examination of the heterogeneous processes of

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<sup>17</sup> Some commentators warn of the dangers of thinking about whiteness relationally. For example, Dyer (1997, p.14) suggests that framing whiteness relationally runs the risk perpetuating the power of whiteness, as 'whiteness is only racial when it is 'marked' by the presence of the truly race, that is the non-white subject' (see also McGuinness, 2000). The dangers of re-centring whiteness by locating the concept in a relational field are real, but at the same time we cannot hope to understand the dynamics of race and racisms without interrogating whiteness.

differentiation through which temporary, but recursive fixings of race are performed. And through the everyday operations of race in Keighley, I develop a non-determinist, nonessentialist concept of race as becoming (that is as plastic, always on the way to becoming something different) and argue for an empiricism that begins with intensive differences and the heterogeneous processes through which race fleetingly takes form. And here I join Arun Saldanha (forthcoming, p.156) in arguing that:

‘race should not be abandoned or abolished, but *proliferated*. Race’s energies are then directed at multiplying racial differences, so as to render them joyfully cacophonic’.

This research aims to contribute to disparate engagements with, and challenges to, various modalities of white supremacy in urban multicultural. For example, my interest in habitual operations of race in Keighley is informed by the anti-racist commitments evident in engagements with white supremacy that have tended to focus on the vicious racisms of white supremacist organisations like the British National Party or the National Front in Britain, or enactments of racist harassment and violence by disempowered, working class white men (Keith, 1995; Back and Nayak, 1999; Ware and Back, 2002). The research also takes seriously the circulation of normative whiteness in imaginative geographies of British cities, where the presence of Black and Asian bodies is implicitly constructed through white nationalist imaginaries as an illegitimate irruption of white space to be tolerated (without ever removing the capacities of white people to be intolerant) (Hesse, 1997). However, I am also wary that such accounts can have the effect of reifying whiteness as an automatic position of race privilege, and how focussing on spectacular racisms and the far right tend to ingrain stereotypes of racists and what they look like (Back, 2002; Pred, 2000). Accordingly, this research pursues an enlarged empirical focus to grasp at the multiple modalities and intensities of white supremacy, and highlight what Allan Pred (1998) has called ‘silenced actual geographies of racism’.

Together with the materialist philosophy of Deleuze and recent conceptions of thinking, whiteness as a becoming is my point of entry into an ethnography of urban multiculturalism in Keighley. Alongside participant observation, conversations and interviews with mainly white women who lived and worked in Keighley introduced me to the virtuality of race in day-to-day lives. Through these research encounters I was struck by both the momentum of raced differences in Keighley, but also the plasticity of race as it momentarily came to matter in interaction on the ground through heterogeneous processes of differentiation.

### **The thesis**

This research joins recent research that has variously sought to reconstruct our understanding of urban multiculturalism from below (Back, 1996; Alexander, 1996; 2000; Nayak, 2003a). Working towards an account of the affective life of urban multiculturalism in Keighley that argues urban multiculturalism is always fleshy and visceral, I seek to exceed traditional accounts of race in the city. Specifically, I privilege an ontology of encounter (Amin and Thrift, 2002a), suggesting that we might productively think of urban multiculturalism as accumulations of, to put a twist on Nigel Thrift's (1999, p.302) phrase, billions of happy and unhappy intercultural encounters. The chapters that follow begin to map moments of intercultural encounter in Keighley, tracing the contours of the turbulent socialities that constitute everyday multiculturalism and tracking the temporary fixings of race in urban contact zones in ways that foregrounding the virtuality, plasticity but also the repetitiveness of race in heterogeneous processes of differentiation.

In the next chapter, I draw together the theoretical threads that run through the research. I begin by questioning the dominance of social constructionist critique in academic talk about race. The chapter demonstrates how such critiques tend to disavow the materiality of race, mobilise static conceptions of race tied to categorical identities, and deflect

attention from the pressing practical issues of how it is that race comes to mediate practices in moments of intercultural encounter. Informed by recent exchanges between neurosciences, cultural theory and phenomenology, I assemble a layered concept of race thinking to ask what Keighley might look like through the half-second delay. These engagements form the basis of a notion of race thinking as thought-in-action that examines precisely how race emerges in moments of intercultural encounter. In chapter three, I go on to examine the practical demands of studying the everyday practices through which race comes to matter. It locates the research in a tradition of urban ethnography that studies race and confronts the complex ethical fields that frame the research. The chapter also addresses practical questions of how we might try to capture a sense of the everyday urban. The chapter closes with an introduction to the montage form (Benjamin, 1999; Pred, 2000) as an aesthetic through which we might simultaneously analyse and perform the assemblage of race thinking. Inspired by the possibilities of the montage form, my empirical chapters do not follow linear narratives, but gather and juxtapose moments of intercultural encounter, and multiple tellings of these encounters, to sketch – and perform – the fleeting and fragmentary ways in which race comes to matter in and around Keighley.

Empirically, this research examines moments of intercultural encounter and the machinic operations of what I call the assemblage of race thinking through three materialities: bodies, cars and spaces. Chapter four develops a Deleuzian concept of the body to interrogate the processes of racialisation in action. Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) concept of faciality provides a framework for theorising the sorting of bodies in interaction as the machinic connections between bodies and things become raced. The chapter examines how bodies are sorted in affectively charged visual economies through the becoming-terrorist, becoming-criminal, becoming-violent and becoming-separate of some bodies. Chapter five interrogates the force of cars in habitual practices of race thinking.



Developing a lively materialism I examine how particularly intense raced memories and affects accumulate around some cars in Keighley. Tracking how prejudice, suspicion and rumour appear to ride on ‘pimped rides’ and taxis, the chapter extends arguments made around the sorting of bodies by face.<sup>18</sup> The chapter also opens a discussion of the road as a particularly intense contact zone, and grounds an examination of mobile Asian spaces to complicate arguments for the spatial construction of race that rely theories of abjection. The final empirical chapter, *Topographies*, evokes the life, passion and intensity of everyday multicultural in Keighley. The concept of topographies approaches everyday multicultural through a lively materialism, emphasising the affective contours and relationality of urban spaces. *Topographies of multicultural touch* explore four distinct spatial registers through which differently raced bodies might come together. *Topographies of loss* provide an alternative account of symptomatic racist geographies, including ‘no-go areas’, by examining the moods of urban settings. Finally, ghostly topographies trace how raced affects and memories become lodged in urban spaces, haunting our experiences of everyday multicultural and disturbing the orderly flow of time. Chapter seven draws together these entangled lines of enquiry to reconstruct contemporary understandings of urban multicultures from below. In particular, I focus on how evoking the dynamic sociality of urban multicultural and locating race within an emergent materialism produces a sense of the life and intensity of urban multicultural that is distinct from recent academic and political invocations of segregation and parallel lives.

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<sup>18</sup> The term ‘pimped rides’ draws on US ‘ghetto’ and ‘gangsta’ aesthetics, and the extrovert customising and outfitting of cars. This subcultural style has been popularised through the MTV programme *Pimp My Ride*.

## Chapter Two

### Assembling race thinking

Race is irrelevant, but all is race.

(Goldberg, 1993, p.6)

#### An encounter

Something in the world forces us to think. This something is an object not of recognition but of a fundamental *encounter*. What is encountered may be Socrates, a temple or a demon. It may be grasped in a range of affective tones: wonder, love, hatred, suffering. In whichever tone, its primary characteristic is that it can only be sensed.

(Deleuze, 1994, p.176)

The arguments running through this thesis emerge from an encounter. Perplexed and troubled by the apparent momentum of raced differences – distributed variously across bodies, things, and spaces – in the turbulence of encounters and interaction that constituted day-to-day lives in Keighley, and at the same time persuaded and inspired by the passionate commitment to expose the illusory, morally bankrupt, and constructed nature of ‘race’ exhibited across the social sciences (Jackson, 1987; Miles and Brown, 1989; Anderson, 1991; Jackson and Penrose, 1993; Gilroy, 1998; 2000; Ware and Back, 2002), I encountered a minor tradition of thought through the philosophy of Gilles Deleuze and his sometime collaborator Félix Guattari. But, to ask a typically Deleuzian question, what use is Deleuze to the study of race? For me this encounter with Deleuze offered alternatives – lines of flight, perhaps – to thinking about race. It encouraged an attentiveness to the dynamic sociality of the ‘contact zones’ of everyday multicultural<sup>1</sup> and the emergent, momentary ways in which race comes to matter through heterogeneous processes of

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<sup>1</sup> Here I use the term multicultural advisedly. Extending Stuart Hall’s (2000) distinction between the adjectival ‘multi-cultural’ and the substantive ‘multiculturalism’, I use multicultural to communicate the lived sociality of everyday touch, contact, encounter, indifference and avoidance, which is distinct from the varied strategies and policies designed to ‘manage’ and ‘govern’ diversity encompassed by multiculturalism (see also, Back, 1996; Hage, 1998; Amin, 2002a).

differentiation without falling into the essentialisms that social constructionist arguments rightly warn us against.<sup>2</sup> Deleuze and Guattari (1994) conceive philosophy as a practice of concepts, ‘an activity that consists in the formation, invention, or creation of concepts’ (Smith, 1998, p. xii). And experimenting with a number of Deleuze’s concepts,<sup>3</sup> I began to negotiate the paradox described so succinctly by David Goldberg (1993, p.6): ‘Race is irrelevant, but all is race’.<sup>4</sup>

Specifically, thinking with Deleuze enabled me to counter the common practice of disavowing the materialities through which race emerges (skin, clothes, pimped rides, neighbourhoods...) in much of our academic talk about race. The dominant tendency of emphasising the constructed nature of race has had the effect, as Saldanha (2006) has noted, of restricting our analyses of race to language. Across the social sciences the constructed-ness of race has been forcefully exposed as narratives, images, discourses and representations have been thoroughly unpacked, all the time maintaining that these constructions are never merely fabrications or fantasies; they have ‘real’ effects (Jackson and Penrose, 1993). However, the problem is that these ‘effects’ remain largely unscrutinised (Saldanha, forthcoming, p.9; for notable exceptions see Back, 1996; Martín

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<sup>2</sup> For example, Manuel DeLanda (2002, p.5) argues that Deleuze is a realist philosopher, but a realist with a difference: ‘Deleuze is *not* a realist about essences, or any other *transcendent* entity, so in his philosophy something else is needed to explain what gives object their identity and what preserves this energy through time. Briefly, this something else is *dynamical process*. Some of these processes are material and energetic, some are not, but even the latter remain *immanent* to the world of matter and energy.’

<sup>3</sup> Massumi (1987, p.xv), in the translator’s foreword to Deleuze and Guattari’s *A Thousand Plateaus*, captures the spirit in which Deleuze and Guattari anticipated that concepts would be used, writing: ‘Deleuze’s own image for a concept is not brick but a “tool box”. He calls his kind of philosophy “pragmatics”, because its goal is the invention of concepts that do not add up to a system of belief or an architecture of propositions that you either enter or you don’t, but instead pack a potential in the way a crowbar in a willing hand envelops an energy of prying.’ Alternatively, Seigworth and Wise (2000, p.141) suggest concepts are events; they are ‘organisations against chaos, cuts in fluxes and movement, passages of intensities’. And yet they are clear to emphasise that while radically contextual, for Deleuze and Guattari concepts are not ‘descriptors of events, but they are crucial in giving shape to events (Seigworth and Wise, 2000, p.141).

<sup>4</sup> This paradox is animated elsewhere by Paul Gilroy (1998; 2000) as he foregrounds his arguments for the ‘abolition’ of race. In particular, he critiques the pious academic convention of agreeing on the illusory and constructed nature of ‘race’, before then deferring to its embeddedness as a social reality.

Alcoff, 1999; Nayak, 2003). Here, inspired by the vitalism of Deleuze's thought and his cultivation (after Spinoza) of ethological perspectives,<sup>5</sup> I am less interested in questions of interpretation (How do we know race?) than questions of experimentation (How does race function? What does race do?). Rather than succumb to the deconstructive impulse to contribute to the ongoing and important work exposing the social and spatial production of race, my project attempts to grasp at plasticity of race as it emerges fleetingly in interaction, in practices of race thinking.

In Keighley I was confronted on a daily basis by the surprising plasticity and liveliness of race as it infected the diffuse, immeasurable, but still tangible moods and feel of neighbourhoods and the heterogeneous ways in which race came to matter as people lived, worked, learned, socialised, shopped, worked out, travelled, or relaxed. However, by repeatedly asking practical questions of what race does, and how it functions I began to come to terms with the momentum of raced difference on the ground. In this chapter I work to expose and understand the heterogeneous push of race in everyday lives of white women in Keighley as race came to infect all kinds of judgments (about people, threats, belonging neighbourhoods, civility, schools, desirability, safety and so on) and practices (including the avoidance of particular parks, streets or schools; assuming indifferent, fearful or suspicious dispositions in interactions; the venting of petty prejudices and resentments). My arguments here join a growing literature on whiteness (Dyer, 1997; Frankenberg, 1993; Back and Ware, 2002), and particularly work combating various modalities of white supremacy (Hesse, 1997; Hage, 1998; Back and Nayak; 1999), but its own distinct way. Throughout the research I locate whiteness in a relational field, arguing that whiteness is a becoming, that only takes form through the materialities, dispositions and practices that

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<sup>5</sup> Deleuze (1998, p.125) contends: 'Ethology is first of all the study of the relations of speed and slowness, of the capacities for affecting and being affected that characterise each thing'.

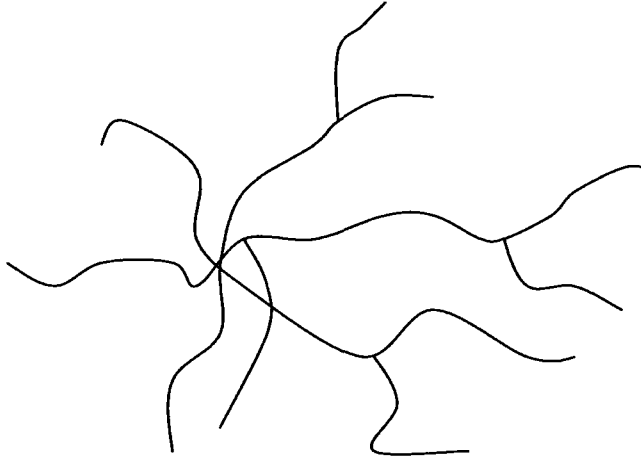
surface in moments of intercultural contact. This is a conception of whiteness then that is always already entangled with the production and rearrangement of raced differences (Saldanha, forthcoming). Absorbed by questions of what race does in moments of intercultural encounter, in this chapter I assemble a concept of race thinking as thought-in-action, which is primarily concerned with practical questions of how it is that race comes to matter in moments of intercultural encounter. In particular I examine recent speculations from cultural theory and neuroscience on what happens during the half-second delay between action and cognition, asking whether it is possible to theorise this delay as a space of prejudice. The concept of race thinking I assemble suggests that looking at urban multiculturalism through the half-second delay, we can better grasp the heterogeneous and often intense push of race in moments of intercultural encounter as race carried on virtual memories sorts of bodies, things and spaces and coordinates thought and action. This focus alerts us to new intensities and registers that are often overlooked in detached talk of race as a social construction, so that we might start to engage more fully the often visceral, habituated and dispositional ways in which race comes to matter in urban multiculturalities.

For me, engaging practically with questions of how race functions through the happy and unhappy moments of inter-ethnic encounters of urban multiculturalism required a specific conception of race. Race is fundamentally *not* about categories, taxonomies, hierarchies, bell curves, organisms, orderings, grids or divisions. Rather race is emergent. That is, race is an immanent heterogeneity that is always in the process of taking form (Massumi, 2002), through synergies of bodies, matter, spaces and light. Race is also rhizomatic<sup>6</sup> – a

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<sup>6</sup> Deleuze and Guattari (1987) come up with the concept of the rhizome to disrupt the arborescent model of thought of what they call State philosophy. 'State philosophy,' Massumi (2002, p.4) writes, 'is another name for the representational thinking that has dominated Western metaphysics since Plato...State philosophy is grounded in a double identity: of the thinking subject, and of the concepts it creates and to which it lends its own presumed attributes of sameness and constancy'. In distinction to hierarchies of arborescent thought the concept of the rhizome foregrounds principles of connection and heterogeneity – 'any point of the rhizome can be connected to anything other, and must be. This is very different from the tree or root, which

multiplicity in which a singularity can be connected to any other in an infinite number of ways (Smith, 1998). Race is constituted in a relational field, or a ‘*meshwork*’ of interwoven lines, not a network of interconnected points (Ingold, 2006; DeLanda, 1997) that looks something like this (after Ingold, 2006, p.13):



Race cannot be confined to genes or culture, but takes form immanently along lines of movement through this relational field. And so race is capricious, both creative and constricting. Arun Saldanha (2006, p.20) expresses this capriciousness, suggesting:

...race is devious in inventing new ways of chaining bodies. Race is creative, constantly morphing, now disguised as sexual desire, now as *la mission civilatrice*, all the while weaving new elements in its wake. Deleuze and Guattari might say that what defines race is not rigidity or inevitability, but its “lines of flight”. Race can be as stark as apartheid, but mostly it’s fuzzy and operates through something else.

Pursuing a similar line of argument to Moira Gatens’s (2000, p.65) discussion of sexual difference prompted by an engagement with Spinoza and Deleuze, race (like sex, gender and class distinctions) ‘appears as coagulations of molecular combinations, strata of more or less stable configurations that are at once discursive (for example, the human sciences), normative (for example, medical and legal “codes”), and subjectifying (subjects designated as “woman,” “native,” “mentally ill”’. Flattening the hierarchies that routinely frame questions of race and racism – majority and minority; hegemonic and subordinate, privileged and oppressed – does not however evacuate a notion of power from my

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plots a point and fixes an order’ (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p.7). There are no points or positions on a rhizome, only lines.

conception of race. However, I suggest that power is not located in ideologies that naturalise or normalise race and raced differences as social constructionists might argue, but is a more diffuse, mobile, and productive effect that gradually builds up through repetition.

In assembling a conception of race thinking that appreciates the provisional and heterogeneous emergence of race in moments of encounter, I am arguing for an empiricism that begins with intensive differences, and the immanent processes through which race fleetingly takes form, rather than with fixed identities, representations, genes or oppositions. This empiricism is interested in examining whiteness, Asianness, and Muslimness as becomings, or emergent properties of encounters as bodies, things and spaces are sorted immanently and raced differences settle. By provisionally mapping the cartographies of the assemblage of race thinking and exploring the layered nature of thought (Connolly, 2002),<sup>7</sup> I hope to become alive to the intensities (and wildness) of race thinking while also addressing practical questions of what race does, asking how, for example, it mediates encounters, aligns bodies, infuses dispositions, induces tendencies to attraction or repulsion, stirs antagonisms, affects speeds, or inspires engagement. In doing so I hope to provide a sketch of a multicultural town that exceeds conventional accounts of the multicultural city (Sennett, 1994; Back, 1996; Touraine, 2000; Sandercock, 2003; Nayak, 2003; Keith, 2005). Although intimately concerned with questions of how we might live together (Touraine, 2000; Hall, 2000; Amin, 2002) for me urban multicultures are never just about cohesive communities (Community Cohesion Review Team, 2001), segregation

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<sup>7</sup> I am using Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) concept of the assemblage as a resource to frame race thinking as it helps us focus on the disparate and various components that participate in the heterogeneous, fleeting and lively emergence of race in the turbulent socialities of everyday multicultural, while also integrating these components onto a single place of consistency. For Elizabeth Grosz (1994, p.167), assemblages are: 'heterogeneous, disparate, discontinuous alignments or linkages brought together in conjunctions (x plus y plus z) or severed through disjunctions and breaks. But significantly, an assemblage follows no central or hierarchical order, organisation, or distribution; rather, it is, like the contraption or gadget, a conjunction of different elements on the same level.'

(Bradford Race review Team, 2001), the dystopian spaces of terror and paranoid, panicked urbanism (Virilio, 2005; Flusty, 1997), demographic change tied to political economy and the colonial present (Kalra, 2000), inter-ethnic relations and the territorialisation of urban spaces (Back, 1996), urban governance (Sandercock, 2003; Keith, 2005), agonistic publics and counterpublics (Amin, 2002), or identity politics (Modood, 2005). It is about all of these and more. By foregrounding moments of intercultural encounter I hope to gesture towards the affective life of urban multicultures, producing a sense of how multicultural in Keighley is fleshy and visceral. How it is embodied, practiced and felt.

### **An ontology of encounter**

Encounter is an important concept running through my arguments around the emergent materialities of race and lived textures of multiculturalism from below. I argue here that an ontology of encounter (Amin and Thrift, 2002a) enables a rigorous grasping of the hybridity and confusion of urban multicultures, and the heterogeneous processes of racial differentiation by focussing or attention on the coming together and collision of multiple bodies, objects, ideas and spaces through intensities of love, hate, fear, indifference, suspicion and excitement. From government reports citing segregation as *the* primary cause of the 2001 urban disturbances (Community Cohesion Review Team, 2001) to more nuanced calls to nurture prosaic sites of face-to-face negotiation and banal transgression (Amin, 2002a & b), it is important to recognise that encounters are routinely presented as the way for getting around raced differences and intercultural conflict in British cities. In this research, however, I move beyond the tendency to confine encounters to face-to-face interactions and 'face-work' (Goffman, 1972; Urry, 2000; Amin and Thrift, 2002) in discussions of everyday urban life, and also interrogate transformative claims made for more interaction, more community cohesion and the integrative potential of urban publics, by examining the modalities and intensities of intercultural encounter more precisely. I am



interested in thinking about urban multicultures as intercultural ‘contact zones’ (Pratt, 1992; Back, 1996),<sup>8</sup> or more specifically as accumulations of ‘billions of happy and unhappy moments of encounter’ (Thrift, 1999, p.302), and this includes not only encounters between bodies, but also encounters with things (including souped-up cars, newspaper headlines, veils, kebab skewers, graffiti, BNP leaflets) and spaces (parks, pubs, back streets, school playgrounds, inner city neighbourhoods, etc.). Urban multicultures might be usefully considered then as particularly intense accumulations of encounter that include the many urban spaces of fleeting contact (pavements, bus stations, shops, parks, rush hour traffic, pubs, public transport, cafés, gyms, etc.), spaces of prosaic intercultural engagement and exchange (including classrooms, allotments, colleges of Further Education, work places, and doctors’ surgeries), but also mediated spaces of intercultural contact (including the pages of the local newspapers, rumour, film, police statements, television news, urban myth).

My concept of encounter is inclusive – perhaps even rapacious – in its attempts to account for what we might broadly call geographies of face, but also more distanced and mediated forms of encounter, and its interest in accumulations of both the routine and repetitive, but also the infrequent and the extraordinary aspects of urban multicultural. But the importance of encounters to my theoretical arguments does not simply relate to the distinct perspectives (from below) that an ontology of encounter can open up. An ontology of encounter can also grasp the lively, affective dimensions of thought ‘before and beyond the deliberative and reflective constituencies of representational thinking’ (McCormack, 2003, p.490; Connolly, 2002; Thrift, 2004a), and encourages us to think more carefully about the

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<sup>8</sup> In her impressive account of cultural, material and biological encounter during the Columbian Exchange, Mary Louise Pratt (1992) introduces the term ‘contact zone’ to articulate the intensity of transcultural exchange after Columbus’s landfall. More recently, the concept of ‘contact zone’ has become a useful tool for examining the prosaic sites of inter-cultural interaction and exchange and the banal transgressions of urban multicultural (Back, 1996).

temporalities of encounter. Conceptually, a lot has been said recently about the excessive potential of encounters (Massumi, 2002; Thrift, 2004a; Seigworth and Gardiner, 2004), and through these arguments one cannot help but feel that each encounter is novel and fresh. These observations are important to my formulation of the immanent and fleeting taking form of race in moments of intercultural encounter, however, I also think that in the rush to celebrate the potential of excess and endless novelty the weight of memory, routine and repetition on moments of encounter is overlooked (Massumi, 2002; Seigworth and Gardiner, 2004; cf. Hemmings, 2005). Against this tendency to theorise encounters as somehow weightless and unconstrained, I emphasise that encounters are never just a point in time; they occupy a duration that prolongs the past into the present (Bergson, 1988; Connolly, 2002). Drawing heavily on the ideas of Henri Bergson (1988) we can begin to develop a concept of encounters with history, as moments of intercultural encounter stir virtual memories, that then come to mediate and shape perceptions, judgment and action in the here and now of an encounter. Appreciating long histories of tacit reaction and the rapid work of virtual memories encourage us to consider how micropolitical technique, past experience and repetition come to play in moments of encounter (Connolly, 2002), and help explain that in spite of the radical potential for excess, so many encounters fall into fairly stable repetitions. In short, encounters carry a weight of history and micropolitical baggage. And it is through this leadenness of moments of encounters with history and micropolitics that we can begin weave questions of power back into our conceptions of race and race thinking. In contrast to the hierarchies of power that structure accounts of racism as enactments of racist ideology or beliefs, my account locates power in encounters. In this sense power is slow fused. It is a diffuse, mobile and productive force that accumulates through repetition (Foucault, 1984). I return to these arguments later in the chapter, but first I want to situate my line of flight from the dominant mode of presenting race as a social construct.

## Race matters

Across the human sciences the problem of race is routinely posed as one of epistemology.<sup>9</sup> In part, at least, I think we can attribute this situation to the force of Edward Said's (1979) systematic exposure of the discursive fabrication of imagined 'Others' in *Orientalism*.<sup>10</sup> On the back of Said's argument – coupled with engagements with poststructural philosophers like Foucault and Derrida (Hall, 1991) – 'race' is now routinely, and sometimes inconvertibly, presented as a social construct (Miles and Brown, 1989; Jackson and Penrose, 1993; Kobayashi and Peake, 2000). Aligned with anti-racist sensibilities, social construction has been successfully marshalled to disrupt biological essentialisms, puncture taken-for-granted categories, combat racial oppressions and multiple racisms, and expose the normative white gaze of the academy (Kobayashi and Peake, 2000; Dwyer and Jones, 2000), and now sustains calls for the abolition of race and transcendence of race thinking (Gilroy, 1998; 2000; Ware and Back, 2002). However, this insistence on the constructedness of race, and an accompanying narrowing of empirical focus on questions of representation, has had a 'deadening effect' as analyses of race have tended to a 'conservative, categorical politics of identity and textual meaning' (Lorimer, 2005; Thrift and Dewsbury, 2000), neglecting the ephemerality, multiplicity and excessiveness of

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<sup>9</sup> This point is argued forcefully by Arun Saldanha (2006) in his call for the 'reontologisation of race'. Saldanha's contention is animated by what he sees as the disavowal of the materiality of race both in the dominant paradigm that emphasises the social construction of 'race', but also more pragmatic approaches to race from the US that explicitly acknowledge real phenotypical differences while insisting that these differences receive their social force through 'culture, economics and the law'. And so, Saldanha asks more precisely what race is, and what it might be. In short, he argues for a machinic conception of race that examines how real corporeal differences between bodies come to matter in face-to-face encounters. And through the machinism of race he argues, against Gilroy (1998; 2000) that '[r]ace should not be eliminated, but *proliferated*, its many energies directed at multiplying racial differences so as to render them joyfully cacophonous' (Saldanha, 2006, p.21).

<sup>10</sup> Said's (1979; 1981) thesis maintains the 'Orient' constituted a 'regime of knowledge' produced and staged by Western institutions, discourses and texts, and was quickly assimilated by academics working on race in sociology, geography, anthropology and cultural studies, compelling an acknowledgement that representations are never innocent. And the sensibilities introduced in *Orientalism* have come to define a large proportion of social scientific work on race, as theoretical engagements with race as a social construct have bled into empirical concerns that have tended to emphasise practices of Othering through, for example, media representations (Jackson, 1989; Alexander, 2000; Dunn and Mahtani, 2001), film, (Dyer, 1997; Smith, 2005), planning discourses (Anderson, 1991; Dunn, 2005; Gale and Naylor, 2002) or the institutionalisation of the 'white gaze' in academic geography (Dwyer and Jones, 2000; Kobayashi and Peake, 2000; Pulido, 2002).

everyday life (Massumi, 2002; Seigworth, 2000; Seigworth and Gardiner, 2004). Here, without wishing to be ungenerous to the significant contributions of social construction, I want to question the effects of presenting the problem of race as largely epistemological.<sup>11</sup> By staging race as a problem of interpretation, social constructionist and abolitionist arguments have to disavow the materialities of race to criticise race (Saldanha, 2006, p.15).<sup>12</sup> While this tendency is perhaps understandable, and even defensible, I want to trace three entangled lines of critique that both challenge, and perhaps move on, our academic talk about race, as I work towards a non-determinist, non-essentialist, emergent conception of what race is, what it does and what it might be.<sup>13</sup> The first line seeks to address the tendency of social constructionist critiques to disavow the materialities of race, the second questions the static conception of race they deploy as bodies are captured in what Massumi (2002) calls 'cultural freeze-frame', and thirdly I examine how presenting race as an epistemological problem encourages a disengagement from practical questions of precisely how race comes to matter in and through the inhabitation of everyday multicultures.

I have suggested already that social constructionist arguments sidestep the materiality of race in order to critique it, and here I follow through some implications of this theoretical nimble footedness. Social constructionist arguments tend to replace one essentialism with

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<sup>11</sup> Clare Hemmings (2005, p.556) has recently warned against the excesses of recent engagements with affect in cultural theory have tended to overstate the problems of poststructuralism to prise open a theoretical space for affect. She goes on to suggest that when poststructuralist epistemology is staged as the problem it is 'not enormously surprising that postdeconstructivist ontology is offered as the solution' (Hemmings, 2005, p.557). While acknowledging these concerns, I maintain that by dwelling on what we might call the emergent materialities of race (which envelop a concern with the affectual) we can better engage with the everyday, practical questions of how races comes to matter.

<sup>12</sup> Of course, this is not to say that constructionist arguments do not engage with questions of materiality, but engagements tend to be restricted to the material effects of the idea of race, in terms, for example, of how race is inscribed upon bodies things and space, and how race has manifest material consequences in segregation, differential employment opportunities, unequal access to health care and education and so on (Jackson, 1986; Jackson and Penrose, 1993; Alexander and Knowles, 2005).

<sup>13</sup> Here, I hope to embrace the ethos of non-representational styles of thinking that 'apprehends the world less as a series of sites from which to extract representational meaning, but as a field of processes and practices through which the ethical sensibilities of thinking may emerge, an emergence to which theory is a modest yet enlivening and pragmatic supplement' (McCormack, 2003, p.489).

another. As they deconstruct the naturalness of race they essentialise the nature of matter, nature and the biological sciences, which are stage as fixed, linear and determinist.<sup>14</sup> And so social constructionist critiques can be seen to vibrate between two poles, at one extreme race is either 'natural' and therefore unconstructed, or it is a fabrication inscribed on raw and passive matter, a 'prediscursive field' that is itself constituted by the concept of race (Cheah, 1996; Butler, 1993). Given the brutal, genocidal histories of racial science the discomfort – impossibility even – with engaging with the bodily matter of race is understandable, but privileging the social and the discursive and erasing real material differences between bodies means that ultimately social constructionist are insufficient for a truly anti-racist politics. This insufficiency lies in their attempts to wipe out material differences 'which are not eradicable without disfiguring the body' (Grosz, 1994, p.18), and they surface most acutely in what Gilroy (1998) identifies as the 'pious ritual' through which the illusory nature of race is agreed upon before then deferring to the social embeddedness, such that it might be afforded existence-as-such, or Gilroy's (1998; 2000) own 'loud calls for abandoning the term race [that] in fact perpetuate it' (Saldanha, 2006, p.13).<sup>15</sup> However, if we begin to think of race, and the raced body, as both a cultural interweaving and a production of nature it becomes possible to think about the fundamental differences between bodies without descending into essentialism. Instead, we can admit differences between bodies without accepting transcendent essences or categories. And so, I am interested in how material differences in skin, language, salwar

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<sup>14</sup> Manuel DeLanda (2002) and Ilya Prigogine and Isabelle Stengers (1984) have been particularly important in introducing dynamic, nondeterministic and nonmechanistic conceptions of nature into the human sciences, such that Prigogine has contended "a new formulation of nature is now possible, a more acceptable description in which there is room for both the laws of nature and novelty and creativity' (*cit.* Connolly, 2002, p.56). Despite the decline of 'race science' since the Holocaust (Thompson, 2006, p.547) identifies three enduring intersections between race and science: racist science; 'global science and technology markets dependent on processes of racialisation'; and 'race-differentiated disease profiles'.

<sup>15</sup> Ironically, his call for the abolition of race has precisely the opposite effect to that Gilroy intends. Indeed, his manifesto for the abolition of race is motivated by the observation: 'If the most dedicated of anti-racist and antifascist activists remain wedded to the mythic morphology of racial difference, what chance do the rest of us have of escaping its allure?' (Gilroy, 1998, p.842).

kemeez, calls for prayer, expensive cars, drugs, veils, pubs, parks and rucksacks, and so on, emerge as sites of intensive difference that sort bodies, things and spaces as they infect judgment, disposition and action in racialised practices of sense making. Grosz (1994, p.x-xi) captures this line of thought as she outlines her arguments for a corporeal feminism:

I will deny that there is the “real,” material body on one hand and its various cultural and historical representations on the other...The bodies in which I am interested are culturally, sexually, racially specific bodies, the mobile and changeable terms of cultural production. As an essential internal condition of human bodies, a consequence perhaps of their inorganic openness to cultural completion, bodies must take the social order as their productive nucleus. Part of their own “nature” is an organic or ontological “incompleteness” or lack of finality, an amenability to social completion, social ordering and organisation.

In this way we might begin to appreciate the complex, immanent mixing of culture and nature as race takes form immanently and fleetingly in the dynamic physicalism of everyday sociality. And through this emergent materialism we can work towards a nonessentialist, nondeterministic concept of race. Race then is fundamentally not about imposing grids that divide human bodies into groups, categories or hierarchies. Race is an event. That is to say race is neither static nor stable, but rather it is dynamic and immanent to the processes to which it expresses (Masumi, 1992). And so we can begin to appreciate both the plasticity of race as it takes different forms immanently through synergies of bodies, things, and surroundings, but also that this taking form of race is not unconstrained. It is weighed down by memories, routine, repetition, and boredom. Race is emergent, but it cannot escape geologies of memories, and sedimentations of routine and micropolitical technique. Indeed, it was striking in Keighley that so many encounters seem to fall into fairly stable repetitions, race took from in predictable ways and encounters fell into habituated sets of outcomes of indifference, polite tolerance, fear, engagement, hatred, rejection and desire.

This ephemeral conception of race as emergent through the turbulence of interaction segues into my second line of argument that seeks to counter the ‘deadening effect’ of representational thinking on race (Thrift and Dewsbury, 2000). Constructionist accounts tend to a rather static concept of race, concerned with categorical (if fluid and hybrid) identities or the interpretation of various forms of representation. Here, I take up the challenge of a diverse set of sensibilities often gathered under the label non-representational theory that seek to engage more fully with our more-than-human, embodied and practised worlds (Thrift, 1996; 2004; Thrift and Dewsbury, 2000; Harrison, 2000; Amin and Thrift, 2002a; Dewsbury *et al.*, 2002). As he lays out what might be called a manifesto for non-representational theory Nigel Thrift (1997, p.126) claims it is a constellation of ideas that is ‘meant to provide a guide to a good part of the world that is currently all but invisible to workers in the social sciences and humanities, with their intellectualist bent, that part, which is practical rather than cognitive’. Non-representational theory, broadly put, is concerned with practice (Thrift, 1996; 1997, Thrift and Dewsbury, 2000) in an attempt to reconfigure, in Thrift’s (1997, p.126) words, ‘what counts as knowledge and explanation’.<sup>16</sup> The reconfiguration that Thrift and others seek involves ‘a continuity of engagement that allows us to know how things are because of what we did to bring them about’ (Radley, 1995, p.5; also cited in Thrift, 1997). If we accept non-representational theory’s invitation to reconsider what counts as knowledge, we become less interested in static conceptions of race than in sketching the relational field of emergence through which race indeterminately and momentarily takes form. Whereas social construction begins by subtracting movement – its explanatory point of departure involves ‘catching the body in cultural freeze frame’ (Massumi, 2002, p.3) – non-

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<sup>16</sup> Lorimer (2005, p.84) efficiently captures non-representational theory’s emphases when he claims: ‘The focus falls on how life takes shape and gains expression in shared experiences, everyday routines, fleeting encounters, embodied movements, precognitive triggers, practical skills, affective intensities, enduring urges, unexceptional interactions and sensuous dispositions.’ In this way, non-representational theory falls in line with Deleuze’s vision of baroque theory of practices that focuses on swirls and folds, but also ‘operative functions’ of practices and not essences (Thrift, 1996; DeLanda, 2002).

representational theory challenges us to think in terms of formation, and focus on the ontogenesis, or becoming, of race (or for that matter gender, sexual orientation, etc.) in a field of emergence that is '*open-endedly social*' (Massumi, 2002, p.9). Escaping the 'deadening effect' of representational thought requires, then, a shift in 'ontological priority' as we recognise that 'passage precedes construction' (Massumi, 2002, p.8). Rather than rely on static concepts of race tied to categorical identities, we need to think race as an event: race emerges, immanently and fleetingly, and back-forms its reality (Massumi, 2002). Here, we might think then about the anatomy of suspicion after the July 7<sup>th</sup> bombings when a young Asian man takes a seat on a train. Suspicion, I suggest, does not just stick to this body because it may or may not fit a racial category, and he therefore elicits responses from other passengers. Rather suspicion is a doing, a mode of acting into the world. The sorting of this body as suspicious – a becoming-terrorist – is an outcome of affective intensities scattered by material connections between skin, clothing, a rucksack, a train carriage, and how these intensities are organised in heterogeneous practices racial differentiation and sense making. And along these lines we can begin to suggest that that whiteness, Asianness, and Muslimness are becomings. They are emergent properties of encounters that take form immanently and ephemerally in thinking, judgment, dispositions and gesture, and cannot be fixed immutably in identities, representations or oppositions.

A concern with the non-cognitive and the practical leads me into a third, and final, line of critique that begins to rethink what racisms might be. Over recent years there has been widespread agreement across the social sciences that there is not one racism, but multiple racisms (Taguieff, 1987 *cit.* Hage, 1998; Jackson, 1987; Balibar, 1991; Blaut, 1992; Pred, 2000). But for all the agreement on disparate forms and guises that racism assumes, conceptualisations of racism tend to be sustained by the premise that racisms flow from



enactments of racist beliefs.<sup>17</sup> Accordingly, racisms – as enactments of fallacious investments in the existence of races – become a problem of epistemology. But by remaining wedded to what we might call representational modes of thought, this conception of racism fails to engage substantively with the longevity and tenacity of racisms, returning inevitably to the paradox: ‘Race is irrelevant but all is race’ (Goldberg, 1993, p.6). However, if we take seriously Thrift’s (1996; 1997) call to reconfigure what constitutes knowledge and explanation across the social sciences by addressing not only the cognitive but also the practical racism might begin to look quite different. Ghassan Hage (1998, p.31), inspired by Pierre Bourdieu, identifies the implications of social scientists preoccupation with assessing whether racist statements constitute ‘good sociological explanation’,<sup>18</sup> neglecting the more pressing practical concerns that ‘popular racist categorisations are not out to explain ‘others’ for the sake of explaining them’. He elaborates:

The sociological tradition has a long history of perceiving ‘racism’ as a mental phenomenon in abstraction from the possible practices through which it can be articulated. It is generally considered as a system of beliefs, a mode of classification or a way of thinking. Furthermore, it is invariably considered an ‘evil way of thinking’ about the ‘self’ and particularly about the ‘other’. It is perceived as ‘evil’ both logically and politically...Despite the important insights it has allowed, this general and dominant tendency to define racism as a mental phenomenon has continually led to an undertheorisation of the relationship between the mental classification involved and the practices in which they are inserted, between what racists are thinking and what they are doing.

(Hage, 1998, p.28-9)

By thinking more explicitly about the force of race – conceived as a multiplicity, always becoming – as it bleeds into practices, it becomes clear that the more pressing questions are

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<sup>17</sup> For example, David Theo Goldberg (1993, p.42) suggests: ‘Racism as a discursive object has been variously analysed as rationalisations for psychosexual fear; for social and economic disparities; for cultural exclusions; or for political entitlements. Racist expressions, whether practices in the traditional sense or texts, are informed by beliefs. They involve enunciations of racist principles, supposes justifications of differences, advantages, claims to superiority (whether considered ‘natural’ or ‘developed’) and legitimations of racist practices and institutions...race is a discursive object of racialised discourse that differs from racism, but race creates the conceptual conditions of possibilities for racist expression to be formulated.’

<sup>18</sup> This preoccupation is disclosed, for example, in the routine evaluation of racist statements as essentialist, ideological, false, simplification, determinist and so forth, in ways which fail to examine the relation between the practices in which racist classifications are used and the classifications themselves (Hage, 1998, p.31)

how race comes to mediate, infuse and shape practices in moments of encounter rather than producing an ever-more sophisticated theory of what racism might be (Hage, 1998, p.184). Our focus shifts from whether ideologies, narratives or representations – however, pernicious – are ‘good’ or ‘bad’ explanations to more practical questions of how race surfaces immanently in indifference, verbal abuse, incivilities, physical violence, antagonisms, rejection, abjection, avoidance, discrimination, misanthropy, exploitation, desire, fear, and so on.<sup>19</sup> This is not however to abandon any notion of power in discussions of race and racisms. But it involves an account of power that is slow fused, diffuse and mobile, which accumulates through repetitions and not brute power assumed in accounts of the naturalisation and normalisation of race through ideology.

So how can we think differently about how race is done in Keighley? From these knotted lines of argument that spur my line of flight from social constructionist and abolitionist accounts of race, I want to locate race within an emergent materialism that attempts to assemble a conception of race thinking that emphasises thought-in-action in the moments of intercultural encounter and exchange that make up everyday multicultural.

### **Assembling race thinking**

In impassioned pleas that we renounce race, Paul Gilroy argues that what he calls *raciology* is vulnerable ‘when we attack the anachronistic perceptual habits to which it is bound’ (Gilroy, 1998, p.840).<sup>20</sup> Gilroy’s call for the end of race begins with the assertion that ‘new

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<sup>19</sup> Here, I dissent somewhat from Hage’s argument. Hage goes on to argue that race is perhaps not the *primary* motivator for what we call racist practices. For Hage (1998, p.32) it is an imagining of a ‘privileged relationship’ between race, ethnicity and the nation, and so he argues for a territorial conception of racism, or what he calls ‘nationalist practices’, that energises exclusions, rejections, worries and so on. Troubled by the proximity of Hage’s argument to Ardrey’s territorial imperative, which has the effect of enrolling territories to explain racist behaviour, justify aggression and naturalise inter-ethnic conflict, I prefer to think the emergence of race in practices of all kinds in less mechanistic and deterministic terms.

<sup>20</sup> For Gilroy (1998; 2000) *raciology* refers to regimes of knowledge that posit ‘race’ as the basis for differentiation and classification. Accordingly, *raciology* can be said to encompass the biological and

histories of visibility' and recent technoscientific progress in molecular biology have exposed the bogus footing of racial imaginaries that continue to inform even the most committed anti-racist research and politics. I think Gilroy is right to isolate advances in molecular sciences and shifting visual regimes, but rather than follow his attempt to expose the dubious genetics of race to dismiss the materialities of race to escape paralysing racial gazes that fix bodies in their skin, I pick up on recent productive exchanges between the biological sciences, and particularly neuroscience, cultural theory and phenomenology (Varela *et al.*, 1991; Norretranders, 1991; Clark, 1997; Lakoff and Johnson, 1999; Connolly, 2002; Massumi, 2002) to develop, and open out, what we might understand by race thinking. For me then, race thinking is not about returning to the deterministic regimes of differentiation and classifications identified by Gilroy and so many others. Rather it is concerned with understanding the 'push' of race in practices of thinking; it is about the force of race as the event you encounter is translated into perception (Connolly, 2002). It is about understanding how race translates an encounter with a passing car into suspicions about drug dealing; how race surfaces in connections between money, accent and lattes in coffee shops; how race sticks to calls for prayer, *salwar kameez* on washing lines, and street signs as neighbourhoods become no-go areas for whites; and so on. Assembling race thinking is about recognising the multiplicity and plasticity of race in everyday lives in Keighley, and beginning to trace a way out of racism and white supremacy by, as Saldanha (forthcoming, p.162) has argued, multiplying race, 'to use its lines of flight toward a situation where skin colour, genitals, AIDS, hunger, obesity, beauty, wealth and speed connect in less predictable ways than they do now'. This chapter might have been organised explicitly around the materialities of race, the dynamic physicality of the social,

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anthropological racisms that compelled and justified European colonial excursions, the genetic racisms of Eugenics that informed the Nazi genocide, but also race thinking after the holocaust, including American Pragmatism and the rise of racial phenomenology for which Franz Fanon is often enrolled as a touchstone and the investments in the idea of race as the basis for Black politics (Gilroy, 1998; 2000; see also Keith, 2005).

and the tendencies of differently race bodies in the turbulence of interaction (Saldanha, forthcoming; Massumi, 2002).<sup>21</sup> However, in assembling a conception of race thinking I hope to weave a line between the alternatives set up in social constructionist arguments around race, namely that race is either natural and therefore unconstructed or it is fabricated and inscribed on a pre-discursive field (Cheah, 1996; Grosz, 1994), as I try to understand how the materiality of the bodies, things and spaces we encounter and their affective intensities are sorted in heterogeneous processes of racial differentiation in habitual practices of sense making. Specifically, I bring three lines of argument together through an assemblage of race thinking that emphasises that race thinking is primarily orientated to action (and not cognition); that race thinking is never simply confined to a body, but is spaced through body/brain/culture networks (Connolly, 2002; Anderson and Harrison, 2006); and that by conceptualising race thinking as layered we can conceive of the half-second delay as a space of prejudice, introducing new political registers and intensities into our analysis of race.

### *What is thinking?*

Probably 95 percent of embodied thought is non-cognitive, yet probably 95 percent of academic thought has concentrated on the cognitive dimension of the conscious 'I'. Without in any way diminishing the importance of cognitive thought (though certainly questioning its exact nature) we can conceive of non-cognitive thought as a set of embodied dispositions ('instincts' if you like) which have been biologically wired in or culturally sedimented (the exact difference between the two being a fascinating question in itself), action-orientated 'representations' which simultaneously describe aspects of the world and prescribe possible actions.  
(Thrift, 2000, p.36)

In the 1960s neuroscientist Benjamin Libet decisively showed that an action is set in motion before we decide to perform it (Norretranders, 1991; Thrift, 2004a). Libet's experiments formalised speculations on the 'half-second delay', a period of 'bodily anticipation' (Thrift, 2004a, p.67) that alerts us to the realities that people are not conscious

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<sup>21</sup> Indeed I attend to these kinds of arguments at length in Chapter 4 as I discuss the tendencies and distributions of bodies in interaction in Keighley.

of very much of what they sense.<sup>22</sup> Proof of the half-second delay seems to have opened lines of connection between neurosciences and diverse thinking on 'body practices' (including Mauss, Merleau-Ponty, Benjamin and Wittgenstein) that have insisted that much of 'human life is lived in a non-cognitive world' (Thrift, 2000, p.36). And allied with recent attempts to 'embody' the mind,<sup>23</sup> Libet's 'discovery' of the half-second delay has provided fertile terrain for engagements between neuroscience, cultural theory and phenomenology,<sup>24</sup> expanding the space of human embodiment through 'a fleeting but crucial moment, a constantly moving preconscious frontier' (Thrift, 2004a, p.67). Here, I begin to speculate on what everyday multiculturalism in Keighley might look like through the half-second delay. There is agreement that vast amounts of nonconscious calculation proceed during the half-second delay as sensory material is computed, subtracted and organised into perception (Norretranders, 1991; Damasio, 2000), and the conjunction of

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<sup>22</sup> Libet's discovery of the half-second delay introduces particular problems for consciousness and the closely related idea of free will, puncturing two millennia of Western thought that perpetuated the view that 'our actions are the product of a unitary conscious system (Gazzaniga *cit.* Norretranders, 1991, p.277). Taking Libet's findings seriously we might agree that what Norretranders (1991, p.257) calls the conscious '*I*' does not initiate actions, and so 'free will might be seen to disappear into the blue'. However, Norretranders argues that to use Libet's experiment to suggest that people do not possess free will would be a misinterpretation, it is just that the 'bandwidth of consciousness is far too low for consciousness to control everything a person does' (*ibid.*). Instead, Norretranders (1991, p.258) argues that it is not the *I* ('the conscious player') that possesses free will, but the *Me* ('the person in general'). Free will then is exercised by the *Me*, while it is the *I* that enters into social contracts, knows what is socially acceptable, etc. (Norretranders, 1991, p.270). That consciousness thinks it determines an act is attributed to what Norretranders calls the 'user illusion'; the content of consciousness is 'already processed and reduced, put into context, before we experience it' (*ibid.*, p.288) and so a mass of sensory information has already been discarded before we experience consciousness. And yet consciousness conceals all this activity: 'the sequence is sensation, simulation, experience...But it is not relevant to know about the simulation so that is left out of our experience, which consists of an edited sensation that we experience as unedited' (Norretranders, 1991, p.290).

<sup>23</sup> Attempts to embody the mind escape the Cartesian opposition of mind and body – vigorously critiqued by Feminists and Queer theorist, but also a minor tradition of thought that includes Spinoza, Bergson and Deleuze (Grosz, 1994) – by recognising that cognition depends on experiences that come from having a body with sensorimotor capacities, which are themselves embedded in biological, psychological and cultural contexts (Varela, *et al.*, 1991; Clark, 1997; Lakoff and Johnson, 1999). Embodying the mind therefore works against entrenched assumptions that the mind, perception and thinking can transcend the peculiarities of the human body, cultural location and imaginative understandings (Lakoff and Johnson, 1999).

<sup>24</sup> Engagements with neuroscience within social and cultural theory have, as William Connolly (2002) notes, courted controversy, and are routinely accompanied by warnings about the reductionism of biology. However, these understandable concerns tend to perform another reductionism as theorists overlook how 'biology is mixed into thinking and culture and how aspects of nature are folded into both' (Connolly, 2002, p.3). Perhaps the most forceful objection to these early conversations between cultural theory and neuroscience are that while the observation of brain physiochemical activities might '*correlate* with phenomenological experiences of thinking, desiring, dreaming, judging, and so on, but it cannot capture the quality and shape of those experiences' (Connolly, 2002, p.7).

this minor tradition in philosophy (that variously includes Spinoza, Bergson, William James, and Deleuze and Guattari) and new neuroscience generates productive lines for theorising this delay as we try to make sense of how the ‘sensed action on an encounter is filtered in order to make it do something *for* you, rather than it being just something that does something *to* you’ (Dewsbury, 2003, p.1918). Below, I emphasise three related concepts that emerge from this encounter. The first suggests that thinking is orientated towards action (Varela, *et al.*, 1991; Lakoff and Johnson, 1999). Secondly, the layered character of thinking, and the insistence that ‘[t]hinking is implicated in brain/body/culture networks that extend well beyond the skin of the thinker’ is examined (Connolly, 2002, p.13). And third, I foreground the role of intensity in thinking, tracking how affectively imbued intensities are involved in the movement of thought before conscious reflection takes over (Thrift, 1996; Connolly, 2002). This excursion develops a layered, immanent concept of thinking that provides a conceptual grounding from which we can begin to grasp the force of race as people make sense of moments of intercultural encounter.

Thinking is enactive. With this contention Varela, Thompson, and Rosch sought to turn what they call the ‘representationalist attitude’ that dominates thinking about cognition on its head:

Cognition is not the representation of a pre-given world by a pre-given mind but is rather the enactment of a world and a mind on the basis of a history of the variety of actions that a being in the world performs. The enactive approach takes seriously, then, the philosophical critique of the idea that the mind is a mirror of nature but goes further by addressing this issue from within the heartland of science.

(Varela *et al.*, 1991, p.9)

Their argument is that everyday, ‘commonsense knowledge’ is less about propositional knowledge (or ‘knowledge that’), rather it is largely a matter of ‘readiness to hand or “knowledge how” based on the accumulation of experience in a vast number of cases’ (Varela *et al.*, 1991, p.148). Indeed, they go so far to argue that the representational attitude

overlooks much of the *creativity* of thinking by continuing to treat context-specific know-how as a ‘residual artefact’ that in time will (inevitably) be assimilated into ever-more sophisticated models of cognition. Against this they develop a concept of cognition as embodied action that:

provides a view of cognitive capacities as inextricably linked to histories that are *lived*, much like paths that exist only as they are laid down in walking. Consequently, cognition is no longer seen as problem solving on the basis of representations; instead, cognition in its most encompassing sense consists in the enactment or bringing forth of a world by a viable history of structural coupling...cognition as embodied action is always about or directed toward something that is missing: on the one hand, there is always a next step for the *system* in its perceptually guided action; and on the other hand, the actions of the system are always directed toward *situations* that have yet to become actual. Thus cognition as embodied action both poses the problems and specifies those paths that must be tread or laid down for their solution.

(Varela *et al.*, 1991, p.205)

Through this manoeuvre Varela and his colleagues encourage us to reorient our concept of thinking away from what Connolly (2002) calls ‘bland intellectualism’ and towards the practical demands of being in the world. Already, these insights compel us to rethink how race functions in interaction in places like Keighley. Instead of dwelling on unpacking the ideological and epistemological division of humans into categories, taxonomies or hierarchies, they focus our attention on how race momentarily comes to matter as it sorts bodies, things and spaces in line with the practical demands of sense making, judgment and action that subsequently bleed into engagement, defence, excitement, indifference, suspicion, tolerance, fear, and so on.

Secondly, becoming attuned to the layered character of thinking allows us to stress both that thinking cannot be reduced to cognition, and that thinking is materially implicated in brain/body/culture meshworks that recognise the complex ways in which thinking, culture,

biology and technique are entangled (Connolly, 2002).<sup>25</sup> The concept of layered thinking supplements intellectualist models of thinking by admitting the nonconscious and unconscious – that is the many messages flowing between the multiple brain regions of differential capacities in the same body that are too fast and small to be identified by consciousness – in our conception of thinking. And so ‘not properly conscious impulses, inklings, automatisms and reflexive action’ (McCrone *cit.* Thrift, 2000, p.37) can no longer be considered trivial, but rather are seen as fundamental to the vast reductive and subtractive operations of the brain that are under way before consciousness kicks in.<sup>26</sup> But the insistence that thinking is layered, and Libet’s discovery of a delay between increases in the electrical and biochemical activity of the brain and consciousness, beg the question what exactly happens during in the half-second delay. How exactly is the mass of sensory information reduced and processed so that we might act? How are material differences between bodies, things and spaces arranged and sorted through the force of race in ways that bleed into judgment, disposition and action?

Following recent arguments in both neuroscience (Varela *et al.*, 1991; Norretranders, 1999; Damasio, 2000) and cultural theory (Connolly, 2002; Massumi, 2002), I suggest that nonconscious elements are never simply biologically wired but rather they are available – to some degree – to cultural inscription, experimental research and technical intervention.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> I prefer to talk of brain/body/culture *meshworks* rather than use Connolly’s term networks as network implies what Ingold (2006, p.13) calls a ‘field of interconnected points’, whereas meshwork gives a sense of this field as being rhizomatic; that is, a series of ‘interwoven lines’.

<sup>26</sup> For example, Connolly (2002, p.27) argues that because perception responds to the ‘dictates of action in a world marked by speed, risk, surprise and opportunity, perception *subtracts* from the incoming sensory material a surplus irrelevant to a small set of action possibilities. Perception is subtractive, and the virtual memories mobilised during it help determine what is subtracted. Part of the subtracted surplus persists as side perception, potentially available for recall in a different context.’

<sup>27</sup> For example, Francisco Varela and his colleagues (1991, p.172-3) writing from within neuroscience but influenced by the phenomenology of Maurice Merleau-Ponty capture the complex mixing of biology with culture as thinking proceeds: ‘Let us explain what we mean by this phrase *embodied action*. By using the term *embodied* we mean to highlight two points: first, that cognition depends upon the kinds of experience that come from having a body with various sensorimotor capacities, and second, that these individual



For me, Henri Bergson's ideas around virtual memory (1988) provide a compelling account of how nonconscious thinking might be organised into perception in 'action contexts' by opening us to the complex layering of memory, thinking, and culture (see also Deleuze, 1988b; Connolly, 2002; Massumi, 2002).<sup>28</sup> William Connolly (2002, p.38) captures Bergson's emphasis on the layering of thinking as he summarises the role of virtual memories in translating an incomprehensible quantity of sensory information from an encounter into perception and action:

The virtual subsists not only as action-orientated memories below explicit recollection at the moment, but also as intensive traces and fragments that have *effects* on judgment and consciousness in new encounters without themselves being susceptible in principle to explicit recollection. We now engage three layers of memory: (a) explicit memories called up by an existing situation, (b) potential recollections that operate implicitly in action contexts because time is too short to pull them up as recollections, and (c) effects of the past on the present that cannot take the form of explicitly recollection, even when time is available. The latter affect-imbued traces cannot be recollections not because they are repressed, but because the fragmentary form they assume does not coincide with that of an articulable thought or coherent image.

Virtual memories are too fast and subtle to be accessible to consciousness and too close, layered and wild for third-person retrieval (Deleuze, 1994), but they translate sensory

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sensorimotor capacities are themselves embedded in a more encompassing biological, psychological, and cultural context. By using the term *action* we mean to emphasise once action that sensory and motor processes, perception and action, are fundamentally inseparable in lived cognition. Indeed, the two are not merely contingently linked in individuals; they have also evolved together'. For Connolly (2002) the implication of body/brain/culture networks in this layered game of thinking opens the nonconscious thinking to the possibilities of micropolitics, as he conceives of the half-second delay 'not as a super-sensible domain, but in terms of the corporealisation of culture and cultural inscriptions of corporeal processes' (Connolly, 2002, p.85).

<sup>28</sup> By introducing the operations of virtual memory Bergson is developing an account of memory that is less about remembrance (the representation of something absent) rather memory is a duration, it prolongs the past into the present: 'But every perception is prolonged into a nascent action; and while the images are taking their place and order in this memory, the movements which continue them modify the organism and create in the body new dispositions toward action. Thus is gradually formed an experience of an entirely different order, which accumulates within the body, a series of mechanisms would up and ready, with reactions to external stimuli ever more numerous and more varied and answers ready prepared to an every growing number of possible solicitations. We become conscious of these mechanisms as they come into play; this consciousness of a whole past of efforts stored up in thee present is indeed also a memory, but a memory profoundly different from the first, always bent upon action, seated in the present and looking only to the future. It has retained from the past only the intelligently coordinated movements which represent the accumulated efforts of the past; it recovers those past efforts, not in the memory-images which recall them, but in the definite order and systematic character with which the actual movements take place. In truth it no longer *represents* our past to us, it *acts* it; and if it still deserves the name of memory, it is not because it conserves bygone images, but because it prolongs their useful effect into the present moment' (Bergson, 1988, p.81-2).

encounter into experience as their affective charges and intensities help move thinking and judgment in some directions and not others in a timely manner. Perceptions, then, fill a duration as virtual memories prolong the past in the present as the weight of past experiences and disciplining bear down on the moment of encounter as immediate sensory information mingles with thousands of details of past experiences and encounters (Bergson, 1988).<sup>29</sup> Brian Massumi (2002, p.59) makes the point cogently:

‘Proprioception translates the exertions and ease of the body’s encounters with objects into a muscular memory of relationality. This is the cumulative memory of skill, habit, posture. At the same time as proprioception folds tactility in, it draws out the subject’s reactions to the qualities of the objects it perceives through all five senses, bringing them into the motor realm of externalisable response.’<sup>30</sup>

And so virtual memories operate in strikingly similar ways to what the neuroscientist Antonio Damasio (2000) calls ‘somatic markers’.<sup>31</sup> Somatic markers are not biologically wired dispositions, but ‘culturally pre-organised charges’ that shade perceptions and judgment, and demonstrate how ‘linguistically complex brain regions respond not only to events in the world, but also proprioceptively to cultural habits, skills, memory traces, and affects mixed into our muscles, skin, gut, and cruder brain regions’ (Connolly, 2002, p.36). This is a layered concept of thinking that strives to understand the complex ways in which biology is mixed into human culture through body/brain/culture meshworks as sedimentations and traces of memory, as biologically wired brain processes engage with a ‘linguistically mediated world and respond to multiple signals from the body that bears

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<sup>29</sup> Alternatively this indivisible duration that perceptions fill might be thought of as a ‘sheet of time’ as a set of virtual memories are rapidly mobilised and assembled in a nonchronological order, as layered memories from childhood, adolescence and adulthood enter communication under the threshold of consciousness as a response is forged to a given encounter (Connolly, 2002, p.97).

<sup>30</sup> Proprioception refers to the ‘sensibility proper to the muscles and ligaments as opposed to tactile sensibility (exteroceptive) and visceral sensibility (interoceptive)...Proprioception folds tactility into the body, enveloping the skin’s contact with the external world in a dimension of depth: between epiderma and depth’ (Massumi, 2002, p.58).

<sup>31</sup> Damasio goes on to develop a concept of memory that correlates closely with Bergson’s, suggesting that in the event of an encounter memory is dispositional rather than recollective. He argues: ‘Dispositions are records which are dormant and implicit rather than active and explicit...; moreover, the memories also contain records of the obligate emotion reaction to the object. As a consequence when we recall an object, when we allow dispositions to make their implicit information explicit, we retrieve not just sensory data, but also accompanying motor and emotional data’ (Damasio, 2000, p.160-1).

traces of past experiences upon them' (Connolly, 2002, p.63). This layered concept of thinking prises open ways of thinking about how a variety of media, past events and techniques are enrolled to coordinate thought and action. And it is here that we can open up the half-second second as a space of prejudice. During the half-second delay the rapid work of virtual memories potentially mobilises all kinds of past events and experiences, habits, dispositions, institutional disciplines and micropolitical techniques, some or all of which might introduce, amplify or dampen the force of race as the event we encounter is sorted to make it do something for us.

Thirdly, and finally, I turn to the participation of affect in thinking. More precisely, I develop a Deleuzian concept of thinking as the 'interplay of forces' (Thrift, 1996, p.29) to grasp the fugitive energies of thinking.<sup>32</sup> For Deleuze, affect – always distinct from emotion – connotes 'bodily meaning that pierces social interpretation, confounding its logic, and scrambling its expectations' (Hemmings, 2005, p.552);<sup>33</sup> in Deleuze's reworking of Spinoza affect describes the passage from one bodily state to another, and pertains to intensities that increase (through joy) or decrease (through sadness) the capacity to act (Deleuze, 1988a; Brown and Stenner, 2001; Thrift, 2004). Affect, as Derek McCormack (2003, p.490) has noted, allows 'encounters with spaces of practice to have a life and force before and beyond the deliberative and reflective consistencies of representational thinking.' What characterises affect then is its capriciousness and flightiness, or what Massumi (2002, p.35) calls the autonomy of affect:

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<sup>32</sup> Rosi Braidotti (1994, *at* Thrift, 1996, p.29) elaborates how Deleuze emphasises 'the affective foundations of the thinking process. It is as if beyond/behind the propositional content of an idea there lay another category – the affective force, level of intensity, desire and affinity – that conveys the idea and ultimately governs its truth value. Thinking, in other words, is to a very large extent unconscious, in that it expresses the desire to know, and this desire is that which cannot be adequately expressed in language, simply because it is that which sustains language.'

<sup>33</sup> Psychoanalysis constitutes the other major tradition with a longstanding interest in theorising affect. However, in psychoanalysis affects are 'the qualitative expression of our drives' energy and variations' (Giardini *at* Hemmings, 2005, p.551), and also 'what enable drives to be satisfied and what ties us to the world' (Hemmings, 2005, p.551; see also Thien, 2005).

The autonomy of affect is its participation in the virtual. *Its autonomy is its openness.* Affect is autonomous to the degree which it escapes confinement in the particular body whose vitality, or potential for interaction, it is. Formed, qualified, situated perceptions and cognitions fulfilling functions of actual connection or blockage are the capture and closure of affect. Emotion is the most intense (most contracted) expression of that *capture* – and of the fact that something has always and again escaped.

(Massumi, 2002, p.35, emphasis in original)

The participation of affect in thinking – as intensive memory traces and fragments and affectively imbued thoughts – emphasises the capricious, even wild, elements of thinking, which ‘while playing out before reflective thinking comes into play, are nevertheless felt as ways of going on in the world’ (McCormack, 2003, p.495). The concept of thinking that emerges here is one that accentuates a ‘field of sensible experience’ but does not restrict that field by ‘identifying it through discursive categories as a personally captured emotional state’ (McCormack, 2003, p.495; Massumi, 2002). It is interested in the connections between affectively imbued virtual memories and the movement of thought, before consciousness pulls it in this or that direction (Connolly, 2002). Moreover, developing a Spinozist notion of affect that puts an ‘ethological spin’ on thinking (Thrift, 2004a, p.62), locates thinking in an immanent field of relations and encounters, allowing us to conceptualise how affects flow across bodies *of all kinds* (Connolly, 2002). Stressing the affective intensities of thinking, involves recognising, then, that affects are not of a body, but rather the ‘composition of affect’ needs to be *spaced* throughout the world through ‘the nervous system, hormones, hands. Love letters, screens, crowds, money...’ (Anderson and Harrison, 2006, p.334). Affect displaces any notion of thinking as an intellectual activity confined to a brain or a body; the composition of affect is distributed or spaced throughout the world, and so race thinking is not another form of knowing race, but a particular doing of race that is variously spaced through the nervous system, intensities of melanin in the skin, accent, veils, curry houses, pubs, cars, places of worship...

These three lines of thought through recent exchanges between cultural theory and neuroscience have given us a conception of thinking as a layered, immanent field (Connolly, 2002). Here, we might turn to Deleuze and Guattari's concept of the assemblage (*agencement*) as a resource for framing thinking. Assemblages, Venn (2006, p.107) explains:

‘...can be seen as a relay concept, linking the problematic of structure with that of change and far-from-equilibrium systems. It focuses on process and the dynamic character of the inter-relationships between the heterogeneous elements of the phenomenon. It recognises both structurizing and indeterminate effects: that is, both flow and turbulence, produced in the interaction of open systems’.

Assemblages are provisional linkages of heterogeneous elements, fragments and flows (variously social, biochemical, psychical, inherited, electrical, acquired, economic, etc.) that insist on the ‘flattening of relations’ between their components.<sup>34</sup> And so, emphasising a layered concept of race thinking, assemblages focus our attention on the disparate and various components that participate in the heterogeneous, sometimes wild, but often repetitious emergence of race in interaction. Orientating thinking to practice, this concept of thinking seeks to theorise the conjunction of the event of an encounter and the ‘distinctive thoughts it might rapidly mobilise in people with different, affectively imbued memory banks’ (Connolly, 2002, p.71). In particular, I have focussed on the nonconscious elements of thinking – including intense memory traces and fragments laid down, and engrained, through habit, skill and disposition – that while not necessarily piercing consciousness in the form of explicit recollection nonetheless influence thinking, judgment and action. It is the vast quantities of subtractive work that takes place here, in the half-

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<sup>34</sup> Elizabeth Grosz (1994, pp.167-8) captures this flattening of relations graphically as she suggests there is: ‘no hierarchy of being, no preordained order to the collection and configuration of the fragments, no central organisation or plan to which they must conform. Their ‘law’ is rather the imperative of endless experimentation, metamorphosis or transmutation, alignment and realignment. It is not that the world is without strata, totally flattened; rather the hierarchies are not the result of substances and their nature and value but of mode or organisation of disparate substances. They are composed of lines, of meetings, of speeds, and intensities, rather than of things and their relations. Assemblages or multiplicities, then, because they are essentially in movement, in action, are always made, not found. They are the consequences of a practice, whether it be that of the bee in relation to the flower and the hive or of a subject making something using tools or implements. They are necessarily finite in space and time, provisional and temporary in status, they always have an outside, they do not or need not belong to a higher-order machine.’

second delay between action and cognition, that might be considered a space of prejudice, opening new political registers and intensities to the analysis of race and racisms. Specifically, an emphasis on the layering of thinking shows us how, through the complex mixing of biology and culture, biologically wired neurological processes are open to cultural inscription, institutional discipline, experimentation and micropolitical technique (Connolly, 2002; Deleuze, 1994), which can be 'deployed to move the affective organisation of thought and judgment' (Connolly, 2002, p.95). Finally, this assemblage enables us to conceptualise thinking as the outcome of, and distributed across, an entanglement with the object world. Race thinking proceeds then through what Massumi (2002, p.214) calls the "mangle' of practice', enveloping the force of, for example, intensities of melanin in the skin, glares, veils, designer stubble, soup-ed-up cars, taxis, a street sign, park gates at dusk...in habitual and habituated practices of sense making.

### **'Formatted perception' and race affects**

But how exactly does this layered, immanent concept of thinking affect and move on our understanding of the 'push' of race in everyday lives. To begin, this detour through recent exchanges between neuroscience and cultural studies disturbs the ground on which the usual definitions of race thinking, or raciology, have settled. In these accounts, race thinking is assumed to be a perceptual habit (Gilroy, 1998), but a habit staged as a product of conscious reflection, the racial imaginary presented as an accumulation a 'representational technology and its perceptual and cognitive regimes' (Gilroy, 1998, p.844). In these terms race thinking is about the extraction of (spurious) representational meaning from bodies, the projection of emotions and affects (fear, desire, disgust...) onto these bodies, and their insertion into regimes of differentiation and classification (Gilroy, 1998; 2000). However, this line of argument becomes insufficient as we become alive to the more than/less than representational, nonconscious thinking that is already well under way

by the time consciousness pulls it in this or that direction. Indeed, if we are going to take seriously arguments for a layered concept of thinking, we need to recognise that perception moves fast – faster, indeed, than the conscious mind can think (Connolly, 2002). So in order to grasp the push of ‘race’ in habitual practices of race thinking and open up the half-second delay as a space of prejudice, we need to understand how everyday action-orientated perceptions are subject to processes of ‘formatting’ (Connolly, 2002, p. 23), and how vast amounts of sensory material are reduced by a biocultural apparatus (involving body/brain/culture meshworks) to enable perception at a particular moment. I am interested, therefore, in how raced memories and affects accumulate and are laid down as virtual memories – both intensive traces and fragments and affect-imbued thoughts – that then constitute an immanent field of nonconscious thinking, which can, *potentially*, be actualised momentarily to translate the sensory material of an encounter into something meaningful for you, in ways that inform thought and judgment, and direct disposition and conduct. Here, race is not the ‘cold, corporeal fact of ‘race’” that Gilroy (1998, p.839) seeks to abrogate, but a multiplicitous, and emergent (but often no less pernicious) concept, that comes to matter immanently and fleetingly through all kinds of bodies, things and surroundings (including melanin, salwar kameez, souped-up cars, veils, rucksacks, kebab skewers, drugs, calls for prayer, pubs, taxis, street signs...).

But precisely how might our perceptions be formatted so that race comes to matter routinely and repeatedly in encounters as everyday multicultures are lived out? For me, race takes form immanently at the conjunction of the event you encounter and memory without recollection as some bodies, things and surroundings are singled out as sites of *intensive difference* (DeLanda, 2002; Saldanha, forthcoming).<sup>35</sup> And as Connolly (2002, p.42)

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<sup>35</sup> I am arguing here for a what Manuel DeLanda (2002) calls a ‘morphogenetic account’ of ‘race’. He elaborates: ‘In a Deleuzian account, on the other hand, a species (of any other natural kind) is not defined by its essential traits but rather by the *morphogenetic process* that give rise to it...And while an essentialist account

notes difference is layered: 'It operates on several registers, assuming a different level of complexity on each'. For example, on one level difference might refer to a minority that 'deviates from majority practice'; on a second it could relate to how a minority varies from other constituencies; a third register subsists within an identity, and relates to elements 'obscured, suppressed, or remaindered by its own dominant tendencies'; while on a fourth register 'surpluses, traces, noises and charges in and around the concepts and beliefs' suffuse proto-thoughts and affect how judgments are reached, arguments are received and alternatives weighed (Connolly, 2002, p.42). Here, I want to focus on two processes through which raced memories and affects are laid down as virtual memories, so that they might then sort the mass of incoming sensory material during an encounter into differences, some of which become sites of intensive difference as the emergent materialities of race take form momentarily in a becoming-white, becoming-'Paki', becoming-local, becoming-Other, -suspicious, -criminal, -terrorist, in becoming-Fascist, -intolerant, -multicultural...The first suggests that virtual memories are accumulated, intensified and sharpened through micropolitical techniques that pervade cultural life (Connolly, 2002; Deleuze and Guattari, 1987; Foucault, 1984), while the second emphasises how past events and encounters (both lived and mediated) come to 'colour perception' (Connolly, 2002). I will explore each in turn.

Firstly, by foregrounding an 'ethic of cultivation' I argue that perceptions are open to formatting by micropolitics. Perceptions are not formed in a vacuum, and the virtual memories mobilised to subtract vast quantities of sensory information such that perceptions might be enabled do not merely accumulate haphazardly. Instead nonconscious thinking is susceptible to 'intensive institutional disciplining', as institutions (the family, the

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may rely on factors that transcend the realm of matter and energy (eternal archetypes, for instance), a morphogenetic account gets rid of all *transcendent* factors using exclusively form-generating resources which are *immanent* to the material world' (DeLanda, 2002, p.9-10).



nation, genetics, friendship, consumption, neighbourliness, community safety initiatives, policing etc.) become infused in the dispositions, perceptions, beliefs and resistances we share and contest with one another (Connolly, 2002; Thrift, 2004). Micropolitics suffuse every element of everyday life, and William Connolly (2002, p.20-1) efficiently conveys a sense of what micropolitics in a Deleuzian sense might look like:

By *micropolitics* I mean such techniques organised and deployed collectively by professional associations, mass-media talk shows, TV and film dramas, military training, work processes, neighbourhood gangs, church meetings, school assemblies, sports events, charitable organisations, commercial advertising, child rearing, judicial practice, and police routines. It is not that every institution is exhausted by micropolitics, but that the micropolitical dimension of each is potent because of the critical functions the institution performs in organising attachments, consumption possibilities, work routines, faith practices, child rearing, education, investment, security and punishment.

(Connolly, 2002, p.20-1)

Differently put, the application of micropolitical technique affects both the shape and intensity of memory traces and fragments (Connolly, 2002, p.18). Micropolitical techniques therefore press upon multiple levels of being enabling some thoughts (and not others) to bubble into consciousness, as well as by honing the sensibilities that inform judgments (Connolly, 2002, p.108). But this focus on micropolitics, and the learning of dispositions, habits, and beliefs through institutional assemblages of micropolitical tactics also opens out a way of theorising how collective affects, beliefs, perceptions and dispositions might develop, and take hold. So, while each of us takes a distinct set of virtual memories to an encounter, it is possible that like collective perceptions, judgments and actions may be formed through the subtractive work of virtual memory on the back of micropolitical techniques that engender, consolidate and constrain particular perceptions, beliefs, dispositions and judgments in response to a given encounter.

Now we might consider how this formatting might shape not only how race comes to matter, but also the intensity of this mattering. Material differences (including

concentrations of melanin in the skin, veils, accent, calls for prayer, cars, or neighbourhoods) become sites of intensive difference when they are sorted as such through virtual memories variously accumulated and intensified through the micropolitics of genetics, familial relations, schooling, British colonialism, electoral campaigns, neighbourliness, jokes, community cohesion, etiquette at the takeaway counter, police crackdowns on drug dealers, National History, television news, fashion, conversations at the dinner table, neoliberalism, relationships in films or television soap operas, consumption patterns, MP statements carried on the pages of a local newspaper (about rioting youths, terrorism, veils or forced marriage), and so on. This account is meant to be suggestive – and by no means exhaustive – of just some of the ways in which micropolitical techniques might infuse thinking, judgment and action such that some bodily differences become not only isolated as sites of intensive difference, but this becoming raced also feeds into dispositions and conduct.

Or, consider the micropolitics of suspicion that has achieved near epidemic proportions at least since the September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001 attacks, and has been intensified by other terror atrocities. We could begin, for example, to trace a micropolitics of raced suspicion in the wake of the July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2005 bombings in London. We might think of how the bombings are choreographed by the news media both during and in the days after the event. Mixtures and repetitions of words, gesture, images, sounds, and rhythms helped define the sensibilities through which perceptions, judgments and responses were formed.<sup>36</sup> Rolling

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<sup>36</sup> My argument develops a notion of texts (of all kinds) that is more interested in what they *do*, rather than what they purport to represent. In this way texts become events imbued with, and scattering affective energies; they offer means for making connections, forging perceptions and reaching judgments, in short they enable what Latour has called 'learning to be affected' (Hinchliffe, 2003, p.216). Elizabeth Grosz (1995, p.126-7) conveys the more-than-representational possibilities of texts aptly, suggesting: '...texts could, more in keeping with Deleuze, be read, used, as modes of effectivity and action which, at their best, scatter thoughts and images into different linkages or new alignments without actually destroying their materiality. Ideally they produce unexpected intensities, peculiar sites of indifference, new connections with other objects, and thus generate affective and conceptual transformations that problematise, challenge and move beyond existing intellectual and pragmatic frameworks.'

images of ambulances, sirens wailing, hurtling along deserted London streets; the ‘walking wounded’ emerging from tube stations; low quality footage of the carnage shot by camera phones; headlines flashing across the foot of the television screen ‘Terror Attack in London’; updates on the number of injured and killed; solemn commentary from presenters; coverage from carefully stage-managed news conferences chaired by the Home Secretary and also featuring representatives from the emergency services; immediate dissections of events from expert analysts; later suspects are named, located and faced; grainy CCTV grabs of four young men entering a station carrying rucksacks are circulated incessantly; hasty biographies are constructed. Affective energies scattered from the turbulence of words, images, rhythms, gesture begin to format perceptions as initial perceptions, judgments and responses are formed – shock, disgust, anger, fear...Media coverage of terror events are suffused with micropolitical techniques that format (collective) perceptions, but the micropolitics of suspicion is never restricted to the media affects of what Massumi (1993) calls ‘fear blur’. Rather this terror event reverberates through society, resonating across multiple constituencies and affecting multiple levels of being. The micropolitics of raced suspicion is played out through surveillance; in countless conversations; in demands for more community cohesion and less segregation; in lurid newspaper headlines; in community leaders denouncing the bombings; in neighbourhood gossip and hearsay at the school gates; in the social spaces of train carriages and buses; in styles of dress; on conspiracy theory websites; through religious practices; in police tactics of stop under suspicion; in dramatic reconstructions of terrorist activities; on sliding scales of terrorist threat; and in encounters in the street. The micropolitics of raced suspicions infiltrates so much of everyday life and infects moments of intercultural encounters, at times sharpening and accentuating suspicions, at others unsettling, resisting or even decomposing them. My broader point is, however, that micropolitics plays an important role in formatting perceptions – both in the sorting of material differences between bodies

and as raced suspicions take form and stick to some bodies and not others – and the force of micropolitics resides not in the fact that every institution is ‘exhausted by micropolitics’, but that micropolitics is fundamental in shaping our attachments, cultures of belonging, consumption possibilities, education, faith practices and so on (Connolly, 2002, p.20-1)

A second, related, way in which virtual memories might accumulate and format perceptions stresses how past events and encounters might ‘colour perceptions’ (Connolly, 2002). I am thinking here about how events can take a toll on those who experience or witness them, such that they encroach on the formation of perceptions in future encounters. In this way we might think of a distinctive bank of virtual memories weighing down on each one of us at every moment of encounter.<sup>37</sup> This sheet of time then is ‘an indivisible pulse of duration’ (Connolly, 2002, p.97; Bergson, 1988) through which memories prolong the useful effects of the past into present in nonchronological layers of virtual memory. In this way, we might consider how past events and encounters in which race came to matter are prolonged into the present as virtual memories. These events are what Connolly (2002, p.31) calls ‘minor moments in the micropolitics of perception’. An event might be variously absorbed – and added to – by different people in different locations (or subject positions) but the event still potentially mingles with other events as a sheet of memory momentarily takes form. And the force of how singular events can take toll, and come to colour perceptions became particularly evident in a conversation with George. He had been on the dodgems in Lund Park – what he identified as an Asian area – during the Keighley Mela with his young son, when groups of Asian teenagers had begun to throw coins and hurl verbal abuse at the car he was in. One of the coins hit him, and incensed by

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<sup>37</sup> We can think of these banks of virtual memories as ‘nonchronological sheets of time’ rapidly mobilising sets of virtual memories that envelop different events from different period of your life in the organisation and direction of perception, sense making, and action (Connolly, 2002, p.97; Deleuze, 1994). Connolly (2002, p.29) turns to the use of the flashback in cinema to communicate not only the causality of the past on the present, but more specifically to emphasise how ‘each encounter insinuates into perception affectively imbued memories below the thresholds of explicit feeling and invisibility.’

these unprovoked attacks on him and his son, he was prepared to confront the lads, until his wife stopped him with the probably excessive warning that they were probably carrying knives and it was better that their children had a father. This was clearly a distressing event, that was consolidated for George as endemic 'Asian' violence, symptomatic of 'bad' upbringing and disrespect. And, I was struck by the rawness of this encounter. This event was made to matter repeatedly as George talked about other encounters, perceptions, judgments and dispositions as the singularity of the event was lost and it was projected onto all manner of like encounters. The event seemed to have formatted his perceptions. It haunted other encounters through affectively-imbued memories and explicit recollections as race emerged repeatedly through perceptions of aggressiveness, disrespect, violence and taking over. And, thinking more broadly again, we might begin to consider the virtuality of past events and encounters in 'sheets of time' and how all kinds of thoughts are potentially triggered in moments of encounter. For example, encountering a group of young Asian men noising joshing outside a takeaway might stir diffuse affectively-imbued memories, some of which might form explicit recollections, of young Asian men hurling abuse at young white girls; regular headlines in local newspaper about drug dealers and 'Asian gangs'; local gossip about racist attacks on whites; or old friendships that lapsed after college or school. Race emerges immanently as virtual memories accumulated through micropolitical techniques and supplemented by minor moments of micropolitics come to mediate encounters as material differences between bodies become intensive differences, shaping perceptions, judgments and actions. And through this analytic we can start to assemble a notion of how perceptions formatted through micropolitics and past encounters bleed into judgments around danger and threat and particular actions and dispositions, that include avoidance, vigilance, acute self-awareness, and so on.

Through an appreciation of the multi-layered nature of thinking we begin to grasp how institutional disciplines, micropolitical moments and tactics of the self are implicated in the affective movement of thought and judgment (Connolly, 2002). Building on these insights, I have tried to suggest that by theorising the formatting of perception we can consider how raced affects and memories might be laid down as virtual memories, which are then available to subtract the vast quantities of incoming sensory material during the event of an encounter, moving race thinking immanently in some directions and not others, and shaping judgments and action. It is here, I suggest, where the enduring power of race lies. As race comes to matter in moments of encounter, we are not only witnessing the brute power of racist ideologies, but the diffuse and mobile power of race. This micropolitics of power in moments of intercultural encounter is more in line then with a Foucauldian sense of power as *pouvoir* (Foucault, 1978). The power of race resides in geologies of virtual memories that sediment institutional disciplines, micropolitical techniques, experimentation and past experiences, potentially enrolling them in moments of encounter as disparate events tend to fall into a relatively small number of routine and habituated outcomes that might include, for example, indifference, fear, polite tolerance, engagement or hate. In addition, the formatting of perception opens out the possibility of recognising both that every encounter is a conjunction between an event and a distinct set of virtual memories that each one of us carries to an encounter, while also allowing for the formation of collective affects. In what follows I begin to outline how this concept of race thinking that might refocus our thinking about the multicultural city.

### **Urban multicultural and temporary fixings of race**

Between the always already and ever-not-quite-yet, the everyday transpires, suspended, as the infinitely strung-out process of perpetually leaving too soon and arriving too late. Or is it arrive too soon and leaving too late? Either way, you will somehow have missed it because the everyday passes by, passes through. It sails past, sails over. It goes around, goes under. Under the wallpaper. Under the rocks and stone (there is water underground). Under the cobblestones, the beach. Nothing (clearly) happens but something (obscurely) is and has been afoot.

(Seigworth and Gardiner, 2004, p.140)

At the beginning of this chapter I suggested that in my account of urban multicultures in Keighley I hoped to exceed conventional accounts of the multicultural city, and their tendencies to focus on questions of demographic change and segregation (Peach, 1996; 2006), identity politics (Jackson, 1989; Anderson, 1991; Ifekwunigwe, 2002), community cohesion (Community Cohesion Review Team, 2001; cf. Simpson, 2005; Phillips, 2006), urban planning (Sandercock, 2003; Dunn, 2005; Keith, 2005). inter-ethnic conflict (Alexander, 2000; 2004; Amin, 2002a; Hussain and Bagguley, 2003; Wells and Watson, 2005) or the territorialisation of urban spaces (Back, 1996; Nayak, 2003). So far I have argued for an expanded notion of what race thinking that embraces the affective, practical and layered dimensions of thinking, and suggested that we consider the half-second delay as a space of prejudice where the force for race comes into play, coordinating judgment and action. In the remainder of this chapter I consider how these arguments translate into understandings the turbulent sociality of urban multicultural, and address questions of how we might live with difference in distinct ways.

For me, more than anything else the densities and intensities of moments of intercultural contact and encounter are what constitute the 'city-ness' of urban multicultures. As Amin and Thrift (2002b, p.291-2) not '[c]ities have become site of intense ethnic mixing', and they go on to suggest that everyday experiences and practices of race and ethnicity are decisively shaped through the prosaic sites of contact and the daily rhythms in cities (see

also Back, 1996; Back and Keith, 1999; Amin, 2002a). Here, I return to urban multicultures from below through an ontology of the encounter (Amin and Thrift, 2002a; 2002b; Ahmed, 2000) that stresses the eventfulness of this moment-ary world (Thrift, 2000a; Lefebvre, 2002; Seigworth and Gardiner, 2004).<sup>38</sup> Imagining urban multicultures as accumulations of innumerable moments of intercultural encounter, I want to exploit a productive tension between the excess and radical openness of encounters in an everyday sense (Massumi, 2002; Lefebvre, 2002; Seigworth and Gardiner, 2004) and the weight of virtual memories each one of us brings to moments of intercultural encounter to examine the temporary fixings of race. Through this tension, I trace how a layered concept of race thinking and the formatting of perceptions might come into play through the turbulence of interaction in everyday multicultures to expose the plasticity, ephemerality, but also the repetition of race.<sup>39</sup>

The sense of everydayness that I am interested in examining here is evocatively captured by Seigworth and Gardiner (2004, p.140) as that which appears '[b]etween the always already and the ever-not-quite-yet'. This then is a very particular concept of the everyday that is both emergent and radically open:

'the everyday is a whole that reconstitutes itself in each moment as that which subsists (insists) (persists) (ex-sists) as – more modestly? – one additional part alongside any and all of the other parts: the everyday as a whole moving alongside the other moments of the day-to-day.'

(Seigworth and Gardiner, 2004, p.142)

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<sup>38</sup> For example, in their manifesto for 'reimagining the urban' Amin and Thrift argue that we need to understand the city through an 'ontology of encounter or togetherness based on 'principles of connection, extension, and continuous novelty. The watchwords of this ontology may be counted as 'process' and 'potential' (Amin and Thrift, 2002a, p.27).

<sup>39</sup> Similarly, Saldanha's ethnography of psychedelic whiteness in Anjuna, Goa grapples with the temporary fixings of race as he works towards a concept of race that is simultaneously fluid and fixing. He argues: 'Anjuna shows that the materiality of race is embodied, machinic, and ecological. This makes racial difference messy, both physically and conceptually entangled with the differences of gender, eroticism, class, age, etc. How is it possible to think racial difference as simultaneously fluid and fixing, at once relational and discrete, at once productive and constraining, and always supported by a bewildering array of physical components' (Saldanha, forthcoming, p.145).



Elaborating Lefebvre's theory of moments, Seigworth and Gardiner (2004, p.142) go on to suggest that the everyday 'is wholly extended across the open infinity of moments, but forever in the next moment (of the whole's eternal return) ranges across all of them in infinitely varying dispersion, with different emphases and diminutions: a different(ial) whole at each moment.' Nurturing these sensibilities to the radically open, even elusive, nature of the everyday – a moment-ary world that Thrift (2002a, p.217) argues must be 'acted into' – encourages a distinct way of conceptualising socialities as taking form immanently, as continually emerging. As Gregory Seigworth (2000, p.235-6) has noted elsewhere, this sense of the everyday as excessive, as always escaping, opens up the possibility to align the event in the everyday with a Deleuzian concept of virtuality (Deleuze, 1988b; Deleuze and Guattari, 1994; Massumi, 1992; 2002).<sup>40</sup> The virtual attunes us to the excess or the 'infinitely particulate atmosphere that circulates around an occurrence or event' (Seigworth, 2000, p.236). More precisely Brian Massumi (2002, p.30) argues:

Something that happens too quickly to have happened, actually, is *virtual*. The body is as immediately virtual as it is actual. The virtual, the pressing crowd of incipencies and tendencies, is a realm of *potential*. In potential is where futurity combines, unmediated with pastness, where outsides are infolded ad sadness is happy (happy because the press to action and expression is life). The virtual is a lived paradox where what are normally opposites coexist, coalesce, and connect; where that what cannot be experiences cannot but be felt – albeit reduced and contained.

This concept of the everyday engenders a particular orientation to the social that begins to think about the event of race through sites of intensive difference (at once much bigger and smaller than the differences between human individuals) (Saldanha, forthcoming; DeLanda, 2002) and the immanent processes through which race fleetingly takes form, and not through fixed conceptions of race locked in through identities, representations, and

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<sup>40</sup> On this occasion Seigworth (2000) suggest through Maurice Blanchot (1993, p.241) that 'the everyday is that which escapes'. Seigworth (2002, p.235) goes on to expose how in *What is Philosophy* Deleuze and Guattari explicitly align their arguments around virtuality, and its relation to the 'actual' with Blanchot's philosophy of the event.

oppositions. If we are to take seriously this orientation to the social then everyday multicultures are best conceived as the accumulation of infinite moments of encounter (with both human and non-human bodies), with race emerging immanently at each moment of encounter through layered practices of race thinking. This, then is a world of radical possibility, where actualities are always already exceeded by possibilities. However, Nigel Thrift (2000a, p.217) has warned against an unrestrained celebration of the openness of the social, reminding us: '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.' And here, I want to temper the excessive, even weightless concept of encounter that comes through these accounts by holding onto the notion that each one of us is weighed down by vast banks of virtual memories at each and every moment of encounter. It is through the collision of the radical openness of each moment of intercultural encounter with histories of past events, institutional discipline, and micropolitical technique layered in geologies of virtual memory that the temporary fixings of race take form on the ground in places like Keighley. This collision helps us explain the fleeting emergence of race and its plasticity, without losing sight of the fact that so many intercultural encounters fall into repetitive, habituated – even institutionalised – fixings of race, that then bleed into a small set of dispositions and practices, including indifference, engagement, fear, suspicion, tolerance, and avoidance.

In this way, moments of intercultural encounter are never just about a meeting or coming together. An encounter is not something that happens to you, rather 'the sensed action of the encounter is filtered in order to make it do something *for* you' (Dewsbury, 2003, p.1918). Encounters are then enactments not of:

“sense so much as sensuousness, an embodied and somewhat automatic knowledge that functions like peripheral vision, not studied contemplation, a knowledge that is imageric and sensate rather than ideational”

(Taussig, 1991, p.147)

This concept of encounter compels us to face up to the affective intensities and forces that constitute everyday multicultures. Affect, understood as an active outcome of an encounter, either increases (through joy) or decreases (in sorrow) our capacities to act (Spinoza, 1994; Deleuze, 1988a; Thrift, 2004a). And thinking more concretely about how everyday multiculturalism is lived out, this concept of the encounter alerts us to the broader tendencies, resonances, and lines of force in cities (Thrift, 2004a). Affect is a vital element of cities (Thrift, 2005a); our elusive and fragmentary experiences of cities are composites of ‘billions of happy and unhappy encounters’ (Thrift, 1999, p.302), and becoming attuned to relations of force that course through urban multicultures encourages us to embrace the liveliness of multiculturalism. Contact zones of urban multicultures are sites of intense – perhaps exhilarating, but often unsettling or uncanny – ethnic mixture (Back, 1996; Amin and Thrift, 2002b), but urban multiculturalism is also about the comfort of segregated suburbs; the fearful, threatening topographies of ghettos or no-go areas; about the boredom, frustration, intolerance and misanthropy of congested roads, pavements or busy shops; about the possibilities of friendship and mutuality that surface – and more often than passing by unactualised – in classrooms or gyms. But more often than not we at worst overlook, and at best downplay, the life, passion and intensity of urban multicultures. By approaching urban multicultures through encounters I try to admit the affective intensities that living with differences engenders, and how these intensities continuously circulate, stick, scatter, accumulate and propagate through bodies, things and surroundings. Whether we encounter a raced body, a taxi, a kebab skewer, a street sign, or a particular park at dusk, an ontology of an encounter compels us to locate the event of the encounter in a philosophy of relations and affects that might provoke race thinking. But more than

simply stimulating race thinking, the affective intensities of urban multicultural are also an 'agitation to thought and practice' (Amin and Thrift, 2002a); affects increase or decrease our capacities to act. And so thinking multicultural through encounters maintains our focus on practical questions of how race comes to matter immanently as people make sense of prosaic moments of encounter, the rhythms of urban life and experiences of ethnicity and go on.

We are beginning to arrive at a distinct understanding of urban multicultural that is constituted through a dynamic sociality made up of countless moments of intercultural encounter. Here multicultural sociality is located firmly in a lively materialism (Bennett, 2004) that emphasises the dynamic, the emergent, the heterogeneous, the evanescent, the temporary, and the 'infinitely dilating' (Seigworth and Gardiner, 2004, p.140), but also the enduring, repetitious and routine ways in which race comes to matter. Through the twists and turns of affective intensity we can begin to grasp the fleeting emergence and fixings of race through sedimentations of intercultural encounter, as all kinds of bodies, things and surroundings stir layered processes of race thinking into action. Heterogeneous processes of racial differentiation unfold through assemblages of forces as machinic connections between disparate material elements (skin pigmentation, veils, calls for prayer, taxis, mosques) and their interplay with the immaterial (biographical events, memories, stories, rumour, prejudices, expectations, etc.) are mediated by virtual memories into (formatted) perceptions that direct judgments and bleed into practices as we act into an ever-emergent, moment-ary world. This appreciation for the turbulent affectivity of encounters and the layered game of race thinking requires an empiricism that begins not with fixed identities, genes, representations or oppositions, but with intensive differences, which Saldanha (forthcoming) reminds us are at once much bigger and smaller than the differences between individuals, and the immanent, morphogenetic processes and materialities through

which race takes form. Accordingly this research focuses on specific instances of becoming-white, becoming-Asian, becoming-Muslim through ephemeral processes of differentiation that unravel through the affective intensities, and not on whiteness, Asianness or Muslimness as identities, oppositions, or positions of privilege or victimhood (Dyer, 1988; Frankenberg, 1993; Bonnett, 1996; Ware and Back, 2002).

### **Interrogating the assemblage**

Through this chapter I have developed an expansive concept of race thinking through a dialogue between social scientific studies of race, cultural theory, and neuroscience as a line of flight from the theoretical tendencies of social constructionist accounts of race. Assembling race thinking, I emphasised that thinking should not be restricted to cognition by tracing out how thinking is simultaneously practical, layered and distributed or spaced through body/brain/culture meshworks (Connolly, 2002; Anderson and Harrison, 2006). These elements of race thinking introduce, I argue, new political intensities and registers to social scientific analyses of race and racisms. The half-second delay between the event we encounter and the perceptions we form becomes as a space of prejudice, where race is virtual to the sorting of incoming sensory material of an encounter through geologies of virtual memory that envelope institutional disciplines, micropolitical technique, and past events and experiences. Combining, or perhaps more accurately colliding, this notion of an encounter weighed down with virtual memory with a more open and excessive idea of encounters (Massumi, 2002; Seigworth and Gardiner, 2004) I began to think more explicitly about how race thinking might play out in the turbulent interactions of everyday multicultural. This involves considering how some material differences between bodies, things and spaces become sites of intensive differences as race comes to matter provisionally, fleetingly, but also repeatedly in moments of intercultural encounter. Simultaneously emphasising the excessive potential of encounters and the weight of history

bearing down on every moment of encounter I have opened a terrain through which we can track the fleeting emergence of race and its plasticity, without losing sight of how temporary fixings of race are very often routine and repetitive. The push of race in everyday practices of race thinking is located therefore somewhere between fluidity and fixity (Saldanha, forthcoming).

In the coming chapters I take three routes through urban multicultural in Keighley as I start to grasp the temporary fixings of race in and around Keighley. The point of departure for each of these routes is organised around a distinct materiality – bodies, cars and topographies – and each exposes different ways in which enduring racial formations take form in interaction in Keighley’s contact zones. An ontology of encounter is a dominant conceptual theme that runs through each empirical chapter as I consider the heterogeneous and fleeting taking form of race through encounters with bodies, Lexus’s, pubs, designer clothes, cooking smells, street signs, calls for prayer, money, kebab skewers, facial hair, television news, phenotype, veils and so on. Through the accumulated force of the moments of intercultural encounters presented in the empirical chapters I build a dense, tangled, and at times fragmentary account of multicultural in Keighley, where urban multicultures are envisioned as the ongoing accumulation of countless moments of intercultural contact and encounter. In my concluding chapter, I build on the momentum of these encounters to argue that by thinking about urban multicultural in this way we can better understand the force of race in everyday lives in mill towns like Keighley, providing some tentative but innovative answers to how we might begin to address urgent questions of how we might live together (Touraine, 2000; Hall, 2000; Amin, 2002a & b).

## Chapter Three

### Methods

#### *Ethnography, race and urban multicultural*

##### **Researching multicultural from below**

How might we begin to research the fleeting, but repetitive taking form of race in moments of intercultural encounter in places like Keighley? How can we grasp the immanently unfolding of whiteness, Asianness, Muslimness in the turbulent interactions that constitute urban multicultures? How might we track the machinic connections of race thinking and heterogeneous processes of racial differentiation on the ground? Preoccupied by these questions of how to research, engage and analyse the temporary fixings of race in Keighley, this chapter locates my research in what Claire Alexander (2006) has recently described as a ‘new generation of urban ethnography’ on race in Britain (see also Alexander, 1996; 2000; Back, 1996; Back and Nayak, 1999; Kalra, 2000; Nayak, 2003a) that has engaged urban ‘contact zones’, micro-socialities of habitual contact and encounter, and the everyday constitution of multiple, mobile and syncretic identities and ethnicities (Amin, 2002a). I begin by situating the research within a broader tradition of ethnography that has been characterised by a state of ongoing crisis under the force of post-structural, postcolonial, and feminist critique to its epistemological foundations (Clifford and Marcus, 1986; Clifford, 1988; 1997; Said, 1989; Denzin, 1997; Hutnyk, 2002), and alongside recent charges of ‘methodological timidity’ within cultural geography that have argued that research practices have failed to keep pace with theoretical talk (Thrift, 2000b; Pratt, 2000 cf. Latham, 2003; Crang, 2005). My discussion then locates my ethnography in a set of complex theoretical, ethical and practical fields that need to be confronted when engaging questions of race, race thinking and racisms. I then think more explicitly about how ethnography can help us form impressions of the temporary fixings of race through

everyday intercultural encounters, while recognising that the kind of everydayness that I am invoking 'does not easily or readily submit itself to either questions or answers from the knowing (and variously disciplined) subject/s of epistemology' (Seigworth and Gardiner, 2004, p.140). In the final three sections of the chapter I outline how my research practices defined the field in Keighley, I situate ethnography as an embodied practice, and I introduce how collage and montage forms (Benjamin, 1999; Pred, 2000) provided the inspiration for an aesthetic through which I could at once analyse and perform the assemblage of race thinking (Marcus and Saka, 2006), and evoke the force of race in moments of intercultural encounter in Keighley.

Ethnography and its promise of what Jack Katz (2001) has called 'luminous description' provided a set of research practices for engaging the messy and uncompromising realities of urban multiculturalism in Keighley. But before I discuss how a hybrid of ethnographic techniques opened a number of lines of inquiry into the turbulence of urban contact zones in Keighley and the temporary fixings of race, it is important to locate this research within a set of trenchant critiques that have undermined the epistemological foundations of ethnography. Here, I restrict my comments to continuing debates around the 'crisis of representation', how we might address the challenges deconstruction poses for ethnography, and how recent charges of methodological timidity in cultural geography might be answered (Alexander, 2004b; Keith, 1992; Latham, 2003).

The force of post-structural, post-colonial and feminist critique in anthropology – and its reverberations through the social sciences – has fundamentally shaken authorial claims to truth and objectivity (Clifford and Marcus, 1986; Clifford, 1988; 1997; Said, 1989; Haraway, 1991; Denzin, 1997; Smith, 1999; Hutnyk, 2002). Asking 'how is unruly experience transformed into an authoritative written account?' (Clifford *cit.* Crang, 2005, p.226), these



critiques have exposed anthropology's complicity in European colonialisms and imperialisms (Said, 1989; Smith, 1999; Hutnyk, 2002); laid bare the 'God tricks' that sustained the conceit of objective, rational, value free and invisible (masculinist) researchers (Haraway, 1991; Alexander, 2006); and fuelled introspection as ethnographers have grappled with writing practices as necessarily involving the creation of effects that shape how the field is translated for various constituencies (Crang, 2005; Clifford & Marcus, 1986; Keith, 1992; Denzin, 1997). The so-called 'crisis of representation' has provoked convulsions of reflexivity and self-criticism in anthropology and beyond as ethnographers sought to situate their research as partial and embodied accounts (Haraway, 1991), emphasised the (co-)production of knowledge within webs of power relations between researchers, respondents and audiences (Kamberelis 2003; Keith, 1992; McDowell, 1992),<sup>1</sup> and debated how culture should be written (Clifford and Marcus, 1988). However, as Mike Crang has noted (2005, p.226), the ongoing state of this 'crisis' and the 'excesses' of reflexivity have stirred backlash (Hutnyk, 2002; Bourdieu, 2003). The tenor of backlash most often takes the form of complaints about the narcissisms of 'coming clean' (Hutnyk, 2002) and a need 'substitute the facile delights of self-exploration for the methodological confrontation with the gritty realities of the field' (Bourdieu, 2003, p.282; also cited in Crang, 2005), or the tendencies for ethnography to talk as much about discourse as 'actual events' (Latham, 2003) as it negotiates attacks on ethnographic authority through aesthetic retreats to textual strategy (Said, 1989; Back, 1992). Less charitably, John Hutnyk (2002, p.15) goes on to characterise anthropology as 'mired in a spiral of self-doubt and self-indulgent crisis', arguing that the 'crisis' has enabled business-as-usual in a discipline whose practices have remained fundamentally unchanged by trenchant critique. He suggests:

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<sup>1</sup> In Geography Gillian Rose (1997, p.309) has introduced an important caveat to the tendencies of feminist geographers to perform 'Goddess tricks', warning of the epistemological dangers of uncritical claims to transparent reflexivity, where 'the transparent self looks outward, to understand its place in the world, to chart its position in the arenas of knowledge production, to see its own place in the relations of power'.

‘[T]he last thirty years of anthropology has been a truly productive crisis in terms of the provision of paper topics and coffee chats’ (Hutnyk, 2002, p.28).

Hutnyk’s (2002) reservations aside, the ‘reflexive turn’ in anthropology and the social sciences has shaken epistemological foundations and provoked reassessments of claims to objectivity, universality and truth made on behalf of social scientific knowledge. However, whether the lessons of deconstruction have changed research practices remains uncertain (Pratt, 2000).<sup>2</sup> Within Geography, some have argued that the ongoing rumbles of this ‘crisis of representation’ have ‘enfeebled Geography as *an empirical discipline*’ by deflecting attention to away from research practices in the rush to talk about representation (Latham, 2003, p.1994). Alternatively, in a telling intervention Thrift (2000b) has charged cultural geographers with ‘methodological timidity’ (Latham, 2003, p.1993), arguing;

Cultural geographers have allied themselves with a number of qualitative methods...most notably in-depth interviews and ethnographic ‘procedures’...[W]hat is surprising is how narrow this range of skills still is, how wedded we still are to the notion of bringing back the ‘data’, and then re-representing it (nicely packaged up as a few supposedly illustrative quotations), and the narrow range of sensate life that they register.’

(Thrift, 2000b, p.3)

While Thrift perhaps overstates his case, downplaying creative experimentations and methodologically innovative research (Pratt, 2000; Pred, 1998; 2000; see also Latham, 2003; Meth, 2003a), his argument has been difficult to ignore. Such lines of argument have re-focused attention on research practices and appropriate methods in ethnography. They have complicated simplistic claims to the authenticity of fieldwork and its power for uncovering the ‘processes and meanings that undergird socio-spatial life’ (Herbert, 2000), and encouraged more careful considerations of the movement from ‘how to why’ in the production of ethnographic knowledge (Katz, 2001; 2002). However, facing up to these

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<sup>2</sup> For example, Pratt (2002, p.639) has argued: ‘We have yet...to put much of our theoretical talk into research practices. Our talk may be that of poststructuralists, postcolonialists, or social constructivists, but our practices continues to be that of colonising humanists.’

charges of methodological conservatism, there have been notable examples of methodological innovation and experimentation as ethnographies have attempted to engage, for example, the tissue of relationships and events in prosaic urban sites (Latham, 2003; Kusenbach, 2003), or different – and specifically emotional, habitual and tacit – forms of knowing (Meth, 2003a; Latham, 2003; see also Crang, 2005).

These unresolved questions of reflexivity, and the epistemological challenges of situating research in the embodied practices that constitute fieldwork, necessarily course through this ethnography. I revisit these issues in more detail below as I consider how my embodied spatial practices constructed the ‘field’ in Keighley as I went about trying to understand the temporary fixings of race in moments of intercultural encounter.

### **Researching race and racisms**

‘Mapping the issues’ in an introduction to a journal special issue entitled ‘Writing Race: Ethnography and Difference’, Claire Alexander (2006, p.397) argues that despite widespread agreement across the social sciences about the constructed and illusory nature of race research practices have failed to reflect theoretical talk: ‘it remains very much the case that those of us who engage in empirical work have continued to conduct research into racial and ethnic groups, formations and practices regardless’. Research practices have not simply fallen out of step with our theoretical talk through some kind of methodological conservatism, or a failure to translate the lessons of deconstruction to what we *do* in the field – although these, to be sure, are part of the problem. Rather this situation has arisen through an uncomfortable and troubling reckoning that the need to combat enduring racisms, and entrenched ‘lived materialities of racial and ethnic discrimination, violence, and terror’ are too urgent to be sidelined by theoretical misgivings (Alexander, 2006, p.397-8). These dilemmas and negotiations framed my research as I tried to understand the

momentary taking form and fixings of race in Keighley, without falling back onto essentialist conceptions of race, or invoking fixed and stable identities, in my research practices. Here, without wanting to disregard broader debates that have begun to chart complex theoretical, ethical and methodological fields that need to be confronted when researching race (Twine, 2000; Gunaratnam, 2003; Bulmer and Solomos, 2004), I focus on ethnographies of urban multicultural and everyday experiences of race and ethnicity to consider the particular problems of researching race and racisms without sliding into reified and reifying conceptions of race.

In the United States there is a strong and lively tradition of urban ethnography engaging questions of race and racisms that traces a genealogy back to the early days of the Chicago School in the 1930s (Whyte, 1993; Suttles, 1968; Anderson, 1995; 1999; Duneier, 1992; 2000; Wacquant, 2002). Ethnographies of everyday experiences of race and urban contact zones have a more chequered history in Britain, largely confined to anthropological studies of bounded ethnic minority communities (Dahya, 1974; Ballard, 1992; Banks, 1996) that have attracted recent criticism for their culturalist – and even ‘zoological’ (Hutnyk, 2002)– approaches, and are routinely located in a tradition of scholarship traced directly back to the Orientalism that implicated Anthropology in practices of colonial management (Alexander, 2006; Said, 1989; Hutnyk, 2002). Elsewhere, Michael Keith (1992, p.551) has more generally criticised the ‘white core’ of social science that has tended to repress minority communities through racist caricatures and what he calls ‘pathological sociology’. However, an emerging tradition of urban ethnography mapping racist landscapes through lived experiences of race and racism, is beginning to provide nuanced, incisive and compassionate accounts of African Caribbean communities (Alexander, 1996; Back, 1996), British Pakistanis and Bengalis (Alexander, 2000; 2004), and poor white communities (Back, 1996; Back and Nayak, 1999; Nayak, 2003a & b), that deconstruct the typecasting

of, for example, young British Bengalis and Pakistanis as violent Asian gang members (Alexander, 2000; 2004; Amin, 2002a) or the easy labelling of young, white working class men as racist (Back, 1996; Nayak, 2003a). Keeping in mind Keith's (1992; p.551) caveat that '[e]thnography is neither a passport to the ringside view of the exotic nor a form of methodological avant-gardism', I locate my ethnography in this fledgling tradition.<sup>3</sup>

Within this 'new generation' of urban ethnography in Britain there is widespread recognition that research practices remain resilient to change in the face of both broader epistemological critique and the specific demands of researching race. Anoop Nayak effectively captures how talk of deconstruction has failed to translate into research practices as he exposes how Ruth Frankenberg's (1993) impressive account of the whiteness as a social formation in *White Women: Race Matters* maintains throughout that whiteness is a social construct, but then conflates whiteness as a social process with a 'secure, apparently knowable object' by anchoring her study in the 'corporeal certainty of her respondents, so called 'white women'' (Nayak, 2006, p.416). The implications of these observations are far-reaching. However, Nayak (2006) begins to negotiate this apparent inevitability of returning to the social categories we are trying to get away from, by sketching the possibilities of thinking about race in terms of performances and practices, and the doings of race in research contexts. Although, I do not follow Nayak's (2006) argument into a post-race theory, I agree that thinking carefully about how practices and performances of cultural identities might provide useful ways of negotiating this apparent impasse. In my research then whiteness provided my route into thinking about temporary fixings of race in Keighley and how urban multicultures might be understood, but for me these questions were framed by an ontology of encounter. In this way my research

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<sup>3</sup> This 'new generation' of urban ethnography in Britain has not been without its criticisms. For example, Varinder Kalra (2006) has recently launched a provocative attack on what he sees as an obsession with 'cultural minutiae' and the importance of 'authentic' field' experience, in ways that neglect engagements with how ethnography might provide a 'useful tool for activist academics'.

practices did not involve collapsing whiteness into the social category 'white', but directed my attention to the particularity of how whiteness was *done* in Keighley through moments of encounter, contact, and exchange. Although I remain unconvinced that this strategy completely avoided the dangers of falling back into 'the corporeal certainties' of race, directing attention to the momentary taking form of race through interactions on the ground accessed from various locations (both in terms of the sites of ethnography, who I spoke to and the methods I put to use in order to grasp these moments of encounter) certainly maintained a heightened awareness of, and vigilance against, such tendencies.

### **Researching the everyday**

Quite apart from its open invitation to entertain a delicious anarchy, exposing principles no less than dogma to the white heat of daily practicality and contradiction, there is surely plurality in everydayness. My everyday has a certain routine, doubtless, but is also touched by a deal of unexpectedness, which is what many of us like to think of as essential to life, a metaphysics of life, itself.

(Taussig, 1991, p.148)

Through issues framed around researching the everyday, I want to open up a discussion of how we might address the methodological demands of attempting to grasp the everydayness of experiences and practices that constitute urban multicultural (Latham, 2003; Taussig, 1991), but also how we can develop our research practices so that we might register neglected intensities of everyday knowing (the habitual, the affective, the tacit, etc.) (Thrift, 2000; Latham, 2003). This research explicitly works towards understanding the fleshy and visceral realities of intercultural contact on the ground in Keighley. I was also eager not to obliterate a sense of everyday multicultures as diffuse, heterogeneous but also repetitive as they take form through embodied practices of accumulated moments of encounter. My ethnography tried to grasp what we might call the 'structure of feeling' (Williams, 1977; Harrison, 2000), or 'tissues of relationships and events' (Latham, 2003) that frame experiences urban multicultural in Keighley, but these aspects of urban life are

difficult to deal with adequately with conventional methods.<sup>4</sup> Here, I examine two sets of strategies through which I tried to engage the diffuseness and affectivity of everyday multicultures. Firstly, I discuss how I cultivated a set of sensibilities to admit some of the fleeting, ephemeral, banal, and overlooked components of everyday life into my ethnography, before investigating some possibilities for methodological innovation.<sup>5</sup>

In an effort to cultivate sensibilities that embrace the mundane, affective and ephemeral dimensions of urban multicultural through my research practices I turned to Surrealist, Dadaist and Situationist writings on cities that have variously evoked the moods, atmospheres and affective contours of cities and particular modalities of inhabiting the urban (Benjamin, 1999; Debord, 1995; Sinclair, 1997; Pile, 2005). Here, I focus briefly on three different routes through these literatures, and how they engendered ways of thinking and researching everyday multicultural in Keighley that exceeded the application of conventional research practices. Firstly, I began to think about the different kinds of urban knowingness framed by Walter Benjamin's distinction between contemplation and distraction (Benjamin, 1997; 1999; Taussig, 1991; Latham, 1999). For Benjamin contemplation correlates to a form of 'academicism' (Taussig, 1991). It is a distant and aloof form of knowledge that is studied, eyeful and engrossing (Taussig, 1991). By contrast, distraction is much more akin, Benjamin suggests, to the habitual, tactile everyday knowledge (Taussig, 1991; Latham, 1999), a kind of peripheral-vision, where gazes flit incessantly from objects to bodies and back again without pausing to contemplate. Becoming alive to this distinction between contemplation and distraction, and holding it in

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<sup>4</sup> Harrison (2000, p.499) makes this argument in a particularly uncompromising way, suggesting: 'The failure identified here is the inability of knowledge in social analysis to do anything to apprehend the lived present as an *open-ended generative process*; as *practice*. The everyday experience of the lived disturbs categories of thought by way of contingencies, excess and indefinite answers.' While I think the thrust of the criticism here is well placed, Harrison (2000) is also a little too quick to close down the possibility that 'pushed in the appropriate direction there is no reason why these methods cannot be made to dance a little' (Latham, 2003, p.2000).

<sup>5</sup> A full inventory of my research practices, including lists of in-depth interviews, participant diaries, go-along interviews, and the sites where I *did* participant observation sites, is provided in the appendices.

mind during participant observations in contact zones in Keighley, helped to shift my thinking about the force of race in moments of intercultural encounter. Secondly, I turned to Situationist writings on cities and psychogeography (Debord, 1955; Plant, 1992; Sinclair, 1997) to sharpen my sensitivity to the affective contours of multiculture in Keighley and to explore psychogeographical techniques that attempt to capture different, shifting perspectives on the various moods, ambiances and microclimates of the town. Inspired then by the possibilities of psychogeography, and specifically ‘purposeful drifts’ (Sinclair, 1997), as embodied practices for registering and experiencing the impact of an environment on human emotions (Bonnett, 1991; Pile, 2005), I experimented with these techniques through both my own ‘purposeful drifts’ through Keighley and in go-along interviews (Kusenbach, 2003). My final guide for cultivating a heightened attentiveness to the role of the mundane, fleeting and fragmentary composition of everyday multiculture was the ‘documentary realism’ of Georges Perec (1990; 1997; 2003; Becker, 2001). Perec’s ‘experiments in social description’ (Becker, 2001, p.63) provide useful instruction in how to look at daily life through the minute details of clothes, buses, street signs, the place where you pause to buy food or a newspaper, the arrangement of street furniture, cars, and so on. Howard Becker (2001, p.73) has argued that through Perec’s writing social scientists can learn to describe mundane experience, and ‘what’s happening when nothing is happening’. And by reading Perec I started to learn to pay attention to the mundane materialities of urban multiculture, and how numerous objects were variously enrolled in the temporary fixings of race in conversations, interviews, overheard gossip, and observations.

In Keighley, I also developed a number of research practices – with differing degrees of success – in an attempt to register the practised nature of urban multiculture and something of the intensity of ‘sensate life’ (Thrift, 2000) that conventional methods fail to fully engage. In particular I was influenced by Alan Latham’s (2003) experimentation with



the 'diary-interview, diary photograph' methods that engaged the tactile accretions of embodied experiences and practices that constitute cosmopolitan urban cultures in Ponsonby Road in Auckland. Gathering text, diary entries and photographs, Latham (2003) assembles space-time diagrams to communicate how place is practised, in effect performing the go-along interview through his textual strategy (Crang, 2005, p.230). While I had hoped to replicate the diary-interview method in Keighley to grasp how urban multiculturalism was practised through accumulations of embodied, tactile and practical knowledge, I struggled to recruit enough people to dedicate the considerable time and effort necessary to the success of this strategy. In the end I only received six diaries of varying quality, but despite these limitations some of the material elicited through the diary-interview technique provided compelling insights into daily rhythms and routines, habitual contacts zones, and experiences and understandings of urban spaces in the town, that otherwise might have remained obscured. Four go-along interviews in and around Keighley provided a more successful research technique for grasping the practised nature of urban multiculturalism (Kusenbach, 2003). These go-along interviews started to bring out how personal biographies were entangled with particular sites and events and exposed the social architectures of urban sites that shaped experiences of, and practices in, urban space (Kusenbach, 2003; Crang, 2005). Taken together, the diary-interviews and go-along interviews provided an important supplement to other research practices (including participant observation, serial in-depth interviews, informal conversations and archival searches of local newspapers) by beginning to engage forms of tactile, rather than reflective, knowingness and the practised nature of urban multiculturalism.

In this section, I have attempted to deal with methodological questions of how we might research the affective and embodied contours of urban multiculturalism, and how they are practised. This discussion has already alluded some of the messy realities of actually doing

research in/on urban multicultural, and now I want to focus more substantively on how my research practices in Keighley generated the field.

### **Practising the field**

Fieldwork can be productively considered as a set of embodied spatial practices – involving travel, physical displacement, temporary dwelling away from home, as well as the daily rhythms of actually *doing* ethnography (Clifford, 1997) – and in this section I reflect on how my multiple embodied research practices during four months of regularly visiting Keighley and six months living in the town performed fieldwork. But how exactly did my various research practices produce the field in Keighley? Reflecting my interest in thinking about the spaces of urban multicultural from below as constituted through accumulations of moments of encounter and embodied practice, my fieldwork is framed productively as the outcome of accumulations of research practices and ethnographic encounters, rather than something that unfolded in a bounded geographical space. Thinking about the field in this way, opens two lines of argument here. Firstly, the field as a relational space alerts us to the excessive spatial composition of fieldwork, and troubles the tendencies to separate theory from practice in talk about doing ethnography. Secondly, it compels us to consider the multiple geographies of practice that accreted to produce my field, and here I conceptualise the field as an accumulation of ethnographic encounters and a set of pathways through urban multicultural in Keighley.

Before expanding on what I actually did in Keighley, I want to first to pause to trouble the rigid distinctions between theory and practice, that tend to be shadowed by the separation of writing from fieldwork in a lot of talk about ethnographic practice.<sup>6</sup> In his ethnography

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<sup>6</sup> These distinctions are an effect of the so-called ‘crisis of representation’ and the particular ways in which many ethnographers have tried to deal with this epistemological challenges (Clifford and Marcus, 1986; Clifford, 1988; Denzin, 1997; cf. Hutnyk, 2002; Alexander, 2006)

of psychedelic whiteness in Anjuna, Goa, Arun Saldanha (forthcoming) frames ethnography as thought, disrupting the distinction between doing and writing/thinking by setting up – with the help of Deleuze – a recursive relationship between theory and practice. And so Saldanha (forthcoming, p.40-1) stages his account of psychedelic whiteness as an encounter between the distributions and tendencies of bodies on dance floors and beaches in Anjuna and his interest in a set of ideas around corporeality, actor-network theory and the materialist philosophy of Gilles Deleuze. In similar ways, the ideas that run through this thesis emerged from an encounter between the momentum of raced differences I was witnessing and encountering in Keighley, and a series of ideas around theories of practice, affect (Thrift, 1996; 2004a), and different ways of conceptualising the social (Deleuze, 1987; Bennett, 2001). More prosaically, the multiple geographies of practise that constituted my fieldwork also enveloped my biography that included experiences of living in Leicester and Vancouver where daily routines of work, school, university and leisure involved countless moments of intercultural contact, exchange and friendship and had meant I was troubled by, and curious about, talk of parallel lives and the allure of the BNP in Keighley; my regular shuttling between Keighley and Durham, with time ‘away’ from the field providing opportunities to reflect on, discuss and present research material and rethink research practices; or my reading of urban multiculturalism from below in the town against the diagnoses of segregation and parallel lives circulated by government reports and newspaper articles.

In addition to admitting the multiple geographies folded into my field, I also want to think about how my research practices added up to an accumulation of ethnographic encounters and a set of pathways through multiple contact zones of urban multiculturalism in Keighley. Practising the field in this way corresponded closely with my desire to think about urban multiculturalism from below as accretions of innumerable moments of intercultural contact,

enabling me to engage multiple contact zones in the town and the different modalities and intensities through which intercultural encounters unfolded. These research practices also reflected my interest in exposing what Pred (1998) has called 'silenced actual geographies of racism' and performances of whiteness by women in and around Keighley. More specifically, while recent ethnographies of whiteness and multiculturalism from below in urban Britain were influential in framing this research (Back, 1996; Back and Nayak, 1999; Back, Crabbe and Solomos, 2001; Nayak, 2003a), I was also eager not to reproduce the tendencies in these ethnographies to focus almost exclusively on the experiences and practices of youth groups, often through fieldwork at youth clubs (Back, 1996; Back and Nayak, 1999) or schools (Nayak, 2003a). The ethnographic details of these studies have been invaluable in troubling the easy labelling of young white working class men as racist. However, I also think while the ethnographic gaze remains focussed so heavily on the performances of whiteness by mainly working class young men these ethnographies run the risk of inadvertently reproducing assumptions of what racists look like, leaving many other habitual geographies of race and racism unscrutinised.<sup>7</sup> And so practising the field as accumulations of encounter and sets of pathways through multiculturalism also reflects the practical demands of conducting research with people who are often less likely to be found in settings like schools or youth clubs. Below, I reflect explicitly on how my practices produced a field of encounters and pathways.

### *Accumulations of encounters*

My research practices in Keighley produced countless moments of ethnographic encounter. For example, participant observation and in-depth and serial interviews at a College of Further Education, various hairdressing salons and a mother and toddler group in Haworth formed the primary focus of what I did in Keighley, staging countless encounters through

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<sup>7</sup> That said, Les Back's (2002) ethnographic work on white supremacists on the Internet goes a considerable ways to complicate assumptions of what racists look like in popular and academic imaginaries.

recorded interviews and conversations. In addition, participant observation and amassing inventories of public and quasi-public spaces also produced ethnographic encounters with the underside of intercultural contact and relations in Keighley. And so sitting in a café, at the newspaper table in the library, on a bench in the shopping centre, in the town hall square, in the bus station, in Lund Park, in the student union, in the pub down the road from where I lived, recording and retrieving, entering brief conversations, I encountered – and tried to document – the turbulent socialities of everyday multiculturalism in Keighley. Taken together these encounters staged through participant observation and in-depth and serial interviews produced the field through which I came to understand multiculturalism from below, and heterogeneous processes of differentiation through which race took form.

### *Pathways*

In addition to accumulations of encounter, the various pathways I took in my research practices also produced the field in this research. While these pathways overlap in many ways with the sites through which I staged encounters, they are also suggestive of some distinct ways in which I practised the field in Keighley. Pathways through multiculturalism from below in Keighley began with my observant participation of the daily rhythms that living and doing research in Keighley involved – and included observations as I walked into town, shopped at the supermarket, drove to interviews, bought newspapers at the newsagents down the road, ate in local restaurants, and so on. I also took more purposeful pathways through the urban multiculturalism through walking practices inspired by the writings of psychogeographers and through go-along interviews (Kusenback, 2003). In my ‘purposeful drifts’ I took numerous pathways through particular neighbourhoods, along backstreets and overgrown paths, recording and retrieving arrangements of bodies, buildings, signs, green spaces, graffiti, street furniture, architecture, lighting, public spaces, etc. in an attempt to evoke the moods and feel – in necessarily partial and situated ways –

of the mundane contact zones that make up so much of urban multicultural. Alternatively, through go-along interviews I began to forge insights of how other people practised the mundane spaces of urban multicultural as I followed them on pathways through the town. These pathways into multicultural from below opened by the go-along interviews produced situated perspectives onto how multicultural is inhabited and practised, how personal biographies and memories were woven through particular sites, and how social architectures shape how urban spaces in used, occupied and avoided (Kusenbach, 2003).

### **Embodying the field**

Though fieldwork is often portrayed as a classical colonial encounter in which the fieldworker lords it over her/his respondents, the fact of the matter is that it usually does not feel much like that at all. More often it is a curious mixture of humiliations and intimidations mixed with moments of insight and even enjoyment. (Thrift, 2003a, p.106)

My discussion of how fieldwork was practised and constituted through the methodologies I used and activities I performed in Keighley has begun the work of embodying the field. Here, I wish to situate my ethnography more explicitly (Haraway, 2001), emphasising how ‘the researcher embodies the field and the field places the researcher’ (Saldanha, forthcoming, p.40) in the recognition that the knowledge generated through my research practices is necessarily produced from certain places and particular embodied perspectives. Here, I attempt to embody the field in three specific ways, tracking how this research was done through a specific body to emphasise the partiality and situatedness of the knowledge produced through my research practices that must engender a modesty for the claims made on or by this research.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> My intention here is not to provide comprehensive confession or self-disclosure, but is to attempt to grapple with some of the issues that inevitable frame this research and emphasise the partiality of the accounts it generates.

Firstly, I want to think about the various ways in which I was awkwardly placed in complex, heterogeneous and fluid processes of differentiation on the ground through my fieldwork. This awkwardness comes in large part I think from how I felt I stood out through the material connections of my skin, clothes, satchel, camera, accent, notebook, newspaper, glasses, tape recorder, etc. as well as my relative speeds as I hung around cafés, benches or parks or walked purposefully through neighbourhoods, and often paying a little too much attention. I felt conspicuous, as if my presence was constantly soliciting questions: What's he up to? What's he writing? Why isn't he at work? Why is sitting there again? Why is he walking around here? Why is he photographing that? I have no way of knowing of how well placed these anxieties around 'fitting in' and passing unnoticed were. However, on several occasions my curiosity was noticed and initiated brief, and for the most part, uneventful confrontations. A sense of awkwardness also descended on the particular situations where I 'came out' a researcher. For example, I felt out of place as a young man arriving at a mother and toddler group armed with questions, but not a baby, or being uneasy about turning up for yet another haircut. It is impossible to fully grasp how my awkward embodiment of the field shaped the kinds of knowledge my research practices produced, but I want to return some of these specific questions below when I think through the messy power relations that framed ethnographic encounters.<sup>9</sup> Maybe just as significant, however, is how I found it difficult to forget that I was an 'ethnographer with a mission' (see Saldanha, forthcoming), and how this inflected on how I saw the underside of intercultural contact and relations in Keighley. I found that I was constantly removing myself from the rhythms of everyday multicultural in the town, looking for, anticipating, and contemplating, encounters and events, and tentatively reading meanings into the distracted dispositions, looks, styles of movement, avoidances, greetings, conversations,

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<sup>9</sup> In a frank account of ethnographic research with young British Bengalis at a youth club in Tower Hamlets, Claire Alexander (2000) movingly and powerfully communicates how she felt variously intimidated, out of place, vague and unworldly. These are the kind of anxieties and insecurities that I am trying to grasp at in this discussion.

pathways of other people. And while doing this participant observation I was racked by frustrations and insecurities about not being able to know how much of what I encountered came from my own instincts and dispositions, and how much I was learning from others as they interacted.

Secondly, I want to reflect on how the field was produced through particular performances of various identities (including whiteness, researcher, male, and outsider) (Back, 1992) as I tried to negotiate access and entry to particular field sites and engage potential respondents. In some circumstances this involved playing up academic credentials as a researcher. On others it involved a politeness and approachability that needed to quickly allay fears about what and who I might be as I turned up asking to speak with people. Or then again elsewhere it involved downplaying the local knowledge I had acquired during my time in Keighley to elicit further explanation. The point here, however, is also that I was never fully in control of these performances of my research identities. For me this was demonstrated most starkly through the unsettling experiences one evening when I arrived at Becky and George's home to do an interview with Becky. George opened the door, shook my hand and said, 'Good luck' before taking a seat opposite me at the dining room table. The week before I had talked to Becky at a mother and toddler group about everyday life in Keighley, during which she had described her husband as racist. Between then and the interview my visit had clearly been billed as a show-down between me – a green academic cloistered at some university – and George, with his out-spoken and racist views. This encounter also segues into the practical and ethical issues of how I dealt with racist sentiments and statements in the field (Back, 1992; Ware and Back, 2002). Clearly such statements and feelings formed an important component of the underside of inter-ethnic relations that I was interested in, and it was important not to close down discussions or simply dismiss such opinions and perspectives. However, I was also uncomfortable in



giving tacit agreement with racist statements or feelings by remaining silent when I encountered them, and so in research encounters I would register that I disagreed with what was being said (Back, 1992), and tried to negotiate understandings of how they had come to form such perspectives, feelings, dispositions and actions.

Following on from these observations, I want to close this section by trying to situate this research in complex webs of power relations identified as we embodying the field (Haraway, 1991; Rose, 1997). Firstly, I think it is important to complicate simplified notions that the research process is inescapably objectifying and hierarchical, with the researcher 'lord[ing] it over' over their respondents (Thrift, 2003a, p106; Rose, 1997; Alexander, 2000). Here I focus specifically on the role of gender in this research, situating ethnographic encounters between me, a male academic and female respondents in the twists and turns of swirling power relations. I am not making claims here for 'transparent reflexivity' (Rose, 1997), but it is important to register that gendered power relations mediate the research process (Back, 1992). Back (1992, p.224) has identified a tendency to for many male ethnographers to ignore the role of gender in research, and relates this tendency to an on-going discomfort in dealing with the challenges of feminism. He goes on to suggest that this discomfort has translated into a *modus operandi* where it is assumed that men cannot do research on women, and equally that gender does not affect research relationships between male ethnographers and male respondents (Back, 1992). I want to challenge these enduring assumptions by arguing that the complex power relations that inevitably frame ethnographic encounters between a male ethnographer and female respondents do not preclude the possibility of understanding or devalue the knowledge produced. However, the distinct embodiments of research encounters, and the conditions through which the knowledge is produced need to be acknowledged and their partiality emphasised. The insights and accounts in this ethnography are then necessarily the

outcome of negotiated gender relations and identities, which are themselves never fixed. And negotiating gender in research encounters drew up issues around, for example, experiences of being objectified under the gaze of young men in public that I might otherwise have downplayed, or even ignored, as they did not form part of the texture of my everyday experiences of urban multiculturalism in Keighley. Moreover, reflecting on how I embodied the field begins to recognise how my strange requests for interviews and conversations at hairdressing salons or mother and toddler groups, for example, might have attracted suspicion, and framed the subsequent research encounters. But embodying the research also requires more than a simple invocation as male researcher as powerful and females respondents as objectified. Gender relations in my ethnographic encounters were twisted through other regimes of differentiation (including class, age, money, education, time, and work) – as became clear as I was routinely stood up, put off and set up in the research – disrupting any easy equivalence between male researcher as powerful and female respondents as objectified (Back, 1992; Rose, 1997; Alexander, 2000).

Drawing these three lines of argument together, we can better appreciate some of the ways in which the field is embodied by the researcher and her/his practices, and how the research in turn places the researcher (Haraway, 1991). And by embodying the field we begin to admit the partiality of the stories we tell and the knowledge we co-produce in ethnographic encounters. This recognition needs to then translate into modesty about the claims we make for research.

## Translating the field/Performing the assemblage

As my own words have found their way onto the page; as I have striven to be as artful as possible in my articulations; I have sought to bring alive while simultaneously opening the text to multiple sets of meaning and multiple ways of knowing; as I have intermingled my own voice with very differently situated voices that peak past one another as often as the speak to one another; as I have assembled a Benjamin-inspired version of the montage form – deploying a strategy of radical heterogeneity, intercutting a set of geographical (hi)stories, often focussing on seemingly inconsequential details to project the largest possible picture, juxtaposing the incompatible and the contradictory, attempting to illuminate by way of stunning constellation; as I have repeatedly called upon repetitive devices and cascading questions to capture complexity and ambiguity, to drive home a point, to open up the possibility of alternative readings that transcend the taken for granted, I have had the persistent concern that much of my unconventional textural strategy would come to naught.

(Pred, 2000, p.xiii)

To conclude my discussion of methods I briefly want to introduce the styles in which I present the empirical material in the coming chapters. Without wanting to revisit the ‘crisis of representation’ or detour endless debates about *writing* culture at length (Clifford and Marcus, 1986; Clifford, 1988; Denzin, 1997; cf. Hutnyk, 2002), I have taken inspiration from Benjamin’s (1999) montage form, and more particularly Allan Pred’s (2000) powerful and provocative account of racisms in Sweden through the montage form. In the quote above Pred (2000) begins to elaborate how he hopes that his artful putting to work of ‘very differently situated voices’ opens them up to innovative interpretations, destabilises meanings, but also shares his anxiety that by using the montage form his arguments might be overlooked as wordplay. Pred’s (2000) work has also brought different textual strategies, including repetition and cascading questions, into his account of racisms to reinforce arguments, often in ways that disturb academic conventions. While I attempt nothing as impressive as the montage form as I trace the temporary fixings of race through bodies, cars and topographies, the aesthetics of the collage and montage forms influence how I have analysed and performed the assemblage of race thinking through the accumulated moments of intercultural encounter.

My empirical chapters do not follow linear narratives, but gather and juxtapose moments of intercultural contact, and multiple tellings of these encounters to sketch – and perform – the fleeting, fragmentary but also repeated ways in which race comes to matter in and around Keighley. I perform this gathering of moments of encounter through various textual strategies that intermingle academic prose, interview transcripts, newspaper articles, novels, transcripts of film, photographs, maps, psychogeographies, lists, etc. Through the cacophony of situated perspectives, I hope to simultaneously grasp the messy, fleeting and fragmentary realities of urban multicultures in Keighley, to communicate something of the distinct mood and atmospheres in the town, and encourage novel ways of thinking about urban multicultures from below. A number of textual strategies also play an important role in my accounts. At times, for example, like Pred (2000) I rely on repetition to reinforce a point, or different rhythms to evoke affects and moods, or to pick up on the ways in which memories appear to puncture and cascade into consciousness. I also use lists throughout my account to two ends. As Howard Becker (2001) has argued in reference to Georges Perec's documentary realism, lists of bodies, things, and surroundings are powerful representational devices that can carry the mundanity and routine of everyday lives. But secondly, lists also provide a useful textual strategy for flattening relations between bodies, sounds, things, surroundings, smells, etc. in the temporary fixings of race in and around Keighley. Lists force us repeatedly to recognise that race thinking is a distributed practice, and that the push of race is variously spaced through immanent and heterogeneous connections of skin, street signs, accent, facial hair, pubs, Lexus's, calls for prayer, kebab skewers, salwar kameez, rucksacks, television news, and so much more. Through the momentum built up by these textual strategies and my repeated gathering of moments of intercultural encounter gathered in the three empirical chapters, I then revisit contemporary conceptual and political thinking about race and the multicultural city.

## Chapter Four

### Bodies

#### *Resonances of race*

##### **Becoming-terrorist (1)**

Monday, 25<sup>th</sup> July 2005. 11.20am. Eighteen days have passed since four suicide bombers blew themselves up on London's transport system. Fifty-two people were killed, and more than 700 people were injured. Four days ago four explosive devices failed to detonate in London. Those suspected of the attempted bombings are on the run.

Haworth. A young man leaves the holiday cottage he is renting with friends; he turns and walks down the cobbled street towards a hire car. He seems relaxed, unmindful that he and his friends have been under surveillance. The tranquillity of the still morning is punctured by the hard acceleration of a car; brakes screech. Armed police jump out of this unmarked car. They force this man, and a passer-by, to the floor. The men lie face down on the cobbles. Arms spread out. Firearms trained at their heads. Adrenaline rushes through veins. Flashback? Waves of affectively charged memories of police enacting a shoot to kill policy in London 3 days ago? A second man, witnessing these events begins to flee, but is caught. Sniffer dogs are brought in to search the illegally parked hire car for explosives. The cottage is raided.

The operations of what Cindi Katz (2005) calls 'banal terrorisms' were evident on this morning in Haworth. Terror is virtual. It is immanent to day-to-day lives. (Massumi, 1993; 2005). Visual economies are charged by anxiety and suspicion; the affective energies scattered by some bodies – always raced, gendered, aged, cultured in particular ways – have been intensified after the murderous events in London on July 7<sup>th</sup>, and the failed bombings

on July 21<sup>st</sup>. On this Monday morning there were, of course, no terrorists in Haworth – a chocolate box village just a couple of miles outside Keighley that is probably better known as the erstwhile home of the Brontë sisters and a tourist industry that trades on the affection for its former residents. Rather four men – ‘three of Asian appearance and one white’, according to that week’s edition of the *Keighley News* – were renting a cottage on Main Street while they celebrated a friend’s wedding in the area. One of the men, an American, had been giving lectures on ‘community cohesion and the Prophet Mohammad’s teachings on living peacefully’ (*Keighley News*, 27.07.2005, p.1). The passer-by pinned to the floor was an Israeli tourist, who happened to *fit* a description – ‘he had dark skin and looked Asian’ (ibid.). In the end – according at least to the local press – the police apologised for the misunderstanding and even shared a joke about the incident over a cup of tea with the men.

The absurdity of this ‘terror alert’ – that located the picturesque heart of ‘Brontëland’ on a plane of consistency alongside New York, Washington, Bali, Istanbul, Madrid, London, Israel/Palestine, Iraq as a vector in the ‘war on terror’ – begins to suggest how events came to colour perceptions. The becoming-terrorist of these ‘Asian-looking’ bodies lays bare perceptual habits and the operations of race in an affectively charged ‘visual economy’ (Poole, 1997; Saldanha, forthcoming), forcing us to confront a series of awkward questions. Guided by the ethical, political and practical imperatives of anti-racist praxis much of contemporary academic thought has been dedicated to emphasising the social construction, historical emergence, and cultural specificity of ‘race’. Yet this talk falters under the force of stories like this, too frequently ending in what Gilroy (1998 p.842) calls the ‘pious ritual’ through which firstly we agree on the illusory and invented nature of ‘race’, before

deferring to its embeddedness as a social reality.<sup>1</sup> And so I find myself entangled in an uneasy paradox: recognising that race is an arbitrary social invention that mutes bodies through spurious disclosures of the skin (Gilroy, 1998; Fanon, 1967), but also that race seems so completely knitted into the textures of everyday lives that it might be afforded existence-as-such. Feeling my way through these inconsistencies, I trace the messy materialities of race as they are enrolled through habits of perception that appear to locate race so decisively in the realm of the visible (Martín Alcoff, 1999). In particular, I argue that efforts to evade the dehumanising impulses of race, and the refutation of race as a meaningful category of biological difference, has led to a neglect (avoidance even) of the body, and the material differences between bodies, in much of our talk about race.<sup>2</sup> However, countering these tendencies, I suggest – through events like this terror alert – that material differences between bodies are fundamental; they are enrolled through affectively charged perceptual practices that name and locate bodies in racialised processes of *making sense* – heterogeneous elements including intensities of skin pigment, salwar kameez, rucksacks, a hire car, a box, the Qur'an, newspaper cuttings, etc. enter a functional ensemble in the becoming-terrorist of some bodies.<sup>3</sup>

The momentum of bodily differences is compelling, and in this chapter I map out some theoretical implications that an insistence that bodies are different might pose for our

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<sup>1</sup> Gilroy's (1998; 2000) response to these uncomfortable inconsistencies is embodied in his polemic 'abolitionist project' involving a rejection of 'race' in favour of 'planetary humanism' engendering a more affirmative cosmopolitanism.

<sup>2</sup> Although see Saldanha (2006) and Alexander and Knowles (2005) for notable exceptions that begin, at least, to engage with the materialities through which race operates.

<sup>3</sup> I use lists of various materialities throughout this chapter to repeatedly draw attention to my excessive conception of the body, where the body is not something confined by the skin, but something defined through its relations and machinic connections to other bodies (both human and non-human) (Deleuze, 1988a; Grosz, 1994)

thinking about race.<sup>4</sup> Taking inspiration from Gilles Deleuze's (1988, p.123-4) interpretation of Spinoza's concept of the body, I resist defining bodies in terms of forms, substances or subjects by locating bodies in a philosophy of affects and relations, arguing that we need to appreciate the machinic materiality of raced bodies.<sup>5</sup> From a machinic perspective race is not inscribed upon bodies; it is not simply read off passive bodies through what are too often presented as stable and uncontested bodily markers. Against this a more open and connective conception of the body is presented, as I argue that raced bodies emerge through provisional and heterogeneous conjunctions of bodies, the object world and surroundings; race involves what Saldanha (forthcoming, p.149) describes as the 'sociotemporal disciplining and 'charging' of...bodies themselves'. And through this charging, bodies begin to manifest tendencies to aggregation. Bodies cluster, they stick-together, they repel. Bodies become raced. I am specifically interested in how perceptual practices facialize material differences between actual bodies in interaction, as whiteness, Asianness, Muslimness etc. emerge as intensities of attributes (and not characteristics) through heterogeneous and continuous processes of differentiation as raced bodies are assembled.<sup>6</sup> I am concerned then with how the materialities of raced bodies come to matter; how affects flow across and through the specific meetings of the machinic materialities of raced bodies that constitute an encounter; and how these materialities are made meaningful through the operations of a sorting device – the faciality machine – that

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<sup>4</sup> I take my cue here from Elizabeth Grosz (1994, p.19): 'Indeed there is no body as such: there are only *bodies* – male or female, black, brown, white, large or small – and the gradations in between. Bodies can be represented or understood not as entities in themselves or simply on a linear continuum with its polar extremities occupied by male and female bodies (with the various gradations of "intersexed" individuals in between) but as a field, a two-dimensional continuum in which race (and possibly even class, caste, or religion) form bodily specifications.'

<sup>5</sup> Deleuze (1988a, p.123) writes: "How does Spinoza define a body? A body, of whatever kind, is defined by Spinoza in two simultaneous ways. In the first place, a body, however small it may be, is composed of an infinite number of particles; it is the relations of motion and rest, of speeds and slowness between particles that define a body, the individuality of a body. Secondly, a body affects other bodies, or is affected by other bodies; it is this capacity for affecting or being affected that also defines a body in its individuality."

<sup>6</sup> Buchanan (1997, p.86-7) argues: 'Becoming refers to the intensity of an attribute, not it's characteristics – it is not white but whiteness, wolfing not wolf.'



envelopes ‘the most varied components (biochemical, behavioural, perceptive, hereditary, acquired, improvised, social, etc.)’ (Deleuze and Guattari, 1980, p.336; also cited in Saldanha, forthcoming, p.149).

This ontological reorientation presents an intriguing alternative to thinking race through ‘racial epidermal schemas’ (Fanon, 1967) that are haunted by the taxonomic inclinations of racial science’s pasts that divide humans into races (Gilroy, 2004; Pred, 2004). Here, I begin to trace some of the fleeting, but repetitive temporary fixings of race in interaction. Firstly I map the tendencies and distributions of bodies in and around Keighley, analysing the ‘becoming-sticky’ of some bodies as they tend to aggregate immanently into racial formations (Saldanha, 2005), in the same instance repelling other bodies. Extending these arguments, I consider three temporary, but recurring fixings of race in the becoming-terrorist, becoming-criminal and becoming-violent of some bodies. Unpacking each of these becomings through accumulations of encounters, I work towards understanding how the force of race works across the machinic connections that constitute bodies. Specifically, I suggest that some of these material differences between bodies are isolated as sites of intensive difference in the rapid activities of race thinking, sorting bodies and coordinating thought and action. These accounts of becoming-terrorist, becoming-criminal and becoming-violent force us to consider how material differences in the heterogeneous elements that constitute bodies come to matter in the temporary fixings of race, and in the process we begin to appreciate the slow-fuse and distributed power of race as it accumulates through the repetition of encounters. And my account gathers moments of intercultural encounter by tracking heterogeneous processes of differentiation on the ground, we also start to assemble insights into the twists and turns of the turbulent socialities that constitute multiculture in Keighley.

## What can a body do?<sup>7</sup>

Following Spinoza, the body is regarded as neither a locus for a consciousness nor an organically determined entity; it is understood more in terms of what it can do, the things it can perform, the linkages it establishes, the transformations and becomings it undergoes, and the machinic connections it forms with other bodies, what it can link with, how it can proliferate its capacities – a rare *affirmative* understanding of the body.

(Grosz, 1994, p.165. Emphasis added)

What can a body do? Posing this Spinozist question Deleuze and Guattari (1987) invite an important reconfiguration to what Buchanan (1997) calls the philosophical problem of the body; one that is less interested in questions of embodiment – what is a body? – rather it asks: what are the *capacities* of bodies? What is the *potential* for bodies to forge new relations, new connections, with other (human and nonhuman) bodies? For Deleuze and Guattari, Spinoza's question ushers us towards an ethological account of the body and engagement with the capacities of a body to affect and be affected, situating bodies in a philosophy of affects and relations (Buchanan, 1997; Deleuze. 1988a).<sup>8</sup>

Connections, linkages, rhizomes, speeds, intensities, flows, becomings. Thinking with Deleuze and Guattari involves radical ontological reconfigurations that enable alternative

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<sup>7</sup> Intellectual, theoretical and political interest in the body has burgeoned over recent years, largely led by the work feminist theorists attempting to expose the imaginary body/phantom-body of Western patriarchal rational subjectivity (Gatens, 1996), and disrupt constructions of the 'body as reason's underside' (passion, object, non-consciousness, exteriority, passivity, femininity) (Longhurst, 2001) that are maintained through architectures of dualistic thought. In a similar vein Ian Radley (1995) exposes 'the elusory body', as he writes against the recovery of the body in much of social theory, and accompanying ways of seeing the body as an object of controls that emanate from society; in terms of the physicality of the body in relation to the social world (one among other natural objects operating as symbols for the social system); and the assimilation of the body to semiotics as the body is reduced to a corporeal capacity for reflecting and internalising signs. Within all this talk about bodies Jane Bennett (2004, p.348) has identified the contours of what she writes is an 'explosion of political-theoretical work on the (human) body as materiality, indebted to, among others, Merleau-Ponty, Foucault, Luce Irigaray and Judith Butler'. However, much of the work on body as materiality assumes a given body, and posits the body as an inscriptive surface (see note 5 for critique) and I turn to a machinic concept of the body indebted to Gilles Deleuze and his some time collaborator Felix Guattari (Grosz, 1994; Buchanan, 1997).

<sup>8</sup> Ethological approaches require an orientation to the body through *action* and *affect*, and are contrasted with aetiology's preoccupation with *cause* and *effect*. Buchanan (1997) argues that the shift from aetiology to ethology involves both a change in direction (looking forwards not backwards) and a new conceptualisation of the body (looking outwards not inwards).

materialist conceptions of bodies, exceeding social constructionist notions of bodies as inscriptive surfaces; bodies reduced to 'body image' (Grosz, 1994; Gil, 1998; Radley, 1995); 'an individual unitary, organismic body which can act as a surface upon which society can construct itself' (Thrift, 2000c, p.39; see also Currier, 2003; Buchanan, 1997). We might begin, then, to imagine bodies as *open*, *connective* and *distributed*. In the words of Elizabeth Grosz (1994, p.164), the body is 'a discontinuous, nontotalizable series of processes, organs, flows, energies, corporeal substances and incorporeal events, speeds and durations'. For Deleuze and Guattari, bodies are assemblages, or multiplicities, thought outside the binary logics of oppositional categories of mind/body, interiority/exteriority, subject/object, and presenting:

an altogether different way of understanding the body in its connections with other bodies, both human and non-human, animate and inanimate, linking organs and other biological processes to material objects and social practices while refusing to subordinate the body to a unit of homogeneity of the kind provided by the bodies subordination to consciousness or to biological organisations.

(Grosz, 1994, p.165)

From this perspective, bodies are *machinic*, not organic.<sup>9</sup> They are composed of, and connect, a plurality of irreducible intensities and forces (Buchanan, 1997) – biological, capitalist, chemical, material, cultural, electrical, political, colonial. Assemblages connote the provisional, transitory, and contingent 'functional conglomerations' (Currier, 2003) of material elements (human and nonhuman, animate and inanimate), flows and intensities, all of which have the same ontological status. Assemblages demand a flattening out of relations (Grosz, 1994): they do not function as what Dianne Currier (2003, p.328) calls 'transcendental social orders' that determine and distribute component elements, but the constituent elements, fragments and flows of the assemblage cannot be thought of as 'stable, individuated, and self identical, a priori to their engagement in an assemblage',

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<sup>9</sup> Machines are an important element of Deleuze and Guattari's thought, as Buchanan (1997, p.83) identifies: "Machine" is used in its most elemental sense – *machines are not metaphors*. Machines harness forces and are always purposeful, they must be able to do something, must be doing something. Machines are the site of activation of a certain relation.'

rather it is the particular connections, relations and arrangements of these virtual and constitutive elements, fragments and flows that produce the 'specific and immanent whole' (Currier, 2003, p.328).

Assemblages, constituted through machinic connections, permit a greater appreciation of the emergence, indeterminacy (fickle-ness) and movement (flighty-ness) of bodies (Massumi, 1992), yet this machinism is not unconstrained. The body as assemblage is not 'essentially egalitarian or entirely accidental' (Currier, 2003, p.328); power relations are *virtual* to the assemblage, disciplining charges and intensities, channelling tendencies and momentum. However, they operate immanently, not as transcendent structures. For example, if we returning to the story of becoming-terrorist, we need to situate the assembling of these terror bodies within the heterogeneous connections of a larger social machine, itself an assemblage constituted through varied components (institutional, perceptive, biochemical, juridical, technological, behavioural, semiological, media, acquired, inherited) (Guattari, 1995; Currier, 2003; Saldanha, forthcoming). The encounters involved in becoming-terrorist cannot be divorced from the heterogeneous components that comprise that context through which the materialities of these raced bodies were made to matter; knotted historical geographies of religion, capitalism, colonialism, terrorism, etc. were virtual to these encounters.

A machinic perspective refigures human bodies as transitory, provisional assemblages of human and nonhuman elements, flows, and intensities that congeal in particular time-spaces. Bodies are *emergent* entities, albeit with specific virtualities, and probable future trajectories (Saldanha, forthcoming). And, this has important implications for thinking about race. Bodies do not have race. *They are raced*. The machinism of assemblages enables a rigorous analysis of how racial differences emerge not only through fleshy materialities of

bodies, but also the capacities of those for forging connections with other bodies and the object world, and the potential practices in which they engage.

### Raced bodies

What, ontologically speaking, is a raced body?<sup>10</sup> How might taking seriously the materiality of bodies, and the matter of bodily differences, affect – and move on – thinking around race?

I have suggested already that the materiality of bodies remains elusive in much of the talk about race. Historically, of course, this is has not always been so. The morbid excesses of racial science, reaching their genocidal zenith in the Holocaust, took bodies and visible differences between bodies as ‘markers and guarantees of natural difference’, and so the body became a site of experimentation and measurement in the spurious scientific quest to ‘prove’ absolute culture and moral differences between ‘races’ (Alexander and Knowles, 2005, p.10-11). These brutal legacies rightly haunt contemporary scholarship, but also go some way to explaining a hesitancy and discomfort with engaging with the bodily materialities through which race operates, and the perceptual practices through which raced bodies emerge.<sup>11</sup> Ongoing efforts to de-naturalise race and make explicit its dehumanising

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<sup>10</sup> Here I refract Elizabeth Grosz’s (1994) questioning of the ontological status of the sexed body, in which she asks: ‘What, ontologically speaking, is the body? What is its “stuff,” its matter? What of its form? Is that given or produced? Or is there some relation between givenness and the cultural order? Are sexually neutral, indeterminate, or hermaphroditic bodies inscribed to produce the sexually specific forms with which we are familiar? Or do bodies, all bodies (even nonhuman bodies, it must be presumed), have a specifically sexual dimension (whether it be male or female or hermaphroditic) which is psychically and culturally inscribed according to its morphology? In other words, is sexual difference primary and sexual inscription a cultural overlay or rewriting of an ontologically prior differentiation? Or is sexual differentiation a product of various forms of inscription of culturally specific bodies? Do inscriptions produce sexual differentiation? Or does sexual difference imply a differential mode of inscription.’ (p.189).

<sup>11</sup> However, Knowles and Alexander (2005) also note that questions of biological or physical dimensions of racial difference remain vexed today. In particular, advances in micro-biology and human genetics have reignited discussions around race, albeit as Nash (2004) has noted in way which reconfigure racial formations through nativity, indigeneity, relatedness, and notions of genetic purity and pollution. Alternatively, Paul Gilroy (1998; 2000) arguing for the abolition – or deontologisation (Saldanha, 2006) – of race in favour of ‘planetary humanism’, contends that new technologies in molecular biology and genetics (particular around



effects through emphases on the social construction, historical emergence and cultural contingencies of race can have the effect of presenting race as immaterial, as disembodied.

So race is a discursive formation. A fabrication. Its social and spatial production has been thoroughly deconstructed, genealogies charted, and mythologies exposed (Said, 1978; Anderson, 1991; Omi and Winant, 1994). But our confident insistence on the illusory character of race struggles with the tenacious social embeddedness of ‘race’,<sup>12</sup> and the real, often pernicious, consequences that this social construct inflicts (Martín Alcoff, 1999; Gilroy, 2000). Here, I seek to understand how race comes to matter; how it becomes entangled in the texture of everyday lives in Keighley.

### *Visibility*

“Look, a Negro!” It was an external stimulus that flicked over me as I passed by. I made a tight smile.

“Look, a Negro!” It was true. It amused me.

“Look, a Negro!” The circle was drawing in a bit tighter. I made no secret of my amusement.

“Mama, see the Negro! I’m frightened!” Frightened! Frightened! Now they were beginning to be afraid of me. I made up my mind to laugh myself to tears, but laughter had become impossible.

(Fanon, 1967, pp.111-2)

Fanon’s raw account of an encounter, in which he is fixed in the ‘fact of blackness’ through the gaze of a white child, lays bare the operation of race through visibility, as ‘concentrations of melanin in his skin’ (Saldanha, 2006, p.11) are organised and affectively charged (as fearful) through perceptual practices. Audrey Lourde’s (1984, pp.147-8)

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cloning and organ donation) mark a threshold in ‘phenomenologies of the visual’, transforming perceptual and cognitive regimes such that perceptive practices operating through racial epidermal schemas become anachronistic – in Gilroy’s (1998, p.839) words ‘...we can let the old visual signature of race go’ (see also Ware and Back, 2002). However, Gilroy is also aware of how the genetic matter of bodies can also be appropriated to racist ends, both in the spurious claims about racial difference or in the construction of ethnic teleologies. However, Saldanha (2006, p.14) also notes that Gilroy is less willing to engage with non-reductionist genetic explanations of phenotype, that work against an ultimate human sameness that underpins his planetary humanism.

<sup>12</sup> As Judith Butler (1993, p.247-8) recognises when she asserts ‘calling race a social construction or a fictive attribution in no way deprives the term of its force in life.’

remembering of a childhood encounter on the Harlem subways locates race in the realm of the visible in similar ways, exposing the affective registers through which her raced body is encountered as she sits beside a white woman in a fur coat. Lourde feels this woman's disgust; the horror as she lowers her gaze and pulls her coat firmly towards her. There must be something terrible between them – 'probably a roach' – but eventually realises that the disgust and hate she senses are directed at the proximity of her raced body. These accounts have been particularly influential on the ways in which we think about race – for example, we might trace their legacy in phenomenologies of racialised existence (cf. Gilroy, 1998; Ware and Back, 2002) and an emphasis on how seeing difference matters (Martín Alcoff, 1999).<sup>13</sup> Skin, transformed through the logic of fetish, becomes the scene for the play of difference (Ahmed, 2000). Bodily markings disclose racial difference (Noble, 2005) and suffuse the affective registers through which those bodies are encountered.<sup>14</sup> The immediacy and 'realities' of visible differences between bodies perhaps sustain the seductions of race in the so-called 'real world'; they operate as shortcuts to classification and knowledge, buttressing common sense distinctions too easily appropriated by the naturalising ideologies of racisms (Martín Alcoff, 1999).

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<sup>13</sup> Fanon's (1967) discussions of 'racial epidermal schema' and 'the fact of blackness' focuses our attention on the skin, and in particular the performativity of the skin in the perceptual practices of a 'racialised regime of vision' (Saldanha, 2006, p.11). Some dispute Fanon's focus on the materiality of the skin, and its force in interactions, refusing Fanon's 'ontology of race', arguing instead that we need to abolish race in order to transcend it (Gilroy, 1998; 2000; Ware and Back, 2002). However, I pursue a line of argument made by Saldanha (2006) in which he suggests we should not seek to eliminate race, but proliferate it. By asking precisely what happens in innumerable collisions of bodies we can begin to trace the plasticity and temporary fixings of race in heterogeneous processes of differentiation. Through this formulation we can begin to move beyond the way in which Fanon confines his discussion to the skin as the site of intensive difference that comes to matter in moments of encounter, and begin to trace the multiple materialities and machinic connections that are sorted in practices of race thinking.

<sup>14</sup> It is important to recognise how locating race in the realm of the visible also neglects the full sensory spectrum through which race operates. In becoming attentive to the machinism of raced bodies I hope to avoid such ocularcentrism by considering, for example, how sounds (calls for prayer, accents, Urdu, fireworks, etc.), smells and tastes (toasting spices, expensive perfume and aftershave, sweat), and touch (tactility between men, absences of touch between men and women) are implicated in the becoming-Muslim of bodies in Keighley (see Haldrup, Koefoed, and Simonsen, 2006).

The recent vogue for the euphemism *visible minorities*, institutionalised by the Macpherson Inquiry (1999) into the racist murder of Stephen Lawrence, exemplifies the ways in which seeing difference are privileged (Noble, 2005). Visible minorities casts aside the arbitrariness of race and ethnicity as meaningful categories, as bodily markers are taken to disclose a 'transparent chain of signification' (Noble, 2005, p.133), bodies are reduced to surfaces inscribed by racial stereotypes.<sup>15</sup> Alternatively, new lines of affectively charged visibility emerge as the 2001 disturbances in Oldham, Burnley and Bradford, the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks, and the London bombings in July 2005 are stitched together in public imaginations. Asian-Muslim masculinities have become 'hypervisible', (Alexander, 2004; 2005), through new perceptual habits that simultaneously produce a more profound invisibility (Alexander, 2000; Gregory, 2004). For example, media coverage, the Home Office reports, and harsh sentencing all reduced the complexities of urban unrest to irreconcilable cultural difference and inevitable conflict; the force of these responses, accompanied by a repertoire of images (mug shots, grainy CCTV stills), restaged Huntington's 'clash of civilisations' on more intimate scales (Alexander, 2005), inscribing it onto the 'uncivilised', 'maniac' bodies of young Asian lads.<sup>16</sup> Terrorist attacks have only amplified racialised perceptions of who constitutes a threat, ensuring a hypervisibility of Asian-Muslim masculinities, and the framing of encounters with young Asian men through affective registers of fear, suspicion and hate.

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<sup>15</sup> The language of visible minorities also entrenches racial schemas that turn around constructions of visibility/invisibility and minority/majority, reproducing the invisibility of whiteness, and a colonial gaze from racially unmarked position empowered to fix some bodies in the 'fact' of their racial otherness (Dyer, 1997).

<sup>16</sup> Alexander (2005) argues that the dismissal of urban unrest as 'wanton' and 'mindless' violence – as David Blunkett, then Home Secretary, did – had the effect of overriding the complexities of social marginalisation, exclusion and the multiple identifications that cut within and across 'community' boundaries (see Amin, 2002). Moreover, the harshness of sentences meted out to 'rioters', done with the intention (in Blunkett's words) to 'send a message to the community', established tacit connections as all young Asian men were implicated in the sentencing of each defendant (Alexander, 2005).



Theoretical convergences on seeing difference, and disrupting constructed lines of visibility, produce important insights. However, in these interventions the body appears to be little more than incidental. A black box. The body is presented as an inscriptive surface on which racialised power plays happen to unfold. The racially inscribed body may be recalcitrant, resisting capillary alignments of power; but ultimately, it is passive – the raw material for inscription (Grosz, 1994, p.146).<sup>17</sup> Now, asserting that bodies are inscribed is not perhaps contentious, but as Harrison (2000) warns us, stopping at such a conception of the body might be a serious error:

“history is not written into us only as text. It develops in bodily organisms with their own rhythms and capacities, emerging first as disciplines, but eventually as dispositions for practices – *the very things that enable us to act*”

(Burkitt, 1994 *cit.* Harrison, 2000, p.504)

In Alexander’s deconstruction of Asian/Muslim masculinities (2005), for example, I think we find a tendency to mobilise bodies as a ‘static signified to be filled with signs of society’ (Thrift, 2000c, p.39), which are then juxtaposed with complex *discursive* identifications, and negotiated relations of ‘fictive kin’ and ‘community’ (Alexander, 2000; 2005). In her schema the body – admittedly adorned with beards, salwar kemeez, etc. that enhance the visibility of cultural difference – is largely detached from the object world, and is ‘located *in* space, it doesn’t produce space’ (Thrift, 2000c, p.39). Here, I depart from a constructionist body of meanings and signs, arguing for a machinic conception of the raced bodies.<sup>18</sup> This involves a shift from archaeological notions of the body (that trace geologies of inscription)

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<sup>17</sup> My argument here closely parallels Grosz’s (1994) analysis of Foucault’s take on the body. Given the currency of Foucault’s ideas, and their influence on Edward Said’s (1978) *Orientalism*, a seminal text in contemporary Western theories of race, it is perhaps unsurprising that Grosz’s insights might be equally levelled at racially inscribed bodies.

<sup>18</sup> For example, Saldanha (forthcoming, p.149) argues: ‘From a machinic perspective, race is not something ‘inscribed upon’ or ‘referring to’ bodies or phenotype, but a particular spatiotemporal disciplining and ‘charging’ of those bodies themselves. Bodies collectively start behaving like distinct aggregate entities – racial formations, racial clusters. These clusters emerge *immanently*, without external blueprint, through corporeal practices and connection with the environment that bodies necessarily engage in. Racial formations are much more than discursive categories.’

to a present-orientated, 'cartographic' concept of bodies<sup>19</sup>, where bodies exist only as 'ill-defined constellations', assemblages of memories and biographical events, material objects, traces and 'leavings' (Thrift, 2000b, p.220). The raced body is about a 'mechanics of space' enacted through the relations between bodies and things (Thrift, 2000c, p.39):

The body 'lives' in space', but not like a sphere with a closed continuous surface. On the contrary, its movements, limbs, and organs determine that it has singular relations with things in space, relations which are individually integrated for the decoder. These relations imply *exfoliations* of the space of the body which can be treated separately. Relations to a tree, a prey, a star, an enemy, a loved object, desired nourishment, set into train certain privileged organs including precise places of the body. Exfoliation is the essential way the body 'turns onto' things, onto objective space, onto living things.

(Gil, 1998 *cit.* Thrift, 2000c, pp.39-40)

Becoming attuned to the machinic materialities of raced bodies, its 'exfoliations' or turnings onto objects and spaces, and its productive relation to 'sense making' in everyday lives (Harrison, 2000), we might be more responsive to the 'unseen' operations of 'race'.<sup>20</sup>

In and around Keighley, biology, conduct, things and settings are woven together as bodies become raced through heterogeneous connections. Raced bodies emerge through assemblages of flesh, Lexus's, kebab shops, accents, parks, hip hop, spitting, churches, mosques, rucksacks, phenotype, textile mills, facial hair, taxis, salwaar kemeez, mobile phones, skin, corner shops, Urdu, pubs, hijab, BMWs, muezzins, spliffs, handshakes, designer clothes, etc.

From a machinic perspective, raced bodies involve thinking about the '*becoming* of racial formations' (Saldanha, forthcoming); the *emergence* of raced bodies through material

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<sup>19</sup> Thrift (2000b) relies on Deleuze (1997) to sketch out the implications of this shift from an archaeological notion of bodies. Deleuze finds an archaeological notion of the body in psychoanalysis in its construction of a profound link between memories and the unconscious, through which, he argues, the body becomes 'a memorial, commemorative, or monumental conception'. Against this, Deleuze presents a cartographic body, because '[m]aps...are superimposed in such a way that each map finds itself modified in the following map, rather than finding its origin in the preceding one: from one map to the next, it is not a matter of searching for an origin but of evaluating *displacements*' (Deleuze, 1997 *cit.* Thrift, 2000b, p.220).

<sup>20</sup> These unseen operations of race stem from a closeness, a familiarity, a habitualness (see Harrison, 2000, p.497).

conditions and social interaction. And machinism is fundamental to raced bodies and what it might bring to thinking about race. Ian Buchanan neatly condenses the role of machines in Deleuze and Guattari's thinking, suggesting:

“‘Machine’ is used in its most elemental sense: *machines are not metaphors*. Machines harness forces and are always purposeful, they must be able to do something, must be doing something. Machines are the site of activation of a certain relation.”  
(Buchanan, 1997 p.83)

Raced bodies involve specific modes of relating, as affects flow across bodies filtering into conduct, disposition and action. Located within specific fields of relations and affects, raced bodies charge encounters, setting in action specific mechanics of space; particular affects course through ‘force fields of flesh and other objects, producing a continually changing distribution of intensities which prefigure encounters, which set up encounters, and which have to be worked on in these encounters’ (Thrift, 2000b, p.219). The machinic geographies of raced bodies attune us to affectively imbued processes of racialisation in action, and – following a Spinozist understanding of affect<sup>21</sup> – how the affective charging of raced bodies circumscribes what they are capable of at particular times and places (see Saldanha, 2006). These machinic geographies ask how raced bodies are faced as different, and encountered through tonalities of affect – desire, anxiety, hate, shame, etc. – determined by light, architecture, flesh, things, etc. in ways that filter perception, judgment and action. Situated in a lived present, raced bodies are practised; open-ended, generative processes capable of both disturbing, and falling back into, (the performative force of) categories of racialised thought ‘by way of contingencies, excess and indefinite answers’ (Harrison, 2000, p.499). Raced bodies are tendential. They are not about fixing bodies in ‘races’, indexing social practices, or taking-for-granted axes of

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<sup>21</sup> Spinoza's use of affect is neatly summarised by Thrift (2004, p.62): ‘So affect, defined as the property of the active outcome of an encounter, takes the form on an increase or decrease in the ability of the body and mind alike to act, which can be positive – and thus increase that ability (counting as ‘joyful’ or euphoric) – or negative – and thus diminish that ability (counting as ‘sorrowful’ or dysphoric). Spinoza therefore detaches ‘the emotions’ from the realm of responses and situations and attaches them instead to actions and encounters as the affections of substance or its attributes and as *greater or lesser forces of existing*.’

inequality (Smith, 2005); raced bodies are about what Arun Saldanha calls *viscosities*,<sup>22</sup> how some bodies come to stick-together, to cluster, while others keep away, separate.

Raced bodies are not just bodies inscribed by race; they are assemblages actualised in synergies of bodies and matter located in particular fields of relations and affects. The machinism of raced bodies, enmeshed with particular ways of relating, offers alternate insights into how race comes to colour perception, thinking and judgment as people make sense (cf. Connolly, 2002). Firstly, raced bodies alert us to the machinic materialities through which heterogeneous and continuous processes of racial differentiation proceed. Secondly, raced bodies foreground the affective intensities of encounters (already dense with the virtuality of prior encounters, historical geographies of colonialism and capitalism, religion, elements from media machines, etc), that imbue perceptual practices that name and locate raced bodies in processes of making sense, and increase or decrease capacities to act.

### **Facing raced bodies**

I'd often gravitate to Café Brasília – a contemporary café with aluminium seats and tables for that continental-street-café feel in the heart of the Airedale centre, Keighley's dated shopping mall. It served the best coffee I'd found, and comfortably satisfied my needs for a discreet location from where I could do ethnography. Throughout the day the other customers were overwhelmingly white, and predominately women, a wide

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<sup>22</sup> Saldanha (forthcoming, p.8) suggests the concept of viscosity 'enables a rigorous grasping of social spaces by putting the dynamic physicality of bodies and their interactions at the forefront of the analysis. In basic terms, viscosity pertains to two dimensions of a collective of bodies: its sticking-together and its relatively impermeability.'

range of ages, but mostly middle class, taking time out, reading newspapers or magazines, grabbing lunch, getting a caffeine fix, meeting up with friends, chatting after chance encounters, feeding toddlers, etc. And so attempting to pass as a regular, I'd sit, slowly sipping an Americano, with the *Guardian* and a notebook spread out on the table in front of me. Watching and writing. The comings and goings of day-to-day life swirled around me. Intersections of hundreds of individual itineraries; bodies going about their business in autopilot. Strangers. I didn't know these people or their biographies: What were they doing? How did they feel? Where they were going? Who they were meeting? Where did they lived and work? But sitting there, taking in the recurrent, mundane routines – the 'stuff' of everyday lives – and discerning tacit negotiations of innumerable invisible barriers, corridors and gateways that continually give rise to judgments (Lingis, 2000), I began to sense the tendencies of bodies. I *felt* the clustering of raced bodies through face, embodiment and location as they walked, shopped, ate, browsed, avoided, worked, acknowledged, drank coffee, meandered, ignored, queued, hurried, smoked, gossiped, smiled...In the briefest meeting of eyes, that quickly dissolved as bodies pass each other by; in prolonged glances; in looks of disapproval or disgust; in handshakes and pats on the back; in mumbled acknowledgements; in unwanted attention; I felt the tendencies of raced bodies in Keighley; I sensed 'local and

temporary thickenings of interacting bodies' (Saldanha, 2006). The becoming-raced of bodies on the ground through interaction. Stickiness and repulsion were immanent to bodies, as bodies clustered, stuck together, steered clear, ignored...and aggregates (temporarily) cohered. Two young Asian women, arms linked, browse at the make-up kiosk in front of me. Salwar kemeez, accessorised with fashionably tailored coats, designer handbags, and expensive shoes. Veils, carefully coordinated with accessories slip back, exposing most of their hair. Overdetermined signs of Muslim femininities? An encounter. The kiosk owner, (white, in her 40s) has been perched on a stool looking into the distance. Bored. She stirs, asking if she can help. No. They're just looking. A white woman in her twenties is pushing a pram laden with carrier bags – eyes straight-ahead, her quick steps covering ground quickly. Could she be hurrying for the bus? Out of the corner of her eye she seems to recognise someone heading in the other direction. 'Hiya'. A brief acknowledgement carries across the promenade, accompanied by a quick smile. A shouted reply: 'Alright.' Two trajectories cross momentarily, before resuming divergent itineraries. Or at the table next to me, two friends catch up. Lattes, cappuccino, architecture, privilege, style, money, jewellery, pale skin, accent all contributing to the particularity of their middle-class whiteness.

You don't so much have a face as slide into one.

(Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p.196)

Sitting in this café I began to sense how raced bodies emerge *practically* through the myriad encounters that constitute day-to-day life in Keighley – the rub of shoulders in the street, smiles, harsh words, pleasantries exchanged over shop counters, suspicious glances, quiet antagonisms, offhand conversations in taxis, kebab shops, corridors, exchanges of cash, drugs, food, etc. Most of us go about much of our lives in what Brian Massumi (2002) calls 'habitual autopilot', and here I attempt to relay the ways in which labels, categories and prejudices are *felt*.<sup>23</sup> How they are sensed in and through bodily encounter, in ways that enfeeble interpretations of labelling as outcomes of studied or conscious reflection enacted by individual minds (Saldanha, forthcoming, p.89; Connolly, 2002). Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) concept of the face, and the operations of the abstract machine of faciality, provides some useful cues as I disentangle how corporeal difference in encounters might be organised into perception, how labels and prejudices might be felt (see Connolly, 2002, pp.22-49).

The face operates as a resonance machine with virtual poles to which human bodies *tend*,<sup>24</sup> and here I want to briefly elucidate the social functions of the face, and the efficacy of the abstract machine of faciality as what Saldanha (forthcoming) calls a *sorting device* in distinguishing between whiteness, Asianness, Muslimness, etc, as formatted 'perception *subtracts* from the incoming sensory material a surplus irrelevant to a small set of action

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<sup>23</sup> In this way encounter might be thought of as enactments not of 'sense so much as sensuousness, an embodied and somewhat automatic knowledge that functions like peripheral vision, not studied contemplation, a knowledge that is imageric and sensate rather than ideational' (Taussig, 1991, p.147).

<sup>24</sup> Deleuze and Guattari (1987, p.186) contend: 'Faces are not basically individual; they define zones of frequency and probability, delimit a field that neutralizes in advance any expressions or connections unamenable to appropriate significations. Similarly, the form of subjectivity, whether consciousness or passion, would remain empty if faces did not form loci of resonance that select the sensed or mental reality and made it conform in advance to a dominant reality.'

possibilities' (Connolly, 2002, p.26).<sup>25</sup> In an admittedly mechanistic account, Deleuze and Guattari present the face as a machinic system that involves the capture of bodies, and the face is then assimilated into the 'machine of majoritarian subjectification and stratification' (MacCormack, 2005, p.3).<sup>26</sup> Through a double movement the abstract machine of faciality reduces the multiplicity of bodies to a singular mode of knowledge as they are first pigeonholed in a grid of raced categories (white/brown, male/female, bearded/shaven, veiled/uncovered, etc.), and then in the second moment the faciality machine "judges whether the face passes or not, whether it goes or not on the basis of the elementary facial units." (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p.196).<sup>27</sup> The faciality machine is mutable and capricious, categories metamorphose so that faces are rendered recognisable – and the machine is therefore underpinned by an imperialistic impulse (see Saldanha, forthcoming, p.85):

At every moment, the machine rejects faces that do not conform, seem suspicious. But only at a given level of choice. For it is necessary to produce successive divergence-types of deviance for everything that eludes biunivocal relationships, and to establish binary relationships between what is accepted on first choice and what is only tolerated on second, third choice, etc. The white wall is always expanding, and the black whole functions repeatedly.

(Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p.197)

The abstract machine is fluid, constantly making and remaking significations and subjectifications (MacCormack, 2005), and actual bodies therefore elude, evade but also conform to emergent categories (Saldanha, forthcoming). In practical terms, the abstract machine of faciality deflects our attention from the individuality of the face, and alerts us to

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<sup>25</sup> Deleuze and Guattari (1987, p.197) characterise the abstract machine of faciality in terms of its role as 'deviance detector' and operations in the 'computation of normality'.

<sup>26</sup> The abstract machine of facialisation implies a deterritorialisation and decoding of the entire body, and its surroundings and objects, and a reterritorialisation on, and overcoding by, the face (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p.201). Put bluntly: "The body is not coded or able to be read through the face. The face is not a natural extension of the flesh. Rather, the body is overcoded and annihilated through the system of the face" (MacCormack, 2005, p.2).

<sup>27</sup> "Regardless of the content one gives it, the machine constitutes a facial unit, an elementary face in biunivocal relation with another: it is a man *or* a woman, a rich person or a poor one, an adult or a child, a leader or a subject, "an x or a y"." (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p.196)



the ciphering, the sorting, that faces enable. The facility machine allows accounts for the tendencies of raced bodies, and how the machinic geographies of raced bodies might be made meaningful in ways that direct perception, judgment and action. Faces are attached to bodies that resemble them, and understanding faciality helps us grasp the capacities of bodies at particular times and places; how raced bodies become viscous, clustering immanently to form racial aggregates; how some bodies pass, while others fail to pass as they are encountered as Other, suspicious, exotic, dangerous, alluring, fearful...

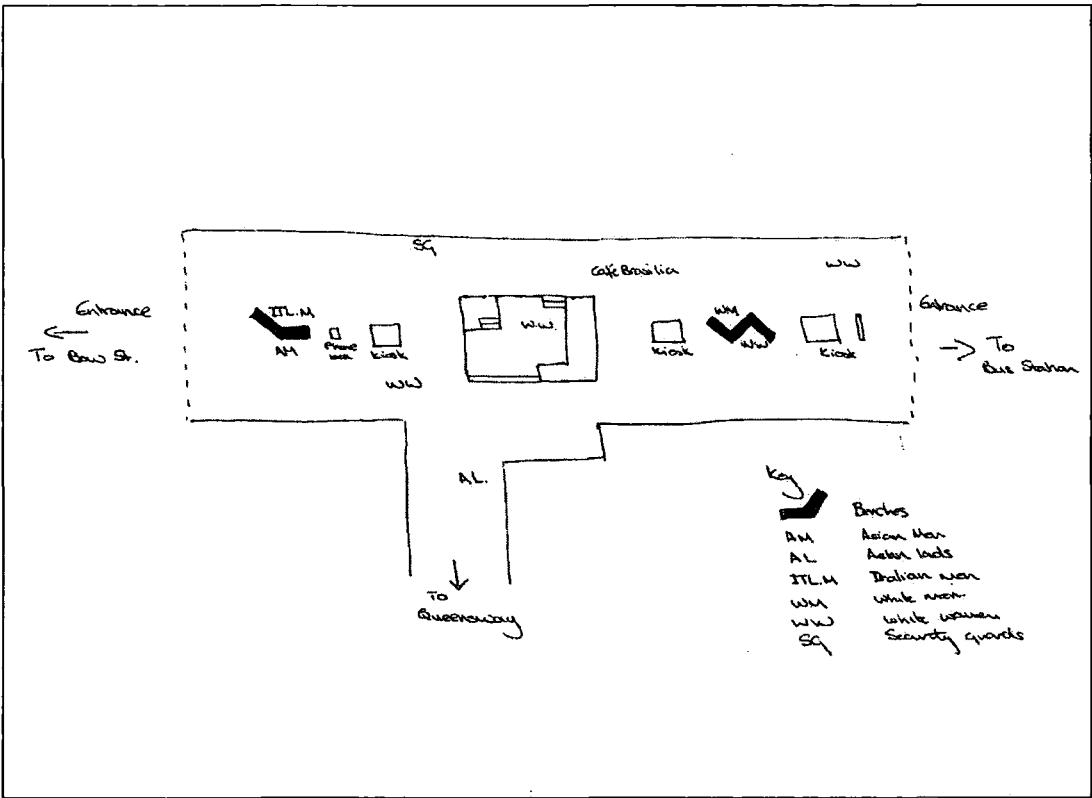


Figure 4.1: Distribution of bodies in Cooke Lane, Airedale Centre.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>28</sup> This sketch seeks to capture what Saldanha (2005; forthcoming) calls ‘tendencies towards viscosity’, and so the distributions are not depicting a static state of affairs on the ground.

Two elderly men sit on a bench outside Dixons in the Airedale centre. A third arrives. Protracted handshaking. All three wear off-white salwar kameez, half-hidden under anoraks. One wears a flat cap. They talk. Urdu. Behind them, three elderly white men sit on the same bench. Smart trousers, shirts, pullovers. One even wears a tie. They pass the time of day, watching the people going by. Infrequently they exchange words in what sounds like Italian. Most of the time they just sit, comfortable with the silence between them. Racial clusters? Brushing shoulders, sharing a bench, but these raced bodies come together in specific ways. The bench that enables proximity – and the virtuality of encounter – also colludes with the materiality of these raced bodies (intensities of skin pigment, experience, accent, salwar kameez, shopping, shirt and tie, food, light, memories...) as tendencies towards viscosity are maintained. The potentiality of encounter is ruptured as faces are reproduced through the entangled materialities of raced bodies. Habit and routine congeal, as raced bodies are turned away from each other immanently – without contemplation, and aggregates cohere: Kashmiri elders and Italian signor. Most of the time they seem unaware – even oblivious – to each other's presence. Then again, might indifference mask annoyance (at proximities, or

encroachment, that threaten to rupture aggregations) or  
unsaid pleasures and reassurance of closeness and  
corresponding dispositions.

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Sophie: [.2] I mean my middle daughter [.1] umm my middle child, she umm – that brings up another story. She's used to do a lunch class, and she's always had as many male friends as female friends. They are just friends. Definitely. She's got a lovely social circle. And [.2] in amongst her circle was a couple of Asian men, who [.2] they did daft stuff at break and they sat together in classes. And their relationship was just the same as any relationship with any of the [.] you know, the white lads that she was friendly with. And [.] she was once walking through town [.1], I think she was with a couple girls, and saw one of these lads. And if she'd seen one of her white male friends it would have been, 'Hello. What are you doing? How are yer?'

Dan: Yeah?

Sophie: And she went flying over to him, sort of pushed the back of his head, 'Hi there. What are you doing?'

He said, 'Go away.'

She said, 'What's the matter? What have I done?'

He said, 'Just go away.'

And when saw him the following lunch, she said, 'Look I'm sorry I didn't know, you didn't want to talk to me in other areas.'

He said, 'Are you stupid – if you talk to me in town they're just gonna call you a Paki-shagger.'

So it wasn't him that didn't want to talk to her, he was terrified for what [.4] comments at her for talking to him. And I think it – well it did shock her.

In contrast to the immanent tendencies of raced bodies on the benches in the Airedale centre, my conversation with Sophie began to expose the pernicious sorting device of the street as raced bodies are named and located in a profoundly racialised visual economy. In her account of this event, Sophie's daughter's failure to sense the workings of an abstract machine of faciality, and the ways in which it circumscribe the capacities for raced bodies to come together in particular ways, becomes evident. And the terse dismissal – 'Just go

away' – suggests the acuteness with which her friend felt the operations of faciality; he understood that their (differently) raced bodies – assembled here momentarily through connections of skin, architecture, clothes, the stickiness of other bodies, gossip, etc. as they passed – could not come together in this friendly, playful, and physical way within the material and social architectures of the town centre, where their raced bodies might be under intense surveillance. Captured and faced as 'white woman' and 'Asian man', their raced and gendered bodies were located in within a particular field of relations and affects, suffused with expectations. While the operations of faciality appear to be more diffuse at certain times and spaces – in the classroom, walking to college, at home – the momentum of bodies in the town centre at this time, made their bodies more viscous. As Sophie's daughter approached her friend, and intimacy of this approach, expectations might have been momentarily confounded and assumed capacities for bodies coming together were transgressed. The possibility of raced bodies coming together in friendship appears to be denied by the affects that course through assemblages of skin, objects and surroundings in this encounter. The friend clearly senses that their interaction might be perceived, and judged through affective registers of shame, disgust, desire and anxiety – the becoming-'Paki-shagger' of Sophie's daughter – as people made sense of their encounter through sexuality – 'Why else would they be so intimate?' – suggesting how bodies, things and surroundings might conjure prejudices, suspicions and fears about the sexuality of Othered men, 'miscegenation', 'race traitors', etc. Her friend's actions in the encounter, however, seemed to have the effect of intensifying the operation of faciality. Repelling her approach and closing of the possibility of interaction, corporeal differences between their raced bodies were maintained, faces reproduced, and the tendencies of raced bodies steadied as they clustered into racial formations.

The momentary sorting of raced bodies in interaction is prolific. The abstract machine of faciality is at work all over Keighley, sorting bodies in shops, buses, streets, offices, gyms, college corridors, queues, libraries, pubs, parks, doctor's surgeries, pedestrian crossings, checkouts, leisure centres, alleyways...

Local newsagent. A contact zone. Constant coming together of raced bodies through countless dropping-ins to grab a newspaper, milk, cigarettes...Daily rituals of snatched conversations with the Asian guy behind the counter. Might the momentum of accumulated small talk counter the viscous tendencies of raced bodies, diffusing the operations of faciality through familiarity, rapport and banter? Might surface tensions that maintain racialised boundaries be momentarily transgressed? Might differently raced bodies not longer repel? 'Paki'. Graffiti. An impatient customer ('Don't you understand English?')...A jolt. The faciality machine intensifies in face-to-face interactions over the counter.<sup>29</sup> The tendencies of raced bodies (assembled through skin, clothing, property, service, language, accents...) are amplified, leading, possibly, to racist harassment and abuse (Parker, 2000).

At other times and places faciality might be intense in other ways. Saturday Night, 11pm. North Street. Flesh, wine, lipstick, Lush, light, skin, double vodka, Weatherspoons, stilettos, laughter, takeaways, vomit, staggering, taxis, etc. are assembled in the machinic geographies of becoming-intoxicated of white women. Encounters – with police, with taxi drivers, other drinkers, friends, etc. – are charged, but the faciality machine seemed particularly strong in interactions with Asian lads. Machinic geographies charged through a potent cocktail of shame,

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<sup>29</sup> The pernicious intensification of faciality in racist encounters over counters hit the local press after two men were witnessed shouting 'scig heil' and giving Nazi salutes in a Keighley take-away by an off-duty police officer ('Pair face prison for takeaway Nazi jibes', *Keighley News*, 03.12.2004, p.3).

sexual desire and disgust. Feeling objectified by the intensity of gazes from Asian men slowing down as they walked or drove by (reinscribing Orientalist notions of the Other's sexuality) (see Haldrup, Koefoed, Simonsen, 2006), or attracting unwanted attention<sup>30</sup> – calls of 'White whore' through windows as cars fly by, comments in take-aways, cars pulling up and asking girls to get in. Intimidation. Uneasiness. A relational choreography: two becomings. The becoming-unchaste of white women and the becoming-perverted of Asian lads, conducted through a specific mechanics of space, playing on the intensities of corporeal difference, polarising the tendencies of raced bodies; as white lasses and Asian lads congeal into distinct aggregates.

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<sup>30</sup> My conversation with Lucy illustrates my argument at length:

Lucy: Yeah. Yea. Yeah, it is. [.3 Yeah I mean like a group of Asians who [.1] came up here and put the window through. And you sort of thinking, you know, 'Why? What's the point?' And you know, you wonder why that is [.5]

Dan: Yeah and do you think it's maybe sort of, is that a problem with younger men [.2]

Lucy: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah, it is Yeah. You know, but then again I mean my friend was walking down from the pub the other day [.] from where she works [.1] and one, you know, an Asian man, stopped in a car and asked her to get in. You know, and you're sort of thinking, [.1] you know, you wouldn't get somebody just [.1] you're average white person doing that. Well I've never heard of that happening to [.2] anybody like that. I think they have less respect for us [.4] for women.

Dan: Right?

Lucy: Definitely. But I think that's because of their religion and their culture. I don't think they have any respect for their own [.] women. And I think that comes across when they speak to us and [.2] the way, the way they look at yer and things. You know, it's [.1] like when I walk round there to Sainsbury's and things, they all shout something at you, when you're walking round.

Dan: Really? What sort of stuff?

Lucy: Just like rude stuff. You know and like [.1] like [.2] pervey stuff and you think 'Oh get lost.' And I think that's, that's why [.1] most women are sort of 'Oh get...' you know? You just think, 'Oh sod you.' You know, 'Why should [.1] well I don't even want to talk to yer if that's the first thing that comes out of yer mouth'

Dan: Right.

Lucy: ]But I don't think they have any respect for women at all, at all. [.2] Mainly that's taught in the language isn't it? [.1] In the, their religion I mean, sorry. [.1] Because they're not, because they don't have to give as much respect to women as to do to men and I think that's [.1] part of it. I think. They don't care, or they don't seem to see that. [.3] You know, it's just the way it seems, that they don't, so [.4].

At the school gates. Anxieties, resentment and pity conjured by conjunctions of salwar kameez, designer shoes, hijab, Koran, pavements, Urdu, mosques, pushchairs, veil, skin, daylight, averted gazes, etc. The machinic connections constituting some bodies are enrolled in a becoming-fundamental of Muslim women. Intensive differences. Machinic geographies polarise the tendencies of bodies communicating affects across bodies. Anxieties surface. About Islam (never Islams). About the rejection of our way of life. Shame and resentment. Veil as an overdetermined signifier of female oppressions and feudal customs (Dwyer, 1999). A machinic extension of patriarchal control of women's bodies, of circumscribed mobility, of inequality. This style is never an affirmative or empowering assertion of identity. Brief smiles, acknowledging presence. But rarely conversations. 'We'd have nothing in common.' Clustering.

And so the complex sorting of raced bodies in interaction proliferates. Mapping the habitual and familiar ways in which race is practised through particular mechanics of space performed through assemblages of bodies, objects, and surroundings, the workings of an abstract machine of faciality – sometimes intense, at others diffuse – can be felt everywhere. I turn my attention, however, to three specific becomings: becoming-criminal, becoming-violent and becoming-terrorist. Through the machinic geographies of these specific becomings, and fields of affects and relations they engender, I hope to grasp how the mundane, entangled materialities and machinic connections that constitute these bodies come to matter as they initiate and direct a range of socio-spatial practices.

## Becoming-criminal

One day is much like any other at the Eclipse hairdressers' salon at Oakworth, an affluent, stone-built village in West Yorkshire's Bronte country, so the regulars were drawn from their blow-dryers when a new sports car parked outside in the street.

The salon's young proprietor Sharon Wiseman was the first to clock that the driver and his passengers were young Asian men, and "up to no good", she assumed. "The first thing I thought was 'drug dealers'", she admitted later.

Her assistant added that she will not let her daughter into nearby Keighley because of stories about "Asians grooming teenage white girls". She also believes it is time to "do something about" Keighley's immigration problem. From beneath a mass of pink rollers, Joan, aged 67, nodded her head vigorously. "Up to no good," she said.

(*Independent*, 13.04.2005)

These opening paragraphs from a feature article written by Ian Herbert for the *Independent* in the run-up to the 2005 General Election expose the operation of faciality in Keighley's racialised visual economy, as the machinic geographies of raced bodies conjure suspicions, judging these Asian bodies at this particular time and place to be 'up to no good': *They're probably dealers. They might be paedophiles.*<sup>31</sup> Moral panic in action: filtering perceptions and directing conduct.<sup>32</sup> A back catalogue of sensationalist headlines about grooming, violence,

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<sup>31</sup> This was one of a number of feature articles in national newspapers focussing on the entanglement of race and electoral politics in Keighley that followed the decision of Nick Griffin, leader of the British National Party to run for MP in the town.

<sup>32</sup> In his study of youth cultures and sociologies of deviance Stan Cohen (1972) describes moral panics as: 'A condition, episode, person or group of persons emerges to become defined as a threat to societal values and interests; its nature is presented in a stylised and stereotypical fashion by the mass media; the moral barricades are manned by editors, bishops, politicians and other right-thinking people; socially accredited experts pronounce their diagnoses and solutions; ways of coping are evolved or (more often) resorted to; the condition then disappears, submerges, or deteriorates and becomes more visible.'

Cohen's ideas were particularly influential in contesting the production and circulation of a series of racialised figures, or folk devils, with notable interventions exposing the moral panics around mugging (Hall *et al.*, 1978) and 'disentangling' the Asian gang (Alexander, 2000). Within this literature, often due to institutional location, considerable effort has been expended in unpicking the construction of media realities, whereas Clare Alexander's recent work has been exemplary in embodying the 'Asian gang', drawing on ethnography to communicate the multiple and nuanced identifications of young Asian men in a South London borough. In similar ways, Bradford writer Yunis Alam (*Annie Potts is Dead* and *Kilo*) writes incisively about drugs culture



gun and knife crime, ‘racist attacks on whites’, ‘gangland executions’, mug shots of ‘rioters’, ASBOs for teenagers, of hearsay about drugs, gossip about attacks, documentaries about grooming, far-right politicking, urban myth is virtual to the abstract machine of faciality, moving thought and perception in some directions and not others, bleeding into dispositions and actions. Here, I resist temptations to deconstruct media fabrications of Asian-Muslim youth masculinities transfixed in a moment of crisis, the latest incarnation of the folk devil (Alexander, 1999; 2000; 2004). While recognising the important work of deconstructing the Orientalist and racist imaginaries, narratives discourses that feed moral panics about ‘Black muggers’ (Hall *et al.*, 1978) or ‘Asian gang violence’, and recent ethnographic work with British Bengalis that shows that young men are at once much more and much less than their typecasting as violent gang members (Alexander, 2000; Amin, 2002a), I am more interested in how moral panics play out in interaction. I consider how the performative repertoires of moral panics might distribute affective intensities – fear, suspicion, anger, etc. – that anticipate, set up and course through encounters. What might moral panics *do*?<sup>33</sup>

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### Gangland execution

THE SLAYING of an Asian youth from Keighley could be linked to a gang war which recently spilled out onto the streets of the town.

(*Keighley News*, 07.09.2001, p.1)

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among young Asian men in Bradford, and populates his novels with complexly motivated characters that resist easy categorisation.

<sup>33</sup> In the process I am also distancing myself from a literature on the fear of crime (Smith, 1987; Valentine, 1989; Holloway and Jefferson, 1997; Pain, 2001; 2003; Bannister and Fyfe, 2001) that focuses on the ‘emotional and practical responses to crime and disorder by individuals and communities’ (Pain, 2001, p.901). Although work on fear of crime provides some useful insights – exposing, for example, differential distributions of fear among men and women – much of the literature relies on problematic assumptions that fear of crime can somehow be quantified and measured through survey material, in the process uncritically reproducing problematic social categories. Moreover, while this literature claims to track the impact of fear of crime on social life (usually through exclusions from the urban public sphere), in reality it dwells on how people talk about being fearful and fails, therefore, to confront how people *do* fear (Pain, 2001). Here, I am more interested in how the circulation of moral panics scatters affective energies that infect the sorting of bodies in heterogeneous practices of differentiation in way that shape judgment, disposition and action.

### **Beaten to death on the street**

A MAN has been beaten to death in the latest in a string of murders on Keighley's streets.

Qadir Ahmed became the fourth young person from the town to be brutally slain since last September.

*(Keighley News, 15.02.2002, p.1)*

### **Guns, drugs and cash seized in raids**

HAND guns and heroin were seized by drugs squad police in the latest Crack Down raids.

*(Keighley News, 16.05.2003, p.1)*

### **Lavish life of dealers inspires teenagers**

DRUG dealers making as much as £25,000 profit per week are being held up as role models among members of Keighley's Asian community.

The vast profits are being spent on various items, including designer clothes, sports cars and jewellery – and even property.

Researcher Abdul Shukoor said: "The income and lifestyle of young people who sell drugs make them tempting role models for other young people living in areas and communities where there are perceived to be few positive life chances or career options.

*(Keighley News, 17.06.2005, p.1)*<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> This article was written after a public meeting reporting on a research project undertaken by the University of Central Lancashire in collaboration with Project 6, a drug service provider in Keighley. The research was designed to better understand the extent of drug abuse among Keighley's Asian communities, and explain low levels of service take up at Project 6. Discussion of drug dealing was a minor feature of the report, but made the front page of the *Keighley News*. No other findings were reported in that week's edition of the paper.

*Dealers...*

Drugs are virtual to the facialisation of Asian lads in Keighley. The momentum of sensational headlines, sustained by weekly updates on drugs raids and convictions in the 'news in brief' and 'court list' columns of local newspapers,<sup>35</sup> entangled with gossip, rumour, urban myth, and are repeatedly and routinely 'witnessed' in encounters, interactions, meetings, exchanges...Moral panics leave an impression. Stories charge visual economies. Memories and affects accumulate around the machinic geographies of particular raced bodies. Drugs are used in the reproduction of faces; and if the face fits...

A series of violent events between September 2001 and February 2002 contrived to make Keighley's shadowy drug culture notorious.<sup>36</sup> Four brutal murders. Four young Asian men dead. 'Gang war'. These events were strung together as a struggle for 'turf' between rival 'Asian drug gangs'. These events, wrenched from their singularity through repeated storying and coverage (Massumi, 1993), charged visual economies in Keighley, determining the distribution of intensities through which some specifically raced and bodies were encountered. As an abstract machine of faciality sorts machinic connections of skin, language, topography, architecture, drugs, kebab shops, clothing, hand shakes, swaggers, expressions, cars, loitering, fireworks, bling jewellery, styles of interaction, etc., in the becoming-dealer of young Asian men. Faciality names and locates raced bodies, *placing* them as dealers in a field of specific of relations and affects, as capacities of bodies are determined. Pupils dilate. Adrenaline surges through veins. Paces quicken. Curtains twitch. Eyes eager to avoid meeting, steal furtive glances. Evasion. Gossip.

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<sup>35</sup> The *Keighley News* is published once a week. The *Bradford Telegraph and Argus* is a daily newspaper distributed throughout the Bradford Metropolitan Area, and therefore covers news items in Keighley.

<sup>36</sup> For example, the *Observer* (14.07.2002) ran a special investigation entitled 'Deadly Asian heroin gangs carve up lucrative new trade' exploring the drugs culture within Asian communities that focussed predominately on events happening in Keighley.

The unfolding of suspicion and prejudice in conversation between journalist, stylist and clients in the Eclipse hair salon reveals the sorting of raced bodies, felt to be a threat, in the process setting up and closing off the ways in which these bodies could then be encountered. Conjunctions of skin, drugs, sports cars, architecture, topography etc., determined that these bodies *might* be drug dealers, and even if they weren't, they were surely 'up to no good'. As I spoke with Gina – a mother of two in her late 20s who works from home – I brought up this article I had read in the *Independent*, and in the conversation that follows she appears to confirm a routine enframing of 'Asian lads' through skin, drugs, cars and clothing:

Dan: ]And it happened in one of the article written in the run up to the general election, this journalist used it as an example of racism in Keighley. So he was in Oakworth – he was in a hairdressers, and a, you know, a souped up car pulls up, and there were a couple of Asian lads in it, and then it's like, 'Oh they're drug dealers...'

Gina: ]Yeah. Oh yeah that would happen if you were in a hairdressers or a nail bar or something in Keighley, having your nails done, and you know, two Asians go by – that is what [.2] what would get said. If they pull up on this street people would be like, 'What are they doing round here? They better not be dealing drugs.' But if two Asians just turned up in a car, and it wasn't souped up and there wasn't [.3] I mean that is the whole society things – because there's like hoodies and stuff, ain't there, that people are scared of. If two Asians [.2] pulled up and they were dressed normally, probably not a lot would be said. It would probably be like, 'Oh, there's a salesman.' Or [.4] whatever. [.4] I don't know how people would react if a [.2], if a traditional Asian family moved in round here. I would imagine there would be some proper resentment. But [.2] when it's professional Asians I think it's [.1] not, you know?

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...everywhere

Walking through town. A teenager. An Asian lad.

Standing around, mobile phone clasped in his hand.

'What's he up to? No good, I'd imagine.' Adidas

trainers, designer jeans, Ralph Lauren wind-breaker. A

chunky gold chain draped around his neck is just visible. His hair is fashionably cropped and painstakingly gelled into place. He seems to be waiting. Shifting weight from foot to foot. Eyes scanning passing bodies, some rushed, others ambling by. He seems to be trying to pick a face out of the crowd. His mobile rings, and he immediately snaps it open. A short, staccato conversation, and he hangs up. Moments later recognition flickers across his face. 'Who has he seen?' Two lads turn the corner. Asian. Designer gear. Walking slowly, hands in pockets, they too have seen the first guy. An encounter. 'Salaam. How you doing?' A brief conversation. Skin + subcultural style x handshake = suspicion.<sup>37</sup> 'Why are they shaking hands?' 'They must be exchanging something.' 'Drug dealers!' 'So blatant!' Rage. 'Why don't the police do something about it?' Panic. Heart races. What if they've noticed me watching. Eyes down. Move on.

### *Suspicion*

Ali: But [.2] it's like I can be giving you anything under the table. You know, maybe I don't want somebody to see me, giving you what I am giving you. Yeah. Fair enough it could be drugs, I'm not saying it's not drug dealers. But I did not see them, you know, I did not see them giving something which said heroin on it, or cocaine on it. So...it's, you know, they can say, turn around to me and say, 'What the hell you on about, it wasn't drugs. Just gave him a pen. He asked for a pen.

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<sup>37</sup> Here I am trying to convey how suspicions do not simply stick to some bodies and not others. Suspicions are distributed across the heterogeneous elements and machinic connections that constitute a body. What is more including addition and multiplications I want to suggest that suspicions are not simply the outcome of a linear or symmetrical accumulations but are amplified through some connections leading to 'phase changes' in registers of intensity (DeLanda, 2002).

Or he asked me for some money. I gave him some money.' Whatever. We know it's drugs [.2] it's a bit obvious, but...

Dan: Is it a big issue? I mean how many people are involved?

Ali: It used to be [.3] I couldn't tell you how many people are involved. But sometimes it looks like there is more than there is. There's like some people will only be there because there mate's a drug dealer. They're only in there because their mates got the money and their mates treated them everyday to, you know, drinks and whatever, a bit of skunk or whatever. There gonna stick around him like flies with shit basically. Do you know what I mean? Why? Because they're getting a treat. And their mates saying, 'yeah boys, here have a chill, have a laugh. It's on me.' And most of the time it's on him every night. You know what I mean. Because he's got the money. So [.2] there's probably one drug dealer but with 5 mates. You know. Yeah his mates might do him a favour once in a while. But the drugs issue has calmed down a lot. The BNP could have picked up on it, but they know it's calmed down a lot. Especially since the murders. So when the BNP came in for these elections, they never used it, you know [.3] as one of their agenda, it wasn't on it.

Dan: Because there was a lot of coverage, I guess, around the murders. And then again nationally – like it hit the Observer I think. And, what was the reaction locally to that?

Ali: Everybody was distraught about it and...this is why even the Asians in the [.2] there's so many people out there who have been drug dealers in the past, and now you see 'em and they're not, they're not in that game any more. They're either doing taxi, or you know, they'll be working for someone or they've got a business now, and, you know, pray 5 times a day. You know, because they've learnt that, that it's not worth it, it's not worth it selling, you know, bags a day and then, and ending up, you know, living in fear that you might get shot, because [.3] you've just got someone else's customer. You might not be stealing customers but them customers coming to you because you've got good stuff. And you've got the other drugs dealers not going to say, 'Oh yeah, you've got better stuff than me. It's all good.' It's not that kind of a business. It case of like, you know, I'm out to make my money and I'm going to make it. It doesn't work, like, you know, as happens in Dixons they'll say, 'OK, may the best man win'. It's not that kind of an issue.

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The circulation of suspicion through machinic geographies of raced bodies surfaced again and again around Keighley. The particularity of the machinic connections involved in the becoming-dealer, and the affective registers through which those raced bodies are then encountered, is manifest in Gina's suggestions that: '[i]f two Asians pulled up and were dressed normally, probably not a lot would be said. It would be like, 'Oh, there's a

salesman. Or [4] whatever.’ However, when specific conjunctions between skin, cars, street corners, light, designer sportswear, jewellery, loitering, dispositions, touch, etc., are made faces are reproduced and raced bodies are imbued with immanent tendencies. The becoming-dealer of Asian lads through assemblages of bodies, things and surroundings somehow foregrounds the tonalities of affect through which their bodies are encountered by particular other bodies – suspicion, fear, distrust, anger, anxiety, resentment by many, but also through desire, dependence, need by others. The affective energies scattered by these bodies in a suspicious visual economy, computed through perception and judgment into behaviour and action, curtail the possibilities for encounter and interaction. Memories and affects accumulated around drugs might catalyse connections between the becoming-dealer of an Asian male body and gangs, criminality, wealth, violence, guns, murders, addicts, in ways that intensify the viscosities of raced bodies, as they congeal into distinct racial aggregates. For some, affective responses to the implicit and explicit associations of becoming-dealer, filter into multiple socio-spatial practices of avoidance, evasion, disinterest, and indifference. The becoming-dealer of Asian Muslim bodies intensifies affects, repelling some bodies (for example, white-middle-class-middle-age-concerned-parent-bodies) as distinct racial clusters coalesce. But of course these same machinic connections simultaneously attract some bodies (white-down-and-out-heroin-addict, experimenting-teenagers, etc.), initiating practices (solicitation, meeting) in the anticipation of particular forms of interaction – a deal.



Figure 4.2: Facing violence (*Telegraph and Argus*, 22.07.2005, p.1)

Park gang in horror attack on baby

A GANG of youths attacked a 13-year-old girl as she played with a toddler on swings in a Keighley park.

AS the 15-strong gang ordered her out of Lund Park they tipped up the pram with the three-year-old strapped inside.

Police who were called say they are treating the attack as a racially motivated incident.

This week the mother of the girl, who the Keighley News has agreed not to name, said: "The children were playing on the swings when a group of 10 to 12 Asian teenagers approached them.

"They started shouting racial obscenities at them, telling them to get out of the park.

(*Keighley News*, 26.09.2003, p.1)



According to our present MP, Ann Cryer, people who vote for the BNP are either “thick or racist”.

Well, the thousands of Keighley folk we’ve met while canvassing on their doorstep, don’t appear to be thick or racist, Ann!

They are worried about the cultural changes rapidly taking place in Keighley! They are worried about *violent crime*, involving *guns and knives*! They are worried about the *drug dealers* selling *heroin* openly on the streets of Keighley! They are worried that their daughters could be next in line for *child grooming*!

(British National Party pamphlet, March, 2005)

Faces are produced through violence, and reproduced through objects (knives, guns, bricks, axes, etc). The force of media-fed imaginations consuming pre-digested presentations<sup>38</sup> that enmesh of multiple violent events – ‘unruly strangers’ hurling petrol bombs and bricks during the 2001 disturbances in nearby Bradford, mug shots plastered on the front pages of local newspapers as police looked to charge suspected ‘rioters’, the increasing regularity reports of racist attacks on whites, ASBOs for teenagers terrorising neighbourhoods, gang warfare – means that Asian lads are often enframed through violence. Machinic connections of raced bodies potentially induce fear, panic, and unease, activating specific ways of relating. Some bodies become faced as threatening, in ways that prefigure and frame encounters, and filter through into distinct spatial practices.

An example. I was catching up with Sarah over coffee one afternoon late in August as she began to recount an event she had witnessed a couple of days beforehand. Sarah rented a first floor flat above a takeaway in the centre of Keighley. Fronted by large windows, the flat provided a vantage point from which Sarah could watch the rhythms of the street – comings and goings, encounters, itineraries, fights, hanging out – and she’d mentioned events she’d observed from her window before. However, the event she’d witnessed most

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<sup>38</sup> Connolly (2002, p.23), for example, argues that perception through television, film and photography is always formatted. The media technologies are pre-digested; they are packaged by people, institutions and instruments, and ‘it is therefore unclear how much of the presentation is shaped by the medium and how much by the events ‘covered’.

recently seemed to have affected her deeply. It was pretty late, about closing time for the pubs, when she heard raised voices in the street outside. Her daughter, who was still watching television, called her to the front room. They both watched through the window. Two men were staggering drunk out of the pub next door. The shouting got louder. A punch. A brawl began between these two white blokes and an Asian lad – who she recognised from work. The dispute was getting out of hand, and then Sarah noticed the Asian lad pulling a knife from his jacket pocket. The glint of the blade under the streetlight charged the encounter. The drinkers fled; and the situation immediately diffused. But the experiencing of witnessing this event had left an impression. Sarah was clearly horrified, shocked and frightened by what she had seen, and as she spoke it became evident this biographical event was pressing on her mind; it had become virtual to encounters with Asian lads, coursing through the workings of faciality, in ways that clearly coloured her perceptions, judgments dispositions and actions. Specific assemblages of skin, darkness, knives, clothes, shouting, parks, alleyways, streets, pubs, police, alcohol, etc., animated new affective responses.<sup>39</sup> Singularity lost. The event morphed into a possibility of repetition; a low-level buzzing of fear and uneasy expectations. It could happen to me. If not today, then maybe tomorrow.

The event was still raw, but its virtuality in the operations of faciality as Sarah encountered Asian lads was revealing. This event and memories of the event were influencing the way in which she ‘turned onto’ – or away from – particular bodies (Gil, 1998). The event, while not foreshadowing or determining encounters with particular raced bodies, forced a different mechanics of space. The negative affective registers through which she encountered particular assemblages of bodies, things, architecture and light were

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<sup>39</sup> Again, my argument here is that through this in encounter Sarah’s affective responses are distributed across the specific conjunction of heterogeneous elements and their machinic connections. Fear, anxieties and suspicions do not stick to skin, but to the specific connections of bodies with other bodies, objects and spaces.

intensified, reducing her capacity to act. Sarah admitted to thinking differently. She'd recognised the Asian lad who had pulled out the knife from her, and always stuck up for him through a sense of fairness – 'innocent until proven guilty and all that.' This event spirals into a contagion of affects, as it confirms other stories she'd heard, amplifying fears. Moreover, this event, or memories of the event appeared not only to be virtual to operation of faciality as Sarah encountered particular raced bodies, but also coursed through her socio-spatial practices. For example, Sarah was contemplating quitting a keep fit class, because it involved walking through Lawkholme – routinely spoken of as a no-go area, 'taken over by Asians' around Keighley – and therefore, she judged the possibilities of coming up against particularly threatening assemblages of raced bodies as too great, especially as the nights began to draw in. Viscosities thicken; the potential for intercultural interactions are closed down, as this biographical event colours perception, and suffuses interaction with the possibility of violence. A virtuality of risk, and the negative affects of possible encounters filter into spatial tactics of evasion and avoidance, and other techniques calculated to temper diffuse anxieties that shadow everyday lives – not going out alone at night; always carrying a mobile phone; sticking to main roads; corporeal practices such as making eye contact, smiling, gestures and making small talk to announce presence, demand recognition in ways calculated to assuage anxieties.

The machinic geographies of this becoming-violent of young Asian men, locates encounters within particular fields of affect and relations, suggesting how intensely labels might be felt in interaction as raced bodies are charged with divergent tendencies. However, through Sarah's account of this event I have tried to make explicit the virtuality of biographical events and memories to the operations of faciality, in ways that prefigure, set up and course through interaction (Thrift, 2000b). The impression this violent event left on Sarah, and the ways in which it appeared to intensify the affects scattered by

particular conjunctions of bodies, things, light and architecture, and curtail her capacity to act, suggests I think the ways in which we might learn to be affected through experiences, both embodied and mediated. Might gossip, elements from the media, films, political pamphlets, etc inflect on the operations of faciality in comparable ways? Are they too immanent to the unfolding of specific mechanics of space? Do they course through practices?

**Becoming-terrorist (2)**



Figure 4.3 **Facing terror** (Source news.bbc.co.uk).  
CCTV grab of three of the suspected July 7<sup>th</sup> suicide bombers as they passed through Luton Station on 28.06.2005, reportedly on a practice run. This image, alongside two or three others, was widely and repeatedly circulated in the days and weeks following the bombings transforming the visual economy of race in Britain.

We are, all of us Blacks and Asians, at first sight, terrorists or illegals. We wear our passports on our faces or, lacking them, we are faceless.

Now anyone whose face is not quite the right shade, who does not walk in exactly the right way, who does not wear the right clothes for the season, can be taken as a potential suicide bomber – as law-abiding Brazilian electrician Jean Charles de Menezes learnt to his cost. And, if you are recognisably Muslim (or just believed to be Muslim), you will be subjected to official stop and searches by the police and to unofficial racial attacks and harassment in the community.

(Sivanandan, 2006, p.2-3)

Returning to my opening story of ‘terror alert’ in Haworth and the becoming-terrorist of four stranger bodies, we can now consider how this extraordinary event exposes the force of abstract machine of faciality. During the state of emergency that has followed the London bombings terror has been comprehensively facialised. Press releases, news conferences, government statements, expert opinions, 24/7 television news programming, rolling updates, blanket press coverage, sensationalist headlines, weblogs, etc. continuously named, pictured, analysed and circulated threats (see figure 5.3). The heterogeneous conjunctions of a terror machine – explosives, buses, Islam, rush hour, British citizenship, Iraq, rucksacks, al Qaeda, Muslim bodies, trains, various media constituencies, Thursday mornings, Bin Laden, multiculturalism, detached looks, accents, the ‘war on terror’, hire cars, tube maps, media, etc. – were implicated in the production and circulation of the face of terror as it travelled through society more or less unchanged. And through the operations of faciality, this face attached it self to anybody that resembled it – a becoming-terrorist. Through such becomings raced bodies the affective energies discharged by some raced bodies in interaction, on the ground, were intensified, colouring perception, judgment and action.

The intense presentation, relaying and circulation of these terror events took their toll on those who saw, read or heard about them. Here, I am interested in media affects (Massumi, 1993). That is, how media presentations are imbued with, and scatter, affective energies, how they offer means for making connections.<sup>40</sup> And I am particularly interested in what Brian Massumi calls the media affect of ‘fear blur’, and how the media’s “serial

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<sup>40</sup> This approach reflects my sympathies with non-representational theories that is more interested in what texts *do* than what they have say. Dewsbury *et al* (2002, p.438) capture the spirit of the non-representational project, arguing: ‘Representations thus do not have a message; rather they are transformers, not causes or outcomes but actions themselves. Not examples, but exemplary. In this sense representation is perhaps more usefully thought of as incessant presentation, continually assembling and disassembling, timing and spacing, worlding.’

transmission of frightful images, results in a loss of the who, what, when and where” (Massumi, 1993, p.24) in a process of collective forgetting of the singularity of an event.<sup>41</sup> In this way events, like the terror atrocities in London, are lost; they become short circuited as the specific contents of the event are blurred into an endless series of *like* events and “[r]estrospective analysis is replaced by a shudder and a shrug, memory quickly elided by expectation” (Massumi, 1993, p.25). Mediated experiences of the bombings begin to format perceptions, as virtual memories filter incoming sensory material, moving thought in some directions and not others (Connolly, 2002). A face replaces the singularity of the event. And as machinic connections actual bodies forge with objects, and surroundings, were sorted through the operations of a faciality machine, faces stuck to some raced bodies, charging encounters and setting specific ‘leavings’, or turnings onto things and space.

The terror machine charged visual economies. Prevailing moods were of anxiety, uneasiness and vigilance.<sup>42</sup> Terror was everywhere – on every bus and train, on every street, at every station...Uneasiness and vigilance becomes suspicion as eyes hurriedly scan previously unnoticed bodies, objects, surroundings. Panic surges, but then subsides. Replaced – perhaps – by guilt. Unmoored from their specific content, the terror events in London are blurred into an endless series of like events: the who, what, when, and where become *where next? It could happen to me. They might be a bomber.* Flows of information,

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<sup>41</sup> This is not to say that all media outlets relayed events in the same ways. Differences in the politics and the aesthetic between, for example, the tabloids and broadsheets, national broadcasters and satellite news programming, or the thousands of Internet sites carrying news and commentary news had important implications for how the events in London were portrayed. In discussing ‘fear blur’, I do want to erase these important differences between media outlets and how this mediated the transmission of events, but I think Massumi’s (1993; as also Massumi, 2005) concept remains useful for identifying how the media were differently involved in modulations, amplifications and circulations of suspicion, anxiety and fear after the bombings.

<sup>42</sup> Newspapers at the time were littered, for example, with anecdotes of travel after the bombings documenting various dispositions ranging from hysteria to defiance, but which on the whole communicated senses of wariness, vigilance and suspicion operating in intensified visual economies of race.

headlines, expert opinion, grainy CCTV grabs, maps, police statement, conversation, quotes, profiles,<sup>43</sup> reconstructions, congealed, facialising terror. The raced body of the suicide bomber was faced through machinic connections between heterogeneous elements including skin, trains, British citizenship, rucksacks, Islam, designer stubble, Pakistan, expensive trainers, immigration, accent, Jeans, al Qaeda, eyes, etc. And as faces attached themselves to actual bodies intensities of suspicion, panic, fear and rage surged, colouring perceptions, judgment and action, and decreasing capacities to act. Anxious glances, vigilance, cycling to work, avoidance, heightened sensitivity to surroundings, changing carriages, 999, police tracking. So many faces fitted. So much became tragically evident when armed police tracked, chased and shot (in a manner likened to a summary execution) Jean Charles de Menezes as he boarded a train at Stockwell tube station on July 22<sup>nd</sup>. Machinic connections between body, objects, architecture coalesced in the becoming-terrorist of this innocent electrician from Brazil. As Gary Younge wrote shortly afterwards: 'Brown skin is little more than a clean skin waiting to happen' (*Guardian*, 25.07.2005). The *ordinariness* of the bombers – *they could have been anyone* – possibly amplified anxieties and coarsened the resolution of abstract machine of faciality. So many faces fitted. And as the police established a West Yorkshire connection with the July 7<sup>th</sup> suicide bombers it is possible that the virtuality of terror in emergent visual economies in and around Keighley intensified. If it happened in Dewsbury it could happen in Haworth...<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> For example on 13.07.2005 the *Daily Mail*, printed a series of profiles on the bombers, all headed with the words 'Suicide Bomber Profile:' and followed by the bombers names, and then terse descriptions like 'The cricketer', 'The teenager', 'The family man'. It is also important to recognise the simultaneous and systematic dehumanisation of the bombers that ran parallel to these 'portraits', as the four men were constructed as evil, and little attempt was made to understand the motivations that had driven these young men, who seemingly has so much to live for, to blow themselves up.

<sup>44</sup> In a conversation with Lynn – a lecturer in her late 40s who worked in Keighley, but lived in Skipton – the operation of an intensified visual economy as the singularity of events in London were lost and so many bodies came to 'fit' facialisations of terror is clearly identified:

Lynn: No. I mean obviously people have been talking [1.] a lot about the fact that they [the July 7<sup>th</sup> suicide bombers] came from here. And about the differences in the, in the communities. Umm [2.] so I think it has, like I said before I think it has, you know [2.] worked in putting wedge between the communities and made people more fearful [2.] of, of people that they don't, they already don't

The terror alert in Haworth unfolded through the affective intensities of the terror machine and its charged visual economies, and here I briefly trace potential lines of affectively imbued thought and judgment as local residents *made sense* of four strangers. Habitual tendencies and clusterings of raced bodies along Main Street in Haworth were disturbed as the bodies of these strangers failed to pass as either as locals or tourists. Prejudices were felt. Terror. A becoming-terrorist. Twitching curtains. Surveillance. 999. Terror alert. Skin, accent, salwar kameez, rucksack, newspaper cuttings, hire car, mangoes, Qur'an, Main street, etc. Machinic connections sorted through the operations of faciality meant that for some at least these bodies were encounter through intensities of panic, fear and suspicion. Phenotypic encounter appears to have been significant in this becoming-terrorist. Brown skin/Asian appearance – attached to the bodies of three of the men – marked out the group as worthy of suspicion in a fluid register of raced differences. But here we also see the mutability of the sorting device of faciality at work, the skin of the fourth suspicious body was not singled out as a site of intensive difference, yet through other elements of his assemblage body and how his body stuck with the other suspect bodies meant his whiteness failed to pass. Skin and phenotype were not the only elements through which these raced bodies came to be facialised in the operations of an intensified visual economy. Conjunctions of accent, language, and salwar kameez seemed to enable the placing of these

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really mix [.1] very well with each other and that's, you know, less likely to make them mix with each other. Because they don't know. It's like [.1] – well you know – people are probably looking at people thinking, 'Well could they be a terrorist? Are they a terrorist?' Where they wouldn't have had those thoughts before [.1] they may not have liked [.1] the Asian community or had the prejudice but I don't think anybody would have been walking around thinking, 'Are they a terrorist?'

Dan: ]Right?

Lynn: ]Where I think people probably are [.1] walking round now and looking at people and thinking, 'Are they a terrorist?' Because they were such ordinary [.1] young [.] people. You know? They were just [.] ordinary lads that you'd see [.1] see around everywhere so I think [.1] that yeah, it's been, you know, really destructive in [.3] in getting communities to mix. I'm sure it has, and that's why obviously all the [.1] politicians and everybody is saying, 'We must have unity. We must have unity.' But [.2] you know I think in people's minds, you know, that fear is now there [.2] that wasn't there before.



bodies as Muslim.<sup>45</sup> And connected with rucksacks, a box (that became a suspicious package, a potential bomb – it turned out to be full of mangoes), a hire car illegally parked (the suicide bombers on July 7<sup>th</sup> had – after all – hired a car to get from Leeds to Luton, before catching a train into central London), the Qur'an, discarded newspaper cuttings covering the terror attacks in London, these bodies emerged as potential terrorists, bombers on the run.

The escalation of suspicions in Haworth to a major police incident involving armed officers, dog-handlers and helicopters was an extreme event. It does gesture, however, to the 'whisper or screech of affect' (Connolly, 2002, p.77) traversing encounters in a visual economy transformed by incessant facialisations of terror as labels, suspicions and prejudices are felt; sensed in corporeal interaction (Saldanha, forthcoming). And while in many conversations this 'terror alert' was dismissed, or on several occasions laughed off, as an over-reaction – 'Who'd want to bomb Haworth? – the suspicions that led to the event were *understandable*. The operations of an intensified visual economy made sense. Those men could have been terrorists. Better to be safe than sorry. As I chatted to Claire – a mum of three who worked from her home in Haworth as a child minder – she related to the affective energies scattered by these bodies; she understood the suspicion and panic:

Claire: ...You know, it's like with the [.1] bombings and [.1] the thing up Main Street. About it, [.1] the Asians up Main Street who got [.1] the armed police [.1] were out [laughs].

Dan: Maybe you could tell me a little bit more about that? I've only really read about it in the Keighley News?

Claire: I thought that were terrible. I can understand the panic [.4] four [.] Asian people, [.1] men, were staying in a Haworth cottage. It turned out they were going to a

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<sup>45</sup> In some ways it is ironic that 'traditional Muslim dress', such as salwar kameez, appears to have amplified suspicions of these bodies in Haworth, as conspicuous practices of religious and cultural adornment of this kind were avoided by the July 7<sup>th</sup> bombers (as figure 5.3 indicates) as part of an attempt to pass unnoticed. In this alert wearing salwar kameez seems to have operated as an overdetermined bodily marker of Muslimness, enabling the pigeonholing of bodies and intensifying the affective registers through which these bodies were encountered.

wedding. [.2] I can understand the panic. Leeds ain't that far away from here and [.5] four males [.1] who [.1] I can totally see, I can totally see [.2] why people would suddenly have the panic. And I think [.2] had I seen four males [.2] around, I maybe would have thought 'Hmm.' [.3] But the way they got tret [.2] was [.1] terrible. And I think the reason they got tret, tret like that is because there isn't many of 'em around here. [.2] And then suddenly 4 turn up and automatically 'They're bombers'. And I just think that [.2] I know they had to act on a report, but I think that was disgusting.

Dan: Ok?

Claire: [Laughs with incredulity] They were literally on the floor with guns pointed at their heads. I think that's [.1] terrible. And the reason that happened is because people around here [.3] are not used to seeing Muslims walk along Main Street. I think if the truth be known a lot of people were scared.

Dan: Ok? And why do you think?

Claire: Because all [.2] [laughing] bombers at the minute seem to be [.] Muslim. Seem to be from [.] Leeds. And suicide bombers all seem to be Muslim. And I think [.1] it's, it's scared of the unknown.

Dan: ]So you think sort of [.3] things say in Iraq maybe have – like bombings in Iraq, bombings in Palestine [.1] have an impact on how people see Muslims?

Claire: ]Yeah. I think – they're known as terrorists. I would say [.1] most people would say [.2] 'I don't trust 'em.' It's [laughs] [.2] you know, you get the people who are [.2] they presume [.1] stereotype – 'You're a Muslim. You're a suicide bomber.' You know? 'You're [.4] you're a bit short of money, you're scruffy, you can't afford a lot [.1] you're a drug [.1] addict.' You know? It's [.1] it's the fear of the unknown, but instead of approaching people and trying to get to know [.1] what's going on, they just 'That's, that's...Well that's what they are.' Four Asian males walking around Main Street. They've got a backpack. They're gonna bomb the place. You know? Rather than just making a little – I can understand the phone call and I can totally understand why it happened [.4] you know, because you could sort of go, 'Oh no it won't be.' And then, then it, it could have been because it is only up the road. You know, they could have been hiding out here. But I think it could have been handled a little bit better than what it were. You know, because they do have to follow it up, that's fine. But to have people on the floor with a gun pointed at their head – when they're going to a wedding! I mean the poor blokes.

On the day of the failed bombings in London, two weeks after the July 7<sup>th</sup> attacks, I met with a friend, Ali, and we spoke at length about the terror attacks in London. Ali, a student and community activist, was clearly affected by the bombings, and at one point began to communicate the ways in which he *felt* a transformation in the visual economy. He sensed processes of facialisation sorting his body assembled through connections of skin,

phenotype, age, facial hair, laptop bag, dress, location as he was subjected to suspicious gazes at Leeds station; he fit the face of a potential suicide bomber:

Ali: Because I was in umm [...] Leeds err [...] only [...] 4 days after, so it was Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday – yeah Monday, I went to Leeds [...] and I was carrying my laptop bag. [...] And you know, I've got, I've got a beard as well like [huh] and I was walking round err [...] Leeds station [...] because I had a good 15 minutes for my next train. And the kind of looks that I was getting, it wasn't [...] it wasn't the usual look that you would expect. And, well I know these people [...] in their, in their minds they were like [...] 'Oh is he?' Or, 'What has he got in his bag?' You know things like that. And it made me think, 'Oh should I walk around with a see-through bag?' You know, so people can see what's in my bag – it's just a laptop and that's it. You know, it's things like that really, [...] really get to you.

Dan: ]Yeah, I mean how does that make you feel?

Ali: ]It makes you feel [...] well, you know, sort of unwanted and you know, kind of like a [...] a, the messages you got back in the day – 'Go back to your own country.' You know stuff like that? [...] You know, we've moved on, we've probably moved on from those times, but [...] these kind of things are [...] well it's totally back, you know, back in the days. And you know, we've probably moved on from there. Even though we live in a multicultural society [...] because of this [...] I still feel now that you know [...] these people are looking at me as though they don't, they don't want me here any more. And it's probably those same people who [...], you know, who I would have worked next to, I would have worked in the same company as them [...] in the next few years or whatever. But [...] you know, it's just things like that – it's that rejection that you get.

### **The momentum of raced bodies**

The momentum of bodily differences in Keighley is compelling. This simple assertion had important ways in which I began to think about race and the turbulent socialities of urban multiculturalism from below in Keighley. This chapter has worked towards assembling an understanding of the fleeting, but recurrent temporary fixings of race in rapid practices of race thinking as bodies were sorted immanently on the ground. I have suggested that the current talk about the social construction of race across the social sciences was inadequate for grasping the momentum of raced differences in dynamic contact zones. Specifically, the tendency for constructionist to disavow the materialities through which race operates has had a 'deadening effect' on the study of race (Thrift and Dewsbury, 2000) directing

academic attention to questions of interpretation and away from scrutinising what race actually does. Here, working towards a non-determinist and non-essentialist concept of the raced body that continuously takes form in moments of intercultural encounter, I have started to explore the emergent ontologies of race. Refracting Spinoza's question: 'What can a body do?' through race, I have developed a machinic conception of raced bodies that locates raced bodies within a philosophy of affects and relations (Deleuze, 1988a). This conception of the raced body exceeds any notion of the body as an inscriptive surface. The raced body is a machinic assemblage that is constituted through its temporary and provisional connections to bodies, things and surroundings. This concept of the body enabled me to think seriously about how the heterogeneous material elements, and the machinic connections between these elements, sometimes became sites of intensive difference as the abstract machine of faciality (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987; Saldanha, forthcoming) – a component of race thinking – sorted bodies and coordinated thoughts and actions. Rather than invoking a static concept of race as an idea that needs to be eliminated (Gilroy, 1998; 2000; Ware and Back, 2002), here I join Saldanha (2006) in recognising the plasticity of race that is simultaneously fluid and fixing, and argue that we might more productively disrupt the enduring power of race by proliferating it. In addition, this conception of the body has opened up ways of thinking about the distributions and tendencies of bodies – and, for example, the becoming-sticky of some bodies (Saldanha, 2005) – through the dynamic physicality of multicultural contact zones. Alternatively, unpacking the becoming-terrorist, becoming-criminal and becoming-violent of some bodies has enabled us to ask precisely how recurring temporary fixings of race work across and through the machinic connections that constitute raced bodies. These machinic geographies explore how raced bodies are faced as different through affective registers – of desire, fear, resentment, etc. – in ways that colour perceptions, judgment and action. Moreover, unpicking this repetitive temporary fixings of race in these becomings,

we begin to appreciate more fully the slow-fuse and distributed power of race. That is a silent, mobile and productive kinds of power that accumulates through the repetition of encounters, as the push of race seeps into judgment, disposition and action.

I want to end by looking forwards to the next chapter. Interrogating the machinic geographies of raced bodies and tracking heterogeneous process of racialisation in action has gathered moments of intercultural encounter, opening situated perspectives onto just a few of the ‘billions of happy and unhappy encounters’ (Thrift, 1999, p.302) that constitute urban multiculturalism from below in Keighley. In the next chapter I build on the steady momentum built up here as I turn my attention to encounters of a different kind as I explore how race rides on the car in Keighley.

